

Luke

tells the good news

A quick look at this book

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God's love is for everyone! Jesus came into the world to be the Saviour of all people! These are two of the main thoughts in this book.

Two of the best known stories that Jesus used for teaching about God's love are found only in Luke's Gospel: The Good Samaritan (10.25–37) and A Lost Son (15.11–32). Only Luke tells how Jesus stayed in the home of a hated tax collector (19.1–10) and promised life in paradise to a dying criminal (23.39–43).

Luke mentions God's Spirit more than any of the other New Testament writers. For example, the power of the Spirit was with John the Baptist from the time he was born (1.15). And the angel promised Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come down to you . . . So your child will be called the holy Son of God" (1.35). Jesus followed the Spirit (4.1,14,18; 10.21) and taught that the Spirit is God's greatest gift (11.13).

Luke shows how important prayer was to Jesus. Jesus prayed often: after being baptized (3.21), before choosing the disciples (6.12), before asking his disciples who they thought he was (9.18), and before giving up his life on the cross (23.34,46). From Luke we learn of three stories that Jesus told to teach about prayer (11.5–9; 18.1–8,9–14).

An important part of Luke's story is the way in which he shows the concern of Jesus for the poor: the good news is preached to them (4.18; 7.22), they receive God's blessings (6.20), they are invited to the great feast (14.13,21), the poor man Lazarus is taken to heaven by angels (16.20,22), and Jesus commands his disciples to sell what they have and give the money to the poor (12.33).

To make sure that readers would understand that Jesus was raised physically from death, Luke reports that the risen Jesus ate a piece of fish (24.42,43). There could be no mistake about the risen Jesus: he was not a ghost. His being raised from death was real and not someone's imagination. Luke also wrote another book — the Acts of the Apostles — to show what happened to Jesus' followers after he was raised from death and taken up to heaven. No other Gospel has a second volume that continues the story.

Luke closes this first book that he wrote by telling that Jesus returned to heaven. But just before Jesus leaves, he tells his disciples:

The Scriptures say that the Messiah must suffer, then three days later he will rise from death. They also say that all people of every nation must be told in my name to turn to God, in order to be forgiven. So beginning in Jerusalem, you must tell everything that has happened.

(24.46–48)

Why Luke wrote this book

CHAPTER 1

¹ Many people have tried to tell the story of what God has done among us. ² They wrote what we had been told by the ones who were there in the beginning and saw what happened. ³ So I made a careful study^a of everything and then decided to write and tell you exactly what took place. Honourable Theophilus,^{* 4} I have done this to let you know the truth about what you have heard.

The births of John the Baptist and Jesus

An angel tells about the birth of John

⁵ When Herod was king of Judea, there was a priest called Zechariah from the priestly group of Abijah. His wife Elizabeth was from the family of Aaron. ⁶ Both of them were good people and pleased the Lord God by obeying all that he had commanded. ⁷ But they did not have children. Elizabeth could not have any, and both Zechariah and Elizabeth were already old.

⁸ One day Zechariah's group of priests were on duty, and he was serving God as a priest.

⁹ According to the custom of the priests, he had been chosen to go into the Lord's temple that day and to burn incense,^{* 10} while the people stood outside praying.

¹¹ All at once an angel from the Lord appeared to Zechariah at the right side of the altar. ¹² Zechariah was confused and afraid when he saw the angel. ¹³ But the angel told him:

Don't be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayers. Your wife Elizabeth will have a son, and you must name him John. ¹⁴ His birth will make you very happy, and many people will be glad. ¹⁵ Your son will be a great servant of the Lord. He must never drink wine or beer, and the power of the Holy Spirit will be with him from the time he is born.

¹⁶ John will lead many people in Israel to turn back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ He will go ahead of the Lord with the same power and spirit that Elijah^{*} had. And because of John, parents will be more thoughtful of their children. And people who now disobey God will begin to think as they ought to. That is how John will get people ready for the Lord.

¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know this is going to happen? My wife and I are both very old."

¹⁹ The angel answered, "I am Gabriel, God's servant, and I was sent to tell you this good news. ²⁰ You have not believed what I have said. So you will not be able to say a thing until all this happens. But everything will take place when it is supposed to."

²¹ The crowd was waiting for Zechariah and kept wondering why he was staying so long in the temple. ²² When he did come out, he could not speak, and they knew he had seen a vision. He motioned to them with his hands, but did not say a thing.

²³ When Zechariah's time of service in the temple was over, he went home. ²⁴ Soon after that, his wife was expecting a baby, and for five months she did not leave the house. She said to herself, ²⁵ "What the Lord has done for me will keep people from looking down on me."^{*}

An angel tells about the birth of Jesus

²⁶ One month later God sent the angel Gabriel to the town of Nazareth in Galilee ²⁷ with a message for a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to Joseph from the family of King David. ²⁸ The angel greeted Mary and said, "You are truly blessed! The Lord is with you."

*1.3 Honourable Theophilus: Luke dedicated his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles to this man, probably a high Roman official.

*1.5 Aaron: The brother of Moses and the first priest.

*1.9 burn incense: This was done twice a day, once in the morning and again in the late afternoon.

See also: 1.5: 1 Chron 24.10.

*1.17 Elijah: The prophet Elijah was known for his power to perform miracles.

*1.25 keep people from looking down on me:

When a married woman could not have children, it was thought that the Lord was punishing her.

See also: 1.15: Num 6.3. 1.17: Mal 4.5,6. 1.19: Dan 8.16; 9.21. 1.27: Matt 1.18.

²⁹ Mary was confused by the angel's words and wondered what they meant. ³⁰ Then the angel told Mary, "Don't be afraid! God is pleased with you, ³¹ and you will have a son. His name will be Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of God Most High. The Lord God will make him king, as his ancestor David was. ³³ He will rule the people of Israel for ever, and his kingdom will never end."

³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "How can this happen? I am not married!"

³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come down to you, and God's power will come over you. So your child will be called the holy Son of God. ³⁶ Your relative Elizabeth is also going to have a son, even though she is old. No one thought she could ever have a baby, but in three months she will have a son. ³⁷ Nothing is impossible for God!"

³⁸ Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant! Let it happen as you have said." And the angel left her.

Mary visits Elizabeth

³⁹ A short time later Mary hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea. ⁴⁰ She went into Zechariah's home, where she greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, her baby moved within her.

The Holy Spirit came upon Elizabeth. ⁴² Then in a loud voice she said to Mary:

God has blessed you more than any other woman! He has also blessed the child you will have. ⁴³ Why should the mother of my Lord come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as I heard your greeting, my baby became happy and moved within me. ⁴⁵ The Lord has blessed you because you believed that he will keep his promise.

Mary's song of praise

⁴⁶ Mary said:

With all my heart
I praise the Lord,

⁴⁷ and I am glad
because of God my Saviour.

⁴⁸ He cares for me,
his humble servant.

From now on,
all people will say
God has blessed me.

⁴⁹ God All-Powerful has done
great things for me,
and his name is holy.

⁵⁰ He always shows mercy
to everyone
who worships him.

⁵¹ The Lord has used
his powerful arm
to scatter those
who are proud.

⁵² He drags strong rulers
from their thrones
and puts humble people
in places of power.

⁵³ God gives the hungry
good things to eat,
and sends the rich away
with nothing.

⁵⁴ He helps his servant Israel
and is always merciful
to his people.

⁵⁵ The Lord made this promise
to our ancestors,
to Abraham and his family
for ever!

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months. Then she went back home.

The birth of John the Baptist

⁵⁷ When Elizabeth's son was born, ⁵⁸ her neighbours and relatives heard how kind the Lord had been to her, and they too were glad.

⁵⁹ Eight days later they did for the child what the Law of Moses commands.* They were going to name him Zechariah, after his father. ⁶⁰ But Elizabeth said, "No! His name is John."

⁶¹ The people argued, "No one in your family has ever been named John." ⁶² So they motioned to Zechariah to find out what he wanted to name his son.

⁶³ Zechariah asked for a writing tablet. Then he wrote, "His name is John." Everyone was amazed. ⁶⁴ Straight away Zechariah started speaking and praising God.

⁶⁵ All the neighbours were frightened because of what had happened, and everywhere in the hill country people kept talking about these things. ⁶⁶ Everyone who heard about this wondered what this

***1.59 what the Law of Moses commands:** This refers to circumcision. It is the cutting off of skin from the private part of Jewish boys eight days after birth to show that they belong to the Lord.

See also: 1.52: Job 5.11; 12.19. 1.55: Gen 17.7. 1.59: Lev 12.3.

See also: 1.31: Matt 1.21. 1.32,33: 2 Sam 7.12,13,16; Isa 9.7. 1.37: Gen 18.14. 1.46-55: 1 Sam 2.1-10. 1.48: 1 Sam 1.11.

child would grow up to be. They knew that the Lord was with him.

Zechariah praises the Lord

⁶⁷ The Holy Spirit came upon Zechariah, and he began to speak:

- ⁶⁸ Praise the Lord,
the God of Israel!
He has come
to save his people.
- ⁶⁹ Our God has given us
a mighty Saviour*
from the family
of David his servant.
- ⁷⁰ Long ago the Lord promised
by the words
of his holy prophets
to save us from our enemies
and from everyone
who hates us.
- ⁷² God said he would be kind
to our people and keep
his sacred promise.
- ⁷³ He told our ancestor Abraham
⁷⁴ that he would rescue us
from our enemies.
Then we could serve him
without fear,
- ⁷⁵ by being holy and good
as long as we live.
- ⁷⁶ You, my son, will be called
a prophet of God
in heaven above.
You will go ahead of the Lord
to get everything ready
for him.
- ⁷⁷ You will tell his people
that they can be saved
when their sins
are forgiven.
- ⁷⁸ God's love and kindness
will shine upon us
like the sun that rises
in the sky.†
- ⁷⁹ On us who live
in the dark shadow
of death
this light will shine
to guide us
into a life of peace.

*1.69 a mighty Saviour: The Greek text has "a horn of salvation". In the Scriptures animal horns are often a symbol of great strength.

See also: 1.76: Mal 3.1. 1.79: Isa 9.2.

⁸⁰ As John grew up, God's Spirit gave him great power. John lived in the desert until the time he was sent to the people of Israel.

CHAPTER 2

The birth of Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 1.18-25

¹ About that time Emperor Augustus gave orders for the names of all the people to be listed in record books.* ² These first records were made when Quirinius was governor of Syria.*

³ Everyone had to go to their own home town to be listed. ⁴ So Joseph had to leave Nazareth in Galilee and go to Bethlehem in Judea. Long ago Bethlehem had been King David's home town, and Joseph went there because he was from David's family.

⁵ Mary was engaged to Joseph and travelled with him to Bethlehem. She was soon going to have a baby, ⁶ and while they were there, ⁷ she gave birth to her firstborn* son. She dressed him in baby clothes* and laid him on a bed of hay, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The shepherds

⁸ That night in the fields near Bethlehem some shepherds were guarding their sheep. ⁹ All at once an angel came down to them from the Lord, and the brightness of the Lord's glory flashed around them. The shepherds were frightened. ¹⁰ But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy. ¹¹ This very day in King David's home town a Saviour was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. ¹² You will know who he is, because you will find him dressed in baby clothes* and lying on a bed of hay."

*2.1 names . . . listed in record books: This was done so that everyone could be made to pay taxes to the Emperor.

*2.2 Quirinius was governor of Syria: It is known that Quirinius made a record of the people in AD 6 or 7. But the exact date of the record taking that Luke mentions is not known.

*2.7 firstborn: The Jewish people said that the firstborn son in each of their families belonged to the Lord.

*2.7,12 dressed him in baby clothes: The Greek text has "wrapped him in wide strips of cloth", which was how young babies were dressed.

¹³ Suddenly many other angels came down from heaven and joined in praising God. They said:

¹⁴ “Praise God in heaven!
Peace on earth to everyone
who pleases God.”

¹⁵ After the angels had left and gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about.” ¹⁶ They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and they saw the baby lying on a bed of hay.

¹⁷ When the shepherds saw Jesus, they told his parents what the angel had said about him. ¹⁸ Everyone listened and was surprised. ¹⁹ But Mary kept thinking about all this and wondering what it meant.

²⁰ As the shepherds returned to their sheep, they were praising God and saying wonderful things about him. Everything they had seen and heard was just as the angel had said.

²¹ Eight days later Jesus’ parents did for him what the Law of Moses commands.* And they named him Jesus, just as the angel had told Mary when he promised she would have a baby.

Simeon praises the Lord

²² The time came for Mary and Joseph to do what the Law of Moses says a mother is supposed to do after her baby is born.*

They took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem and presented him to the Lord, ²³ just as the Law of the Lord says, “Each firstborn* baby boy belongs to the Lord.” ²⁴ The Law of the Lord also says that parents have to offer a sacrifice, giving at least a pair of doves or two young pigeons. So that is what Mary and Joseph did.

²⁵ At this time a man named Simeon was living in Jerusalem. Simeon was a good man. He loved God and was waiting for God to save the people of Israel. God’s Spirit came to him ²⁶ and told him that he would not die until he had seen Christ the Lord.

***2.21 what the Law of Moses commands:** See the note at 1.59.

***2.22 after her baby is born:** After a Jewish mother gave birth to a son, she was considered “unclean” and had to stay at home until he was circumcised (see the note at 1.59). Then she had to stay at home for another 33 days, before offering a sacrifice to the Lord.

***2.23 firstborn:** See the note at 2.7.

See also: 2.21: a Lev 12.3; b Luke 1.31.
2.22–24: Lev 12.6–8. 2.23: Exod 13.2,12.

²⁷ When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple to do what the Law of Moses says should be done for a new baby, the Spirit told Simeon to go into the temple.

²⁸ Simeon took the baby Jesus in his arms and praised God,

²⁹ “Lord, I am your servant,
and now I can die in peace,
because you have kept
your promise to me.

³⁰ With my own eyes I have seen
what you have done
to save your people,
³¹ and foreign nations
will also see this.

³² Your mighty power is a light
for all nations,
and it will bring honour
to your people Israel.”

³³ Jesus’ parents were surprised at what Simeon had said. ³⁴ Then he blessed them and told Mary, “This child of yours will cause many people in Israel to fall and others to stand. The child will be like a warning sign. Many people will reject him, ³⁵ and you, Mary, will suffer as though you had been stabbed by a dagger. But all this will show what people are really thinking.”

Anna speaks about the child Jesus

³⁶ The prophet Anna was also there in the temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. In her youth she had been married for seven years, but her husband had died. ³⁷ And now she was eighty-four years old.* Night and day she served God in the temple by praying and often going without eating.*

³⁸ At that time Anna came in and praised God. She spoke about the child Jesus to everyone who hoped for Jerusalem to be set free.

The return to Nazareth

³⁹ After Joseph and Mary had done everything that the Law of the Lord commands, they returned home to Nazareth in Galilee. ⁴⁰ The child Jesus grew. He became strong and wise, and God blessed him.

***2.37 without eating:** The Jewish people sometimes went without eating (also called “fasting”) to show their love for God or to show sorrow for their sins.

See also: 2.32: Isa 42.6; 49.6; 52.10. 2.39: Matt 2.23.

The boy Jesus in the temple

⁴¹ Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for Passover. ⁴² And when Jesus was twelve years old, they all went there as usual for the celebration. ⁴³ After Passover his parents left, but they did not know that Jesus had stayed on in the city. ⁴⁴ They thought he was travelling with some other people, and they went a whole day before they started looking for him. ⁴⁵ When they could not find him with their relatives and friends, they went back to Jerusalem and started looking for him there.

⁴⁶ Three days later they found Jesus sitting in the temple, listening to the teachers and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ Everyone who heard him was surprised at how much he knew and at the answers he gave.

⁴⁸ When his parents found him, they were amazed. His mother said, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been very worried, and we have been searching for you!"

⁴⁹ Jesus answered, "Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I would be in my Father's house?"⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he meant.

⁵¹ Jesus went back to Nazareth with his parents and obeyed them. His mother kept on thinking about all that had happened.

⁵² Jesus became wise, and he grew strong. God was pleased with him and so were the people.

The message of John the Baptist

CHAPTER 3

The preaching of John the Baptist

This is also told in Matthew 3.1–12; Mark 1.1–8; John 1.19–28

¹ For fifteen years* Emperor Tiberius had ruled that part of the world. Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod* was the ruler of Galilee. Herod's brother, Philip, was the ruler in the countries of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was the ruler of

***3.1 For fifteen years:** This was either AD 28 or 29, and Jesus was about thirty years old (see 3.23).

***3.1 Herod:** Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great.

See also: 2.41: Exod 12.1–27; Deut 16.1–8. 2.52: 1 Sam 2.26; Prov 3.4.

Abilene. ² Annas and Caiaphas were the Jewish high priests.*

At that time God spoke to Zechariah's son John, who was living in the desert. ³ So John went along the Jordan Valley, telling the people, "Turn back to God and be baptized! Then your sins will be forgiven."⁴ Isaiah the prophet wrote about John when he said,

"In the desert
someone is shouting,
'Get the road ready
for the Lord!
Make a straight path
for him.

⁵ Fill up every valley
and level every mountain
and hill.

Straighten the crooked paths
and smooth out
the rough roads.

⁶ Then everyone will see
the saving power of God.'"

⁷ Crowds of people came out to be baptized, but John said to them, "You snakes! Who warned you to run from the coming judgment?"⁸ Do something to show that you really have given up your sins. Don't start saying that you belong to Abraham's family. God can turn these stones into children for Abraham.*⁹ An axe is ready to cut the trees down at their roots. Any tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into a fire."

¹⁰ The crowds asked John, "What should we do?"

¹¹ John told them, "If you have two coats, give one to someone who doesn't have any. If you have food, share it with someone else."

¹² When tax collectors* came to be baptized, they asked John, "Teacher, what should we do?"

¹³ John told them, "Don't make people pay more than they owe."

***3.2 Annas and Caiaphas . . . high priests:** Annas was high priest from AD 6 until 15. His son-in-law Caiaphas was high priest from AD 18 until 37.

***3.8 children for Abraham:** The Jewish people thought they were God's chosen people because of God's promises to their ancestor Abraham.

***3.12 tax collectors:** These were usually Jewish people who paid the Romans for the right to collect taxes. They were hated by other Jews who thought of them as traitors to their country and to their religion.

See also: 3.4–6: Isa 40.3–5 (LXX). 3.7: Matt 12.34; 23.33. 3.8: John 8.33. 3.9: Matt 7.19. 3.12: Luke 7.29.

¹⁴ Some soldiers asked him, “And what about us? What do we have to do?”

John told them, “Don’t force people to pay money to make you leave them alone. Be satisfied with your pay.”

¹⁵ Everyone became excited and wondered, “Could John be the Messiah?”

¹⁶ John said, “I am just baptizing with water. But someone more powerful is going to come, and I am not good enough even to untie his sandals.* He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷ His threshing fork* is in his hand, and he is ready to separate the wheat from the husks. He will store the wheat in his barn and burn the husks with a fire that never goes out.”

¹⁸ In many different ways John preached the good news to the people. ¹⁹ But to Herod the ruler, he said, “It was wrong for you to take Herodias, your brother’s wife.” John also said that Herod had done many other bad things. ²⁰ Finally, Herod put John in jail, and this was the worst thing he had done.

The baptism and temptation of Jesus

The baptism of Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 3.13–17; Mark 1.9–11

²¹ While everyone else was being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. Then as he prayed, the sky opened up, ²² and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in the form of a dove. A voice from heaven said, “You are my own dear Son, and I am pleased with you.”

The ancestors of Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 1.1–17

²³ When Jesus began to preach, he was about thirty years old. Everyone thought he was the son of Joseph. But his family went back through Heli, ²⁴ Matthat, Levi, Melchi, Jannai, Joseph, ²⁵ Mattathias, Amos, Nahum, Esli, Naggai, ²⁶ Maath, Mattathias, Semein, Josech, Joda;

²⁷ Joanan, Rhesa, Zerubbabel, Shealtiel, Neri, ²⁸ Melchi, Addi, Cosam, Elmadam, Er,

²⁹ Joshua, Eliezer, Jorim, Matthat, Levi;

³⁰ Simeon, Judah, Joseph, Jonam, Eliakim,

³¹ Melea, Menna, Mattatha, Nathan, David,

³² Jesse, Obed, Boaz, Salmon, Nahshon;

³³ Amminadab, Admin, Arni, Hezron,

Perez, Judah, ³⁴ Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Terah,

Nahor, ³⁵ Serug, Reu, Peleg, Eber, Shelah;

³⁶ Cainan, Arphaxad, Shem, Noah, Lamech,

³⁷ Methuselah, Enoch, Jared, Mahalaleel,

Kenan, ³⁸ Enosh, and Seth.

The family of Jesus went all the way back to Adam and then to God.

CHAPTER 4

Jesus and the devil

This is also told in Matthew 4.1–11; Mark 1.12,13

¹ When Jesus returned from the River Jordan, the power of the Holy Spirit was with him, and the Spirit led him into the desert. ² For forty days Jesus was tested by the devil, and during that time he went without eating.* When it was all over, he was hungry.

³ The devil said to Jesus, “If you are God’s Son, tell this stone to turn into bread.”

⁴ Jesus answered, “The Scriptures say, ‘No one can live only on food.’”

⁵ Then the devil led Jesus up to a high place and quickly showed him all the nations on earth. ⁶ The devil said, “I will give all this power and glory to you. It has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to.

⁷ Just worship me, and you can have it all.”

⁸ Jesus answered, “The Scriptures say:

‘Worship the Lord your God
and serve only him!’”

⁹ Finally, the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem and had him stand on top of the temple. The devil said, “If you are God’s Son, jump off.

^{10–11} The Scriptures say:

‘God will tell his angels
to take care of you.
They will catch you
in their arms,
and you will not hurt
your feet on the stones.’”

¹² Jesus answered, “The Scriptures also say, ‘Don’t try to test the Lord your God!’”

***4.2 went without eating:** See the note at 2.37.

See also: 4.4: Deut 8.3. 4.8: Deut 6.13.

4.10,11: Psa 91.11,12. 4.12: Deut 6.16.

***3.16 untie his sandals:** This was the duty of a slave.

***3.17 threshing fork:** After Jewish farmers had trampled out the grain, they used a large fork to pitch the grain and the husks into the air. Wind would blow away the light husks, and the grain would fall back to the ground, where it could be gathered up.

See also: 3.19,20: Matt 14.3,4; Mark 6.17,18. 3.22: Gen 22.2; Psa 2.7; Isa 42.1; Matt 3.17; Mark 1.11; Luke 9.35.

¹³ After the devil had finished testing Jesus in every way possible, he left him for a while.

Jesus' ministry in Galilee

Jesus begins his work

This is also told in Matthew 4.12–17; Mark 1.14, 15

¹⁴ Jesus returned to Galilee with the power of the Spirit. News about him spread everywhere. ¹⁵ He taught in the Jewish meeting places, and everyone praised him.

The people of Nazareth turn against Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 13.53–58; Mark 6.1–6

¹⁶ Jesus went back to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and as usual he went to the meeting place on the Sabbath. When he stood up to read from the Scriptures, ¹⁷ he was given the book of Isaiah the prophet. He opened it and read,

¹⁸ “The Lord’s Spirit
has come to me,
because he has chosen me
to tell the good news
to the poor.
The Lord has sent me
to announce freedom
for prisoners,
to give sight to the blind,
to free everyone
who suffers,

¹⁹ and to say, ‘This is the year
the Lord has chosen.’”

²⁰ Jesus closed the book, then handed it back to the man in charge and sat down. Everyone in the meeting place looked straight at Jesus.

²¹ Then Jesus said to them, “What you have just heard me read has come true today.”

²² All the people started talking about Jesus and were amazed at the wonderful things he said. They kept on asking, “Isn’t he Joseph’s son?”

²³ Jesus answered:

You will certainly want to tell me this saying, “Doctor, first make yourself well.” You will tell me to do the same things here in my own home town that you heard I did in Capernaum. ²⁴ But you can be sure that no prophets are liked by the people of their own home town.

²⁵ Once during the time of Elijah there was no rain for three and a half years, and people everywhere were starving. There were many widows in Israel, ²⁶ but Elijah was sent only to a widow in the town of Zarephath near the city of Sidon. ²⁷ During the time of the prophet Elisha, many men in Israel had leprosy.* But no one was healed, except Naaman who lived in Syria.

²⁸ When the people in the meeting place heard Jesus say this, they became so angry ²⁹ that they got up and threw him out of town. They dragged him to the edge of the cliff on which the town was built, because they wanted to throw him down from there. ³⁰ But Jesus slipped through the crowd and got away.

A man with an evil spirit

This is also told in Mark 1.21–28

³¹ Jesus went to the town of Capernaum in Galilee and taught the people on the Sabbath. ³² His teaching amazed them because he spoke with power. ³³ There in the Jewish meeting place was a man with an evil spirit. He yelled out, ³⁴ “Hey, Jesus of Nazareth, what do you want with us? Are you here to get rid of us? I know who you are! You are God’s Holy One.”

³⁵ Jesus ordered the evil spirit to be quiet and come out. The demon threw the man to the ground in front of everyone and left without harming him.

³⁶ They all were amazed and kept saying to each other, “What kind of teaching is this? He has power to order evil spirits out of people!” ³⁷ News about Jesus spread all over that part of the country.

Jesus heals many people

This is also told in Matthew 8.14–17; Mark 1.29–34

³⁸ Jesus left the meeting place and went to Simon’s home. When Jesus got there, he was told that Simon’s mother-in-law was sick with a high fever. ³⁹ So Jesus went over to her and ordered the fever to go away. At once she was able to get up and serve them a meal.

⁴⁰ After the sun had set, people with all kinds of diseases were brought to Jesus. He put his hands on each one of them and

***4.27 leprosy:** In biblical times the word “leprosy” was used for many different kinds of skin diseases.

See also: 4.25: 1 King 17.1. 4.26: 1 King 17.8–16. 4.27: 2 King 5.1–14. 4.32: Matt 7.28,29.

healed them. ⁴¹ Demons went out of many people and shouted, “You are the Son of God!” But Jesus ordered the demons not to speak because they knew he was the Messiah.

⁴² The next morning Jesus went out to a place where he could be alone, and crowds came looking for him. When they found him, they tried to stop him from leaving. ⁴³ But Jesus said, “People in other towns must hear the good news about God’s kingdom. That’s why I was sent.” ⁴⁴ So he kept on preaching in the Jewish meeting places in Judea.’

CHAPTER 5

Jesus chooses his first disciples

This is also told in Matthew 4.18–22; Mark 1.16–20

¹ Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret,* teaching the people as they crowded around him to hear God’s message.

² Near the shore he saw two boats left there by some fishermen who had gone to wash their nets. ³ Jesus got into the boat that belonged to Simon and asked him to row it out a little way from the shore. Then Jesus sat down* in the boat to teach the crowd.

⁴ When Jesus had finished speaking, he told Simon, “Row the boat out into the deep water and let your nets down to catch some fish.”

⁵ “Master,” Simon answered, “we have worked hard all night long and have not caught a thing. But if you tell me to, I will let the nets down.” ⁶ They did it and caught so many fish that their nets began ripping apart. ⁷ Then they signalled for their partners in the other boat to come and help them. The men came, and together they filled the two boats so full that they both began to sink.

⁸ When Simon Peter saw this happen, he knelt down in front of Jesus and said, “Lord, don’t come near me! I am a sinner.” ⁹ Peter and everyone with him were completely surprised at all the fish they had caught.

¹⁰ His partners James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were surprised too.

Jesus told Simon, “Don’t be afraid! From now on you will bring in people instead of

fish.” ¹¹ The men pulled their boats up on the shore. Then they left everything and went with Jesus.

Jesus heals a man

This is also told in Matthew 8.1–4; Mark 1.40–45

¹² Jesus came to a town where there was a man who had leprosy.* When the man saw Jesus, he knelt down on the ground in front of Jesus and begged, “Lord, you have the power to make me well, if only you wanted to.”

¹³ Jesus put his hand on him and said, “I want to! Now you are well.” At once the man’s leprosy disappeared. ¹⁴ Jesus told him, “Don’t tell anyone about this, but go and show yourself to the priest. Offer a gift to the priest, just as Moses commanded, and everyone will know that you have been healed.”*

¹⁵ News about Jesus kept spreading. Large crowds came to listen to him teach and to be healed of their diseases. ¹⁶ But Jesus would often go to some place where he could be alone and pray.

Jesus heals a crippled man

This is also told in Matthew 9.1–8; Mark 2.1–12

¹⁷ One day some Pharisees and experts in the Law of Moses sat listening to Jesus teach. They had come from every village in Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem.

God had given Jesus the power to heal the sick, ¹⁸ and some people came carrying a crippled man on a mat. They tried to take him inside the house and put him in front of Jesus. ¹⁹ But because of the crowd, they could not get him to Jesus. So they went up on the roof,* where they removed some tiles and let the mat down in the middle of the room.

*5.12 leprosy: See the note at 4.27.

*5.14 everyone will know that you have been healed: People with leprosy had to be examined by a priest and told that they were well (that is, “clean”) before they could once again live a normal life in the Jewish community. The gift that Moses commanded was the sacrifice of some lambs together with flour mixed with olive oil.

*5.19 roof: In Palestine the houses usually had a flat roof. Stairs on the outside led up to the roof, which was made of beams and boards covered with packed earth. Luke says that the roof was made of (clay) tiles, which were also used for making roofs in New Testament times.

See also: 5.14: Lev 14.1–32.

*5.1 Lake Gennesaret: Another name for Lake Galilee.

*5.3 sat down: Teachers in the ancient world, including Jewish teachers, usually sat down when they taught.

See also: 5.1–3: Matt 13.1,2; Mark 3.9,10; 4.1. 5.5: John 21.3. 5.6: John 21.6.

²⁰ When Jesus saw how much faith they had, he said to the crippled man, “My friend, your sins are forgiven.”

²¹ The Pharisees and the experts began arguing, “Jesus must think he is God! Only God can forgive sins.”

²² Jesus knew what they were thinking, and he said, “Why are you thinking that? ²³ Is it easier for me to tell this crippled man that his sins are forgiven or to tell him to get up and walk? ²⁴ But now you will see that the Son of Man has the right to forgive sins here on earth.” Jesus then said to the man, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk home.”

²⁵ At once the man stood up in front of everyone. He picked up his mat and went home, giving thanks to God. ²⁶ Everyone was amazed and praised God. What they saw surprised them, and they said, “We have seen a great miracle today!”

Jesus chooses Levi

This is also told in Matthew 9.9–13; Mark 2.13–17

²⁷ Later, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector* named Levi sitting at the place for paying taxes. Jesus said to him, “Come with me.” ²⁸ Levi left everything and went with Jesus.

²⁹ In his home Levi gave a big dinner for Jesus. Many tax collectors and other guests were also there.

³⁰ The Pharisees and some of their teachers of the Law of Moses grumbled to Jesus’ disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with those tax collectors and other sinners?”

³¹ Jesus answered, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor, but sick people do. ³² I didn’t come to invite good people to turn to God. I came to invite sinners.”

People ask about going without eating

This is also told in Matthew 9.14–17; Mark 2.18–22

³³ Some people said to Jesus, “John’s followers often pray and go without eating,* and so do the followers of the Pharisees. But your disciples never go without eating or drinking.”

³⁴ Jesus told them, “The friends of a bridegroom don’t go without eating while he is still with them. ³⁵ But the time will come when he will be taken from them. Then they will go without eating.”

³⁶ Jesus then told them these sayings:

No one uses a new piece of cloth to patch old clothes. The patch would shrink and make the hole even bigger.

³⁷ No one pours new wine into old wineskins. The new wine would swell and burst the old skins.* Then the wine would be lost, and the skins would be ruined. ³⁸ New wine must be put only into new wineskins.

³⁹ No one wants new wine after drinking old wine. They say, “The old wine is better.”

CHAPTER 6

A question about the Sabbath

This is also told in Matthew 12.1–8; Mark 2.23–28

¹ One Sabbath when Jesus and his disciples were walking through some wheat fields, the disciples picked some wheat.* They rubbed the husks off with their hands and started eating the grain.

² Some Pharisees said, “Why are you picking grain on the Sabbath? You’re not supposed to do that!”

³ Jesus answered, “Surely you have read what David did when he and his followers were hungry. ⁴ He went into the house of God and took the sacred loaves of bread that only priests were supposed to eat. He not only ate some himself, but even gave some to his followers.”

⁵ Jesus finished by saying, “The Son of Man is Lord over the Sabbath.”

A man with a crippled hand

This is also told in Matthew 12.9–14; Mark 3.1–6

⁶ On another Sabbath[†] Jesus was teaching in a Jewish meeting place, and a man with a crippled right hand was there. ⁷ Some Pharisees and teachers of the Law of Moses kept watching Jesus to see if he would heal the man. They did this because they wanted to accuse Jesus of doing something wrong.

***5.37 swell and burst the old skins:** While the juice from grapes was becoming wine, it would swell and stretch the skins in which it had been stored. If the skins were old and stiff, they would burst.

***6.1 picked some wheat:** It was the custom to let hungry travellers pick grains of wheat.

See also: 6.1; Deut 23.25. 6.3,4; 1 Sam 21.1–6. 6.4; Lev 24.9.

***5.27 tax collector:** See the note at 3.12.

***5.33 without eating:** See the note at 2.37.

See also: 5.30; Luke 15.1,2.

⁸ Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he told the man to stand up where everyone could see him. And the man stood up. ⁹ Then Jesus asked, “On the Sabbath should we do good deeds or evil deeds? Should we save someone’s life or destroy it?”

¹⁰ After he had looked around at everyone, he told the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He did, and his bad hand became completely well.

¹¹ The teachers and the Pharisees were furious and started saying to each other, “What can we do about Jesus?”

Jesus chooses his twelve apostles

This is also told in Matthew 10.1–4; Mark 3.13–19

¹² About that time Jesus went off to a mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night there. ¹³ The next morning he called his disciples together and chose twelve of them to be his apostles. ¹⁴ One was Simon, and Jesus named him Peter. Another was Andrew, Peter’s brother. There were also James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus. The rest of the apostles were Simon, known as the Eager One,* ¹⁶ Jude, who was the son of James, and Judas Iscariot,* who later betrayed Jesus.

Jesus teaches, preaches, and heals

This is also told in Matthew 4.23–25

¹⁷ Jesus and his apostles went down from the mountain and came to some flat, level ground. Many other disciples were there to meet him. Large crowds of people from all over Judea, Jerusalem, and the coastal cities of Tyre and Sidon were there too. ¹⁸ These people had come to listen to Jesus and to be healed of their diseases. All who were troubled by evil spirits were also healed.

¹⁹ Everyone was trying to touch Jesus, because power was going out from him and healing them all.

***6.15 known as the Eager One:** The word “eager” translates the Greek word “zealot”, which was a name later given to the members of a Jewish group that resisted and fought against the Romans.

***6.16 Iscariot:** This may mean “a man from Kerioth” (a place in Judea). But more probably it means “a man who was a liar” or “a man who was a betrayer”.

Blessings and troubles

This is also told in Matthew 5.1–12

²⁰ Jesus looked at his disciples and said:

God will bless you people who are poor.

His kingdom belongs to you!

²¹ God will bless you hungry people. You will have plenty to eat!

God will bless you people who are crying.

You will laugh!

²² God will bless you when others hate you and won’t have anything to do with you. God will bless you when people insult you and say cruel things about you, all because you are a follower of the Son of Man.

²³ Long ago your own people did these same things to the prophets. So when this happens to you, be happy and jump for joy! You will have a great reward in heaven.

²⁴ But you rich people are in for trouble.

You have already had an easy life!

²⁵ You well-fed people are in for trouble.

You will go hungry!

You people who are laughing now are in for trouble.

You are going to cry and weep!

²⁶ You are in for trouble when everyone says good things about you. That is what your own people said about those prophets who told lies.

Love for enemies

This is also told in Matthew 5.38–48; 7.12a

Jesus continued:

²⁷ This is what I say to all who will listen to me:

Love your enemies, and be good to everyone who hates you. ²⁸ Ask God to bless anyone who curses you, and pray for everyone who is cruel to you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, don’t stop that person from slapping you on the other

cheek. If someone wants to take your coat, don't try to keep back your shirt.³⁰ Give to everyone who asks and don't ask people to return what they have taken from you.

³¹ Treat others just as you want to be treated.

³² If you love only someone who loves you, will God praise you for that? Even sinners love people who love them. ³³ If you are kind only to someone who is kind to you, will God be pleased with you for that? Even sinners are kind to people who are kind to them. ³⁴ If you lend money only to someone you think will pay you back, will God be pleased with you for that? Even sinners lend to sinners because they think they will get it all back.

³⁵ But love your enemies and be good to them. Lend without expecting to be paid back. Then you will get a great reward, and you will be the true children of God in heaven. He is good even to people who are unthankful and cruel. ³⁶ Have pity on others, just as your Father has pity on you.

Judging others

This is also told in Matthew 7.1–5

³⁷ Jesus said:

Don't judge others, and God won't judge you. Don't be hard on others, and God won't be hard on you. Forgive others, and God will forgive you. ³⁸ If you give to others, you will be given a full amount in return. It will be packed down, shaken together, and spilling over into your lap. The way you treat others is the way you will be treated.

³⁹ Jesus also used some sayings as he spoke to the people. He said:

Can one blind person lead another blind person? Won't they both fall into a ditch?⁴⁰ Are students better than their teacher? But when they are fully trained, they will be like their teacher.

⁴¹ You can see the speck in your friend's eye. But you don't notice the log in your own eye. ⁴² How can you say, "My friend, let me take the speck out of your eye," when you don't see the log in your own eye? You show-offs! First, get the log out of your own eye. Then you can see how to take the speck out of your friend's eye.

A tree and its fruit

This is also told in Matthew 7.17–20; 12.34b,35

Jesus continued:

⁴³ A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot produce good fruit.

⁴⁴ You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces. You cannot pick figs or grapes from thorn bushes. ⁴⁵ Good people do good things because of the good in their hearts. Bad people do bad things because of the evil in their hearts. Your words show what is in your heart.

Two builders

This is also told in Matthew 7.24–27

Jesus continued:

⁴⁶ Why do you keep on saying that I am your Lord, when you refuse to do what I say?⁴⁷ Anyone who comes and listens to me and obeys me⁴⁸ is like someone who dug down deep and built a house on solid rock. When the flood came and the river rushed against the house, it was built so well that it didn't even shake. ⁴⁹ But anyone who hears what I say and doesn't obey me is like someone whose house wasn't built on solid rock. As soon as the river rushed against that house, it was smashed to pieces!

CHAPTER 7

Jesus heals an army officer's servant

This is also told in Matthew 8.5–13; John 4.43–54

¹ After Jesus had finished teaching the people, he went to Capernaum. ² In that town an army officer's servant was sick and about to die. The officer liked this servant very much. ³ And when he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish leaders to ask him to come and heal the servant.

⁴ The leaders went to Jesus and begged him to do something. They said, "This man deserves your help!" ⁵ He loves our nation and even built us a meeting place." ⁶ So Jesus went with them.

When Jesus wasn't far from the house, the officer sent some friends to tell him, "Lord, don't go to any trouble for me! I am not good enough for you to come into my house. ⁷ And I am certainly not worthy to come to you. Just say the word, and my servant will get well. ⁸ I have officers who give orders to

me, and I have soldiers who take orders from me. I can say to one of them, 'Go!' and he goes. I can say to another, 'Come!' and he comes. I can say to my servant, 'Do this!' and he will do it."

⁹ When Jesus heard this, he was so surprised that he turned and said to the crowd following him, "In all of Israel I've never found anyone with this much faith!"

¹⁰ The officer's friends returned and found the servant well.

A widow's son

¹¹ Soon Jesus and his disciples were on their way to the town of Nain, and a big crowd was going along with them. ¹² As they came near the gate of the town, they saw people carrying out the body of a widow's only son. Many people from the town were walking along with her.

¹³ When the Lord saw the woman, he felt sorry for her and said, "Don't cry!"

¹⁴ Jesus went over and touched the stretcher on which the people were carrying the dead boy. They stopped, and Jesus said, "Young man, get up!" ¹⁵ The boy sat up and began to speak. Jesus then gave him back to his mother.

¹⁶ Everyone was frightened and praised God. They said, "A great prophet is here with us! God has come to his people."

¹⁷ News about Jesus spread all over Judea and everywhere else in that part of the country.

John the Baptist

This is also told in Matthew 11.1-19

¹⁸⁻¹⁹ John's followers told John everything that was being said about Jesus. So he sent two of them to ask the Lord, "Are you the one we should be looking for? Or must we wait for someone else?"

²⁰ When these messengers came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to ask, 'Are you the one we should be looking for? Or are we supposed to wait for someone else?'"

²¹ At that time Jesus was healing many people who were sick or in pain or were troubled by evil spirits, and he was giving sight to a lot of blind people. ²² Jesus said to the messengers sent by John, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard. Blind people are now able to see, and the lame can

walk. People who have leprosy* are being healed, and the deaf can now hear. The dead are raised to life, and the poor are hearing the good news. ²³ God will bless everyone who doesn't reject me because of what I do."

²⁴ After John's messengers had gone, Jesus began speaking to the crowds about John:

What kind of person did you go out to the desert to see? Was he like tall grass blown about by the wind? ²⁵ What kind of man did you really go out to see? Was he someone dressed in fine clothes? People who wear expensive clothes and live in luxury are in the king's palace. ²⁶ What then did you go out to see? Was he a prophet? He certainly was! I tell you that he was more than a prophet. ²⁷ In the Scriptures, God calls John his messenger and says, "I am sending my messenger ahead of you to get things ready for you." ²⁸ No one ever born on this earth is greater than John. But whoever is least important in God's kingdom is greater than John.

²⁹ Everyone had been listening to John. Even the tax collectors* had obeyed God and had done what was right by letting John baptize them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and the experts in the Law of Moses refused to obey God and be baptized by John.

³¹ Jesus went on to say:

What are you people like? What kind of people are you? ³² You are like children sitting in the market and shouting to each other,

"We played the flute,
but you would not dance!
We sang a funeral song,
but you would not cry!"

³³ John the Baptist did not go around eating and drinking, and you said, "John has a demon in him!" ³⁴ But because the Son of Man goes around eating and drinking, you say, "Jesus eats and drinks too much! He is even a friend of tax collectors and sinners." ³⁵ Yet Wisdom is shown to be right by what its followers do.

*7.22 leprosy: See the note at 4.27.

*7.29 tax collectors: See the note at 3.12.

See also: 7.27: Mal 3.1. 7.29,30: Matt 21.32; Luke 3.12.

Simon the Pharisee

³⁶ A Pharisee invited Jesus to have dinner with him. So Jesus went to the Pharisee's home and got ready to eat.*

³⁷ When a sinful woman in that town found out that Jesus was there, she bought an expensive bottle of perfume. ³⁸ Then she came and stood behind Jesus. She cried and started washing his feet with her tears and drying them with her hair. The woman kissed his feet and poured the perfume on them.

³⁹ The Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this and said to himself, "If this man really were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him! He would know that she is a sinner."

⁴⁰ Jesus said to the Pharisee, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

"Teacher, what is it?" Simon replied.

⁴¹ Jesus told him, "Two people were in debt to a moneylender. One of them owed him five hundred silver coins, and the other owed him fifty. ⁴² Since neither of them could pay him back, the moneylender said that they didn't have to pay him anything. Which one of them will like him more?"

⁴³ Simon answered, "I suppose it would be the one who had owed more and didn't have to pay it back."

"You are right," Jesus said.

⁴⁴ He turned towards the woman and said to Simon, "Have you noticed this woman? When I came into your home, you didn't give me any water so I could wash my feet. But she has washed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You didn't greet me with a kiss, but from the time I came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You didn't even pour olive oil on my head,* but she has poured expensive perfume on my feet. ⁴⁷ So I tell you that all her sins are forgiven, and that is why she has shown great

***7.36 got ready to eat:** On special occasions the Jewish people often followed the Greek and Roman custom of lying down on their left side and leaning on their left elbow, while eating with their right hand. This is how the woman could come up behind Jesus and wash his feet (see verse 38).

***7.44-46 washed my feet . . . greet me with a kiss . . . pour olive oil on my head:** Guests in a home were usually offered water so they could wash their feet, because most people either went barefoot or wore sandals and would come into the house with very dusty feet. Guests were also greeted with a kiss on the cheek, and special ones often had sweet-smelling olive oil poured on their head.

See also: 7.37,38; Matt 26.7; Mark 14.3; John 12.3.

love. But anyone who has been forgiven for only a little will show only a little love."

⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven."

⁴⁹ Some other guests started saying to one another, "Who is this who dares to forgive sins?"

⁵⁰ But Jesus told the woman, "Because of your faith, you are now saved.* May God give you peace!"

CHAPTER 8

Women who helped Jesus

¹ Soon after this, Jesus was going through towns and villages, telling the good news about God's kingdom. His twelve apostles were with him, ² and so were some women who had been healed of evil spirits and all sorts of diseases. One of the women was Mary Magdalene,* who once had seven demons in her. ³ Joanna, Susanna, and many others had also used what they owned to help Jesus* and his disciples. Joanna's husband Chuza was one of Herod's officials.*

A story about a farmer

This is also told in Matthew 13.1-9; Mark 4.1-9

⁴ When a large crowd from several towns had gathered around Jesus, he told them this story:

⁵ A farmer went out to scatter seed in a field. While the farmer was doing it, some of the seeds fell along the road and were stepped on or eaten by birds. ⁶ Other seeds fell on rocky ground and started growing. But the plants did not have enough water and soon dried up. ⁷ Some other seeds fell where thorn bushes grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ The rest of the seeds fell on good ground where they grew and produced a hundred times as many seeds.

When Jesus had finished speaking, he said, "If you have ears, pay attention!"

***8.2 Magdalene:** Meaning "from Magdala", a small town on the western shore of Lake Galilee. There is no hint that she is the sinful woman in 7.36-50.

***8.3 used what they owned to help Jesus:** Women often helped Jewish teachers by giving them money.

***8.3 Herod's officials:** Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great.

See also: 8.2,3; Matt 27.55,56; Mark 15.40,41; Luke 23.49.

Why Jesus used stories

This is also told in Matthew 13.10–17; Mark 4.10–12

⁹ Jesus' disciples asked him what the story meant. ¹⁰ So he answered:

I have explained the secrets about God's kingdom to you, but for others I can only use stories. These people look, but they don't see, and they hear, but they don't understand.

Jesus explains the story about a farmer

This is also told in Matthew 13.18–23; Mark 4.13–20

¹¹ This is what the story means: The seed is God's message, ¹² and the seeds that fell along the road are the people who hear the message. But the devil comes and snatches the message out of their hearts, so that they will not believe and be saved. ¹³ The seeds that fell on rocky ground are the people who gladly hear the message and accept it. But they don't have deep roots, and they believe only for a little while. As soon as life gets hard, they give up.

¹⁴ The seeds that fell among the thorn bushes are also people who hear the message. But they are so eager for riches and pleasures that they never produce anything. ¹⁵ Those seeds that fell on good ground are the people who listen to the message and keep it in good and honest hearts. They last and produce a harvest.

Light

This is also told in Mark 4.21–25

Jesus continued:

¹⁶ No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl or under a bed. A lamp is always put on a lampstand, so that people who come into a house will see the light. ¹⁷ There is nothing hidden that will not be found. There is no secret that will not be well known. ¹⁸ Pay attention to how you listen! Everyone who has something will be given more, but people who have nothing will lose what little they think they have.

Jesus' mother and brothers

This is also told in Matthew 12.46–50; Mark 3.31–35

¹⁹ Jesus' mother and brothers went to see him, but because of the crowd they could not

get near him. ²⁰ Someone told Jesus, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside and want to see you."

²¹ Jesus answered, "My mother and my brothers are those people who hear and obey God's message."

A storm

This is also told in Matthew 8.23–27; Mark 4.35–41

²² One day, Jesus and his disciples got into a boat, and he said, "Let's cross the lake."* They started out, ²³ and while they were sailing across, he went to sleep.

Suddenly a storm struck the lake, and the boat started sinking. They were in danger. ²⁴ So they went to Jesus and woke him up, "Master, Master! We are about to drown!"

Jesus got up and ordered the wind and waves to stop. They obeyed, and everything was calm. ²⁵ Then Jesus asked the disciples, "Don't you have any faith?"

But they were frightened and amazed. They said to each other, "Who is this? He can give orders to the wind and the waves, and they obey him!"

A man with demons in him

This is also told in Matthew 8.28–34; Mark 5.1–20

²⁶ Jesus and his disciples sailed across Lake Galilee and came to shore near the town of Gerasa.[†] ²⁷ As Jesus was getting out of the boat, he was met by a man from that town. The man had demons in him. He had gone naked for a long time and no longer lived in a house, but in the graveyard.*

²⁸ The man saw Jesus and screamed. He knelt down in front of him and shouted, "Jesus, Son of God in heaven, what do you want with me? I beg you not to torture me!" ²⁹ He said this because Jesus had already told the evil spirit to go out of him.

The man had often been attacked by the demon. And even though he had been bound with chains and leg irons and kept under guard, he smashed whatever bound him. Then the demon would force him out into lonely places.

³⁰ Jesus asked the man, "What is your name?"

He answered, "My name is Lots." He said this because there were 'lots' of demons in

***8.22 cross the lake:** To the eastern shore of Lake Galilee, where most of the people were not Jewish.

***8.27 graveyard:** It was thought that demons and evil spirits lived in graveyards.

See also: **8.10:** Isa 6.9 (LXX). **8.16:** Matt 5.15; Luke 11.33. **8.17:** Matt 10.26; Luke 12.2. **8.18:** Matt 25.29; Luke 19.26.

him. ³¹ They begged Jesus not to send them to the deep pit,* where they would be punished.

³² A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. So the demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and Jesus let them go. ³³ Then the demons left the man and went into the pigs. The whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

³⁴ When the men taking care of the pigs saw this, they ran to spread the news in the town and on the farms. ³⁵ The people went out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they also found the man. The demons had gone out of him, and he was sitting there at the feet of Jesus. He had clothes on and was in his right mind. But the people were terrified.

³⁶ Then all who had seen the man healed told about it. ³⁷ Everyone from around Gerasa[†] begged Jesus to leave, because they were so frightened.

When Jesus got into the boat to start back, ³⁸ the man who had been healed begged to go with him. But Jesus sent him off and said, ³⁹ "Go back home and tell everyone how much God has done for you." The man then went all over town, telling everything that Jesus had done for him.

A dying girl and a sick woman

This is also told in Matthew 9.18–26; Mark 5.21–43

⁴⁰ Everyone had been waiting for Jesus, and when he came back, a crowd was there to welcome him. ⁴¹ Just then the man in charge of the Jewish meeting place came and knelt down in front of Jesus. His name was Jairus, and he begged Jesus to come to his home ⁴² because his twelve-year-old child was dying. She was his only daughter.

While Jesus was on his way, people were crowding all around him. ⁴³ In the crowd was a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years. She had spent everything she had on doctors,[†] but none of them could make her well.

⁴⁴ As soon as she came up behind Jesus and barely touched his clothes, her bleeding stopped.

⁴⁵ "Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

While everyone was denying it, Peter said, "Master, people are crowding all around and pushing you from every side."[†]

⁴⁶ But Jesus answered, "Someone touched me, because I felt power going out from me."[†]

⁴⁷ The woman knew that she could not hide, so she came trembling and knelt down in front of Jesus. She told everyone why she had touched him and that she had been healed straight away.

⁴⁸ Jesus said to the woman, "You are now well because of your faith. May God give you peace!"[†]

⁴⁹ While Jesus was speaking, someone came from Jairus' home and said, "Your daughter has died! Why bother the teacher any more?"

⁵⁰ When Jesus heard this, he told Jairus, "Don't worry! Have faith, and your daughter will get well."

⁵¹ Jesus went into the house, but he did not let anyone else go with him, except Peter, John, James, and the girl's father and mother. ⁵² Everyone was crying and weeping for the girl. But Jesus said, "The child isn't dead. She is just asleep." ⁵³ The people laughed at him because they knew she was dead.

⁵⁴ Jesus took hold of the girl's hand and said, "Child, get up!" ⁵⁵ She came back to life and got straight up. Jesus told them to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶ Her parents were surprised, but Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

CHAPTER 9

Instructions for the twelve apostles

This is also told in Matthew 10.5–15; Mark 6.7–13

¹ Jesus called together his twelve apostles and gave them complete power over all demons and diseases. ² Then he sent them to tell about God's kingdom and to heal the sick.

³ He told them, "Don't take anything with you! Don't take a walking stick or a travelling bag or food or money or even a change of clothes. ⁴ When you are welcomed into a home, stay there until you leave that town.

⁵ If people won't welcome you, leave the town and shake the dust from your feet* as a warning to them."

⁶ The apostles left and went from village to village, telling the good news and healing people everywhere.

***8.31 deep pit:** The place where evil spirits are kept and punished.

***9.5 shake the dust from your feet:** This was a way of showing rejection.

See also: 9.3–5; Luke 10.4–11. 9.5: Acts 13.51.

Herod is worried

This is also told in Matthew 14.1–12; Mark 6.14–29

⁷ Herod* the ruler heard about all that was happening, and he was worried. Some people were saying that John the Baptist had come back to life. ⁸ Others were saying that Elijah had come* or that one of the prophets from long ago had come back to life. ⁹ But Herod said, “I had John’s head cut off! Who is this I hear so much about?” Herod was eager to meet Jesus.

Jesus feeds five thousand

This is also told in Matthew 14.13–21; Mark 6.30–44; John 6.1–14

¹⁰ The apostles came back and told Jesus everything they had done. He then took them with him to the village of Bethsaida, where they could be alone. ¹¹ But a lot of people found out about this and followed him. Jesus welcomed them. He spoke to them about God’s kingdom and healed everyone who was sick.

¹² Late in the afternoon the twelve apostles came to Jesus and said, “Send the crowd to the villages and farms around here. They need to find a place to stay and something to eat. There is nothing in this place. It is like a desert!”

¹³ Jesus answered, “You give them something to eat.”

But they replied, “We have only five small loaves of bread* and two fish. If we are going to feed all these people, we will have to go and buy food.” ¹⁴ There were about five thousand men in the crowd.

Jesus said to his disciples, “Tell the people to sit in groups of fifty.” ¹⁵ They did this, and all the people sat down. ¹⁶ Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish. He looked up towards heaven and blessed the food. Then he broke the bread and fish and handed them to his disciples to give to the people.

¹⁷ Everyone ate all they wanted. What was left over filled twelve baskets.

***9.7 Herod:** See the note at 3.1.

***9.8 Elijah had come:** Many of the Jewish people expected the prophet Elijah to come and prepare the way for the Messiah.

***9.13 small loaves of bread:** These would have been flat and round or in the shape of a bun.

See also: 9.7,8; Matt 16.14; Mark 8.28; Luke 9.19.

Who is Jesus?

This is also told in Matthew 16.13–19; Mark 8.27–29

¹⁸ When Jesus was alone praying, his disciples came to him, and he asked them, “What do people say about me?”

¹⁹ They answered, “Some say that you are John the Baptist or Elijah* or a prophet from long ago who has come back to life.”

²⁰ Jesus then asked them, “But who do you say I am?”

Peter answered, “You are the Messiah sent from God.”

²¹ Jesus strictly warned his disciples not to tell anyone about this.

Jesus speaks about his suffering and death

This is also told in Matthew 16.20–28; Mark 8.30–9.1

²² Jesus told his disciples, “The nation’s leaders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law of Moses will make the Son of Man suffer terribly. They will reject him and kill him, but three days later he will rise to life.”

²³ Then Jesus said to all the people:

If any of you want to be my followers, you must forget about yourself. You must take up your cross each day and follow me.

²⁴ If you want to save your life,[†] you will destroy it. But if you give up your life for me, you will save it. ²⁵ What will you gain, if you own the whole world but destroy yourself or waste your life? ²⁶ If you are ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of you when he comes in his glory and in the glory of his Father and the holy angels. ²⁷ You can be sure that some of the people standing here will not die before they see God’s kingdom.

The true glory of Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 17.1–8; Mark 9.2–8

²⁸ About eight days later Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him and went up on a mountain to pray. ²⁹ While he was praying, his face changed, and his clothes became shining white. ³⁰ Suddenly Moses and Elijah were there speaking with him. ³¹ They appeared in heavenly glory and talked about all that Jesus’ death[†] in Jerusalem would mean.

***9.19 Elijah:** See the note at 9.8.

See also: 9.19; Matt 14.1,2; Mark 6.14,15; Luke 9.7,8. 9.20; John 6.68,69. 9.23; Matt 10.38; Luke 14.27. 9.24; Matt 10.39; Luke 17.33; John 12.25. 9.28–35; 2 Pet 1.17,18.

³² Peter and the other two disciples had been sound asleep. All at once they woke up and saw how glorious Jesus was. They also saw the two men who were with him.

³³ Moses and Elijah were about to leave, when Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here! Let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” But Peter did not know what he was talking about.

³⁴ While Peter was still speaking, a shadow from a cloud passed over them, and they were frightened as the cloud covered them.

³⁵ From the cloud a voice spoke, “This is my chosen Son. Listen to what he says!”

³⁶ After the voice had spoken, Peter, John, and James saw only Jesus. For some time they kept quiet and did not say anything about what they had seen.

Jesus heals a boy

This is also told in Matthew 17.14–18; Mark 9.14–27

³⁷ The next day Jesus and his three disciples came down from the mountain and were met by a large crowd. ³⁸ Just then someone in the crowd shouted, “Teacher, please do something for my son! He is my only child!

³⁹ A demon often attacks him and makes him scream. It shakes him until he foams at the mouth, and it won’t leave him until it has completely worn the boy out. ⁴⁰ I begged your disciples to force out the demon, but they couldn’t do it.”

⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “You people are stubborn and don’t have any faith! How much longer must I be with you? Why do I have to put up with you?”

Then Jesus said to the man, “Bring your son to me.” ⁴² While the boy was being brought, the demon attacked him and made him shake all over. Jesus ordered the demon to stop. Then he healed the boy and gave him back to his father. ⁴³ Everyone was amazed at God’s great power.

Jesus again speaks about his death

This is also told in Matthew 17.22,23; Mark 9.30–32

While everyone was still amazed at what Jesus was doing, he said to his disciples,

⁴⁴ “Pay close attention to what I am telling you! The Son of Man will be handed over to his enemies.” ⁴⁵ But the disciples did not know what he meant. The meaning

was hidden from them. They could not understand it, and they were afraid to ask.

Who is the greatest?

This is also told in Matthew 18.1–5; Mark 9.33–37

⁴⁶ Jesus’ disciples were arguing about which one of them was the greatest. ⁴⁷ Jesus knew what they were thinking, and he had a child stand there beside him. ⁴⁸ Then he said to his disciples, “When you welcome even a child because of me, you welcome me. And when you welcome me, you welcome the one who sent me. Whichever one of you is the most humble is the greatest.”

For or against Jesus

This is also told in Mark 9.38–40

⁴⁹ John said, “Master, we saw a man using your name to force demons out of people. But we told him to stop, because he isn’t one of us.”

⁵⁰ “Don’t stop him!” Jesus said. “Anyone who isn’t against you is for you.”

Jesus goes from Galilee to Jerusalem

A Samaritan village refuses to receive Jesus

⁵¹ Not long before it was time for Jesus to be taken up to heaven, he made up his mind to go to Jerusalem. ⁵² He sent some messengers on ahead to a Samaritan village to get things ready for him. ⁵³ But he was on his way to Jerusalem, so the people there refused to welcome him. ⁵⁴ When the disciples James and John saw what was happening, they asked, “Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to destroy these people?”

⁵⁵ But Jesus turned and corrected them for what they had said. ⁵⁶ Then they all went on to another village.

Three people who wanted to be followers

This is also told in Matthew 8.19–22

⁵⁷ Along the way someone said to Jesus, “I’ll go anywhere with you!”

⁵⁸ Jesus said, “Foxes have dens, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man doesn’t have a place to call his own.”

⁵⁹ Jesus told someone else to come with him. But the man said, “Lord, let me wait until I bury my father.”*

⁶⁰ Jesus answered, “Let the dead take care of the dead, while you go and tell about God’s kingdom.”

⁶¹ Then someone said to Jesus, “I want to go with you, Lord, but first let me go back and take care of things at home.”

⁶² Jesus answered, “Anyone who starts ploughing and keeps looking back isn’t worth a thing to God’s kingdom!”

CHAPTER 10

The work of the seventy-two followers

¹ Later the Lord chose seventy-two* other followers and sent them out two by two to every town and village where he was about to go. ² He said to them:

A large crop is in the fields, but there are only a few workers. Ask the Lord in charge of the harvest to send out workers to bring it in. ³ Now go, but remember, I am sending you like lambs into a pack of wolves. ⁴ Don’t take along a money bag or a travelling bag or sandals. And don’t waste time greeting people on the road.* ⁵ As soon as you enter a home, say, “God bless this home with peace.” ⁶ If the people living there are peace-loving, your prayer for peace will bless them. But if they are not peace-loving, your prayer will return to you. ⁷ Stay with the same family, eating and drinking whatever they give you, because workers are worth what they earn. Don’t move around from house to house.

***9.59 bury my father:** The Jewish people taught that giving someone a proper burial was even more important than helping the poor.

***10.1 seventy-two:** Some manuscripts have “seventy”. According to Jewish tradition there were seventy nations on earth. But the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament has “seventy-two” in place of “seventy”. Jesus probably chose this number of followers to show that his message was for everyone in the world.

***10.4 waste time greeting people on the road:** In those days a polite greeting could take a long time.

See also: **9.61:** 1 King 19.20. **10.2:** Matt 9.37,38.

10.3: Matt 10.16. **10.4-11:** Matt 10.7-14; Mark 6.8-11; Luke 9.3-5. **10.7:** 1 Cor 9.14; 1 Tim 5.18.

⁸ If the people of a town welcome you, eat whatever they offer. ⁹ Heal their sick and say, “God’s kingdom will soon be here!”*

¹⁰ But if the people of a town refuse to welcome you, go out into the street and say, ¹¹ “We are shaking the dust from our feet* as a warning to you. And you can be sure that God’s kingdom will soon be here!”* ¹² I tell you that on the day of judgment the people of Sodom will get off easier than the people of that town!

The unbelieving towns

This is also told in Matthew 11.20-24

Jesus continued:

¹³ You people of Chorazin are in for trouble! You people of Bethsaida are also in for trouble! If the miracles that took place in your towns had happened in Tyre and Sidon, the people there would have turned to God long ago. They would have dressed in sackcloth and put ashes on their heads.*

¹⁴ On the day of judgment the people of Tyre and Sidon will get off easier than you will. ¹⁵ People of Capernaum, do you think you will be honoured in heaven? Well, you will go down to hell!

¹⁶ My followers, whoever listens to you is listening to me. Anyone who says “No” to you is saying “No” to me. And anyone who says “No” to me is really saying “No” to the one who sent me.

The return of the seventy-two

¹⁷ When the seventy-two* followers returned, they were excited and said, “Lord, even the demons obeyed when we spoke in your name!”

¹⁸ Jesus told them:

I saw Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. ¹⁹ I have given you the power to trample on snakes and scorpions and to defeat the power of your enemy Satan.

***10.11 shaking the dust from our feet:** See the note at 9.5.

***10.13 dressed in sackcloth . . . ashes on their heads:** This was one way that people showed how sorry they were for their sins.

***10.17 seventy-two:** See the note at 10.1.

See also: **10.10,11:** Acts 13.51. **10.12:** a Gen 19.24-28; Matt 11.24; b Matt 10.15. **10.13:** Isa 23.1-18; Ezek 26.1-28.26; Joel 3.4-8; Amos 1.9,10; Zech 9.2-4. **10.15:** Isa 14.13-15. **10.16:** Matt 10.40; Mark 9.37; Luke 9.48; John 13.20. **10.19:** Psa 91.13.

Nothing can harm you. ²⁰ But don't be happy because evil spirits obey you. Be happy that your names are written in heaven!

Jesus thanks his Father

This is also told in Matthew 11.25–27; 13.16,17

²¹ At that same time, Jesus felt the joy that comes from the Holy Spirit,^{*} and he said:

My Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I am grateful that you hid all this from wise and educated people and showed it to ordinary people. Yes, Father, that is what pleased you.

²² My Father has given me everything, and he is the only one who knows the Son. The only one who really knows the Father is the Son. But the Son wants to tell others about the Father, so that they can know him too.

²³ Jesus then turned to his disciples and said to them in private, “You are really blessed to see what you see! ²⁴ Many prophets and kings were eager to see what you see and to hear what you hear. But I tell you that they did not see or hear.”

The good Samaritan

²⁵ An expert in the Law of Moses stood up and asked Jesus a question to see what he would say. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to have eternal life?”

²⁶ Jesus answered, “What is written in the Scriptures? How do you understand them?”

²⁷ The man replied, “The Scriptures say, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind.’ They also say, ‘Love your neighbours as much as you love yourself.’”

²⁸ Jesus said, “You have given the right answer. If you do this, you will have eternal life.”

²⁹ But the man wanted to show that he knew what he was talking about. So he asked Jesus, “Who are my neighbours?”

³⁰ Jesus replied:

As a man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, robbers attacked him and grabbed everything he had. They beat him up and ran off, leaving him half dead.

³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road. But when he saw the man,

he walked by on the other side. ³² Later a temple helper* came to the same place. But when he saw the man who had been beaten up, he also went by on the other side.

³³ A man from Samaria then came travelling along that road. When he saw the man, he felt sorry for him ³⁴ and went over to him. He treated his wounds with olive oil and wine* and bandaged them. Then he put him on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵ The next morning he gave the innkeeper two silver coins and said, “Please take care of the man. If you spend more than this on him, I will pay you when I return.”

³⁶ Then Jesus asked, “Which one of these three people was a real neighbour to the man who was beaten up by robbers?”

³⁷ The teacher answered, “The one who showed pity.”

Jesus said, “Go and do the same!”

Martha and Mary

³⁸ The Lord and his disciples were travelling along and came to a village. When they got there, a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary, who sat down in front of the Lord and was listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ Martha was worried about all that had to be done. Finally, she went to Jesus and said, “Lord, doesn't it bother you that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to come and help me!”

⁴¹ The Lord answered, “Martha, Martha! You are worried and upset about so many things, ⁴² but only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen what is best, and it will not be taken away from her.”

CHAPTER 11

Prayer

This is also told in Matthew 6.9–13; 7.7–11

¹ When Jesus had finished praying, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his followers to pray.”

***10.32 temple helper:** A man from the tribe of Levi, whose job it was to work around the temple.

***10.34 olive oil and wine:** In New Testament times these were used as medicine. Sometimes olive oil is a symbol for healing by means of a miracle (see James 5.14).

See also: 10.33,34; 2 Chron 28.15. 10.38,39; John 11.1.

See also: 10.22: a John 3.35; b John 10.15.
10.25–28: Matt 22.35–40; Mark 12.28–34. 10.27: a Deut 6.5;
b Lev 19.18. 10.28: Lev 18.5.

² So Jesus told them, “Pray in this way:

‘Father, help us
to honour your name.
Come and set up
your kingdom.

³ Give us each day
the food we need.’⁴

⁴ Forgive our sins,
as we forgive everyone
who has done wrong to us.
And keep us
from being tempted.’⁵”

⁵ Then Jesus went on to say:

Suppose one of you goes to a friend in the middle of the night and says, “Let me borrow three loaves of bread.”⁶ A friend of mine has dropped in, and I don’t have a thing for him to eat.”⁷ And suppose your friend answers, “Don’t bother me! The door is bolted, and my children and I are in bed. I cannot get up to give you something.”

⁸ He may not get up and give you the bread, just because you are his friend. But he will get up and give you as much as you need, simply because you are not ashamed to keep on asking.

⁹ So I tell you to ask and you will receive, search and you will find, knock and the door will be opened for you.¹⁰ Everyone who asks will receive, everyone who searches will find, and the door will be opened for everyone who knocks.

¹¹ Which one of you fathers would give your hungry child a snake if the child asked for a fish?¹² Which one of you would give your child a scorpion if the child asked for an egg?¹³ As bad as you are, you still know how to give good gifts to your children. But your heavenly Father is even more ready to give the Holy Spirit to anyone who asks.

Jesus and the ruler of demons

This is also told in Matthew 12.22–30; Mark 3.20–27

¹⁴ Jesus forced a demon out of a man who could not talk. And after the demon had gone out, the man started speaking, and the crowds were amazed.¹⁵ But some people said, “He forces out demons by the power of Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons!”

¹⁶ Others wanted to put Jesus to the test. So they asked him to show them a sign from God.¹⁷ Jesus knew what they were thinking, and he said:

A kingdom where people fight each other will end up in ruin. And a family that fights will break up.¹⁸ If Satan fights against himself, how can his kingdom last? Yet you say that I force out demons by the power of Beelzebul.¹⁹ If I use his power to force out demons, whose power do your own followers use to force them out? They are the ones who will judge you.²⁰ But if I use God’s power to force out demons, it proves that God’s kingdom has already come to you.

²¹ When a strong man arms himself and guards his home, everything he owns is safe.²² But if a stronger man comes and defeats him, he will carry off the weapons in which the strong man trusted. Then he will divide with others what he has taken.²³ If you are not on my side, you are against me. If you don’t gather in the crop with me, you scatter it.

Return of an evil spirit

This is also told in Matthew 12.43–45

Jesus continued:

²⁴ When an evil spirit leaves a person, it travels through the desert, looking for a place to rest. But when it doesn’t find a place, it says, “I will go back to the home I left.”²⁵ When it gets there and finds the place clean and tidy,²⁶ it goes off and finds seven other evil spirits even worse than itself. They all come and make their home there, and that person ends up in a worse state than before.

Being really blessed

²⁷ While Jesus was still talking, a woman in the crowd spoke up, “The woman who gave birth to you and nursed you is blessed!”

²⁸ Jesus replied, “That’s true, but the people who are really blessed are the ones who hear and obey God’s message!”²⁹

A sign from God

This is also told in Matthew 12.38–42; Mark 8.12

²⁹ As crowds were gathering around Jesus, he said:

You people of today are evil! You keep looking for a sign from God. But what happened to Jonah* is the only sign you will be given. ³⁰ Just as Jonah was a sign to the people of Nineveh, the Son of Man will be a sign to the people of today.

³¹ When the judgment comes, the Queen of the South* will stand there with you and condemn you. She travelled a long way to hear Solomon's wisdom, and yet here is something far greater than Solomon. ³² The people of Nineveh will also stand there with you and condemn you. They turned to God when Jonah preached, and yet here is something far greater than Jonah.

Light

This is also told in Matthew 5.15; 6.22,23

Jesus continued:

³³ No one lights a lamp and then hides it or puts it under a clay pot. A lamp is put on a lampstand, so that everyone who comes into the house can see the light. ³⁴ Your eyes are the lamp for your body. When your eyes are good, you have all the light you need. But when your eyes are bad, everything is dark. ³⁵ So be sure that your light isn't darkness. ³⁶ If you have light, and nothing is dark, then light will be everywhere, as when a lamp shines brightly on you.

Jesus condemns the Pharisees and teachers of the Law of Moses

This is also told in Matthew 23.1-36; Mark 12.38-40; Luke 20.45-47

³⁷ When Jesus finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him home for a meal. Jesus went and sat down to eat. * ³⁸ The Pharisee was surprised that he did not wash his hands* before eating. ³⁹ So the Lord said to him:

You Pharisees clean the outside of cups and dishes, but on the inside you are

greedy and evil. ⁴⁰ You fools! Didn't God make both the outside and the inside?"

⁴¹ If you would only give what you have to the poor, everything you do would please God.

⁴² You Pharisees are in for trouble! You give God a tenth of the spices from your gardens, such as mint and rue. But you cheat people, and you don't love God. You should be fair and kind to others and still give a tenth to God.

⁴³ You Pharisees are in for trouble! You love the front seats in the meeting places, and you like to be greeted with honour in the market. ⁴⁴ But you are in for trouble! You are like unmarked graves* that people walk on without even knowing it.

⁴⁵ A teacher of the Law of Moses spoke up, "Teacher, you said cruel things about us."

⁴⁶ Jesus replied:

You teachers are also in for trouble! You load people down with heavy burdens, but you won't lift a finger to help them carry the loads. ⁴⁷ Yes, you are really in for trouble. You build monuments to honour the prophets your own people murdered long ago. ⁴⁸ You must think that was the right thing for your people to do, or else you would not have built monuments for the prophets murdered.

⁴⁹ Because of your evil deeds, the Wisdom of God said, "I will send prophets and apostles to you. But you will murder some and ill-treat others." ⁵⁰ You people living today will be punished for all the prophets who have been murdered since the beginning of the world. ⁵¹ This includes every prophet from the time of Abel to the time of Zechariah,* who was murdered between the altar and the temple. You people will certainly be punished for all this.

11.44 unmarked graves: Tombs were whitewashed to keep anyone from accidentally touching them. A person who touched a dead body or a tomb was considered unclean and could not worship with other Jewish people.

***11.51 from the time of Abel . . . Zechariah:** Genesis is the first book in the Jewish Scriptures, and it tells that Abel was the first person to be murdered. The Second Book of Chronicles is the last book in the Jewish Scriptures, and the last murder that it tells about is that of Zechariah.

See also: 11.42: Lev 27.30. 11.51: a Gen 4.8; b 2 Chron 24.20,21.

***11.29 what happened to Jonah:** Jonah was in the stomach of a big fish for three days and nights. See Matthew 12.40.

***11.31 Queen of the South:** Sheba, probably a country in southern Arabia.

***11.37 sat down to eat:** See the note at 7.36.

***11.38 did not wash his hands:** The Jewish people had strict laws about washing their hands before eating, especially if they had been out in public.

See also: 11.30: Jon 3.4. 11.31: 1 King 10.1-10; 2 Chron 9.1-12. 11.32: Jon 3.5. 11.33: Matt 5.15; Mark 4.21; Luke 8.16.

⁵² You teachers of the Law of Moses are really in for trouble! You carry the keys to the door of knowledge about God. But you never go in, and you keep others from going in.

⁵³ Jesus was about to leave, but the teachers and the Pharisees wanted to get even with him. They tried to make him say what he thought about other things, ⁵⁴ so that they could catch him saying something wrong.

CHAPTER 12

Warnings

¹ As thousands of people crowded around Jesus and were stepping on each other, he told his disciples:

Be sure to guard against the dishonest teaching* of the Pharisees! It is their way of fooling people. ² Everything that is hidden will be found out, and every secret will be known. ³ Whatever you say in the dark will be heard when it is day. Whatever you whisper in a closed room will be shouted from the housetops.

The one to fear

This is also told in Matthew 10.28–31

Jesus continued:

⁴ My friends, don't be afraid of people. They can kill you, but after that, there is nothing else they can do. ⁵ God is the one you must fear. Not only can he take your life, but he can throw you into hell. God is certainly the one you should fear!

⁶ Five sparrows are sold for just two pennies, but God doesn't forget a single one of them. ⁷ Even the hairs on your head are counted. So don't be afraid! You are worth much more than many sparrows.

Telling others about Christ

This is also told in Matthew 10.32,33; 12.32; 10.19,20

Jesus continued:

⁸ If you tell others that you belong to me, the Son of Man will tell God's angels that you are my followers. ⁹ But if you reject me, you will be rejected in front of them.

*12.1 dishonest teaching: The Greek text has "yeast", which is used here of a teaching that is not true. See Matthew 16.6,12.

See also: 12.1: Matt 16.6; Mark 8.15. 12.2: Mark 4.22; Luke 8.17.

¹⁰ If you speak against the Son of Man, you can be forgiven, but if you speak against the Holy Spirit, you cannot be forgiven.

¹¹ When you are brought to trial in the Jewish meeting places or before rulers or officials, don't worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say.

¹² At that time the Holy Spirit will tell you what to say.

A rich fool

¹³ A man in a crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to give me my share of what our father left us when he died."

¹⁴ Jesus answered, "Who gave me the right to settle arguments between you and your brother?"

¹⁵ Then he said to the crowd, "Don't be greedy! Owning a lot of things won't make your life safe."

¹⁶ So Jesus told them this story:

A rich man's farm produced a big crop, ¹⁷ and he said to himself, "What can I do? I don't have a place large enough to store everything."

¹⁸ Later, he said, "Now I know what I'll do. I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones, where I can store all my grain and other goods. ¹⁹ Then I'll say to myself, 'You have stored up enough good things to last for years to come. Live it up! Eat, drink, and enjoy yourself.'"

²⁰ But God said to him, "You fool! Tonight you will die. Then who will get what you have stored up?"

²¹ "This is what happens to people who store up everything for themselves, but are poor in the sight of God."

Worry

This is also told in Matthew 6.25–34

²² Jesus said to his disciples:

I tell you not to worry about your life! Don't worry about having something to eat or wear. ²³ Life is more than food or clothing.

²⁴ Look at the crows! They don't plant or harvest, and they don't have storehouses or barns. But God takes care of them. You are much more important than any birds.

²⁵ Can worry make you live longer? ²⁶ If you don't have power over small things, why worry about everything else?

See also: 12.10: Matt 12.32; Mark 3.29.

12.11,12: Matt 10.19,20; Mark 13.11; Luke 21.14,15.

²⁷ Look how the wild flowers grow! They don't work hard to make their clothes. But I tell you that Solomon with all his wealth* wasn't as well clothed as one of these flowers. ²⁸ God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields, even though it is here today and thrown into a fire tomorrow. Won't he do even more for you? You have such little faith!

²⁹ Don't keep worrying about having something to eat or drink. ³⁰ Only people who don't know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father knows what you need. ³¹ But put God's work first, and these things will be yours as well.

Treasures in heaven

This is also told in Matthew 6.19–21

Jesus continued:

³² My little group of disciples, don't be afraid! Your Father wants to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell what you have and give the money to the poor. Make yourselves money bags that never wear out. Make sure your treasure is safe in heaven, where thieves cannot steal it and moths cannot destroy it. ³⁴ Your heart will always be where your treasure is.

Faithful and unfaithful servants

This is also told in Matthew 24.45–51

Jesus continued:

³⁵ Be ready and keep your lamps burning ³⁶ just like those servants who wait up for their master to return from a wedding feast. As soon as he comes and knocks, they open the door for him. ³⁷ Servants are fortunate if their master finds them awake and ready when he comes! I promise you that he will get ready and make his servants sit down so that he can serve them. ³⁸ Those servants are really fortunate if their master finds them ready, even though he comes late at night or early in the morning. ³⁹ You would not let a thief break into your home, if you knew when the thief was coming. ⁴⁰ So always be

ready! You don't know when the Son of Man will come.

⁴¹ Peter asked Jesus, "Did you say this just for us or for everyone?"

⁴² The Lord answered:

Who are faithful and wise servants? Who are the ones the master will put in charge of giving the other servants their food supplies at the proper time? ⁴³ Servants are fortunate if their master comes and finds them doing their job. ⁴⁴ A servant who is always faithful will be put in charge of everything the master owns.

⁴⁵ But suppose one of the servants thinks that the master won't return until late. Suppose that servant starts beating all the other servants and eats and drinks and gets drunk. ⁴⁶ If that happens, the master will come on a day and at a time when the servant least expects him. That servant will then be punished and thrown out with the servants who cannot be trusted.

⁴⁷ If servants are not ready or willing to do what their master wants them to do, they will be beaten hard. ⁴⁸ But servants who don't know what their master wants them to do will not be beaten so hard for doing wrong. If God has been generous with you, he will expect you to serve him well. But if he has been more than generous, he will expect you to serve him even better.

Not peace, but trouble

This is also told in Matthew 10.34–36

Jesus continued:

⁴⁹ I came to set fire to the earth, and I wish it were already on fire! ⁵⁰ I am going to be put to a hard test. And I will have to suffer a lot of pain until it is over. ⁵¹ Do you think that I came to bring peace to earth? No indeed! I came to make people choose sides. ⁵² A family of five will be divided, with two of them against the other three. ⁵³ Fathers and sons will turn against one another, and mothers and daughters will do the same. Mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law will also turn against each other.

*12.27 Solomon with all his wealth: The Jewish people thought that Solomon was the richest person who had ever lived.

See also: 12.27: 1 King 10.4–7; 2 Chron 9.3–6.
12.35: Matt 25.1–13. 12.36: Mark 13.34–36.
12.39,40: Matt 24.43,44.

See also: 12.50: Mark 10.38. 12.53: Mic 7.6.

Knowing what to do

This is also told in Matthew 16.2,3; 5.25,26

⁵⁴ Jesus said to all the people:

As soon as you see a cloud coming up in the west, you say, "It's going to rain," and it does. ⁵⁵ When the south wind blows, you say, "It's going to get hot," and it does.

⁵⁶ Are you trying to fool someone? You can predict the weather by looking at the earth and sky, but you don't really know what's going on right now. ⁵⁷ Why don't you understand the right thing to do? ⁵⁸ When someone accuses you of something, try to settle things before you are taken to court. If you don't, you will be dragged before the judge. Then the judge will hand you over to the jailer, and you will be locked up.

⁵⁹ You won't get out until you have paid the last penny you owe.

CHAPTER 13**Turn back to God**

¹ About this same time Jesus was told that Pilate had given orders for some people from Galilee to be killed while they were offering sacrifices. ² Jesus replied:

Do you think that these people were worse sinners than everyone else in Galilee just because of what happened to them? ³ Not at all! But you can be sure that if you don't turn back to God, every one of you will also be killed. ⁴ What about those eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Do you think they were worse than everyone else in Jerusalem?

⁵ Not at all! But you can be sure that if you don't turn back to God, every one of you will also die.

A story about a fig tree

⁶ Jesus then told them this story:

A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard. One day he went out to pick some figs, but he didn't find any. ⁷ So he said to the gardener, "For three years I have come looking for figs on this tree, and I haven't found any yet. Chop it down! Why should it take up space?"

⁸ The gardener answered, "Master, leave it for another year. I'll dig around it and put some manure on it to make it grow.

⁹ Perhaps it will have figs on it next year. If it doesn't, you can have it cut down."

Healing a woman on the Sabbath

¹⁰ One Sabbath, Jesus was teaching in a Jewish meeting place, ¹¹ and a woman was there who had been crippled by an evil spirit for eighteen years. She was completely bent over and could not straighten up. ¹² When Jesus saw the woman, he called her over and said, "You are now well." ¹³ He placed his hands on her, and at once she stood up straight and praised God.

¹⁴ The man in charge of the meeting place was angry because Jesus had healed someone on the Sabbath. So he said to the people, "Each week has six days when we can work. Come and be healed on one of those days, but not on the Sabbath."

¹⁵ The Lord replied, "Are you trying to fool someone? Won't any one of you untie your ox or donkey and lead it out to drink on a Sabbath? ¹⁶ This woman belongs to the family of Abraham, but Satan has kept her bound for eighteen years. Isn't it right to set her free on the Sabbath?" ¹⁷ Jesus' words made his enemies ashamed. But everyone else in the crowd was happy about the wonderful things he was doing.

A mustard seed and yeast

This is also told in Matthew 13.31–33; Mark 4.30–32

¹⁸ Jesus said, "What is God's kingdom like? What can I compare it with? ¹⁹ It is like what happens when someone plants a mustard seed in a garden. The seed grows as big as a tree, and birds nest in its branches."

²⁰ Then Jesus said, "What can I compare God's kingdom with? ²¹ It is like what happens when a woman mixes yeast into three batches of flour. Finally, all the dough rises."

The narrow door

This is also told in Matthew 7.13,14,21–23

²² As Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, he taught the people in the towns and villages.

²³ Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

Jesus answered:

²⁴ Do all you can to go in by the narrow door! A lot of people will try to get in, but will not be able to. ²⁵ Once the owner of the house gets up and locks the door, you will be left standing outside. You will knock on the door and say, "Sir, open the door for us!"

But the owner will answer, “I don’t know a thing about you!”

²⁶ Then you will start saying, “We dined with you, and you taught in our streets.”

²⁷ But he will say, “I really don’t know who you are! Get away from me, you evil people!”

²⁸ Then when you have been thrown outside, you will weep and grit your teeth because you will see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in God’s kingdom.

²⁹ People will come from all directions and sit down to feast in God’s kingdom. ³⁰ There the ones who are now least important will be the most important, and those who are now most important will be least important.

Jesus and Herod

³¹ At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said, “You had better get away from here! Herod* wants to kill you.”

³² Jesus said to them:

Go and tell that fox, “I am going to force out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and three days later I’ll have finished.” ³³ But I am going on my way today and tomorrow and the next day. After all, Jerusalem is the place where prophets are killed.

Jesus loves Jerusalem

This is also told in Matthew 23.37–39

Jesus continued:

³⁴ Jerusalem, Jerusalem! Your people have killed the prophets and have stoned the messengers who were sent to you. I have often wanted to gather your people, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you wouldn’t let me. ³⁵ Now your temple will be deserted. You won’t see me again until the time when you say,

“Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.”

CHAPTER 14

Jesus heals a sick man

¹ One Sabbath, Jesus was having dinner in the home of an important Pharisee, and everyone was carefully watching Jesus. ² All

of a sudden a man with swollen legs stood up in front of him. ³ Jesus turned and asked the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law of Moses, “Is it right to heal on the Sabbath?” ⁴ But they did not say a word.

Jesus took hold of the man. Then he healed him and sent him away. ⁵ Afterwards, Jesus asked the people, “If your son or ox falls into a well, wouldn’t you pull him out straight away, even on the Sabbath?” ⁶ There was nothing they could say.

How to be a guest

⁷ Jesus saw how the guests had tried to take the best seats. So he told them:

⁸ When you are invited to a wedding feast, don’t sit in the best place. Someone more important may have been invited. ⁹ Then the one who invited you will come and say, “Give your place to this other guest!” You will be embarrassed and will have to sit in the worst place.

¹⁰ When you are invited to be a guest, go and sit in the worst place. Then the one who invited you may come and say, “My friend, take a better seat!” You will then be honoured in front of all the other guests.

¹¹ If you put yourself above others, you will be put down. But if you humble yourself, you will be honoured.

¹² Then Jesus said to the man who had invited him:

When you give a dinner or a banquet, don’t invite your friends and family and relatives and rich neighbours. If you do, they will invite you in return, and you will be paid back. ¹³ When you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴ They cannot pay you back. But God will bless you and reward you when his people rise from death.

The great banquet

This is also told in Matthew 22.1–10

¹⁵ After Jesus had finished speaking, one of the guests said, “The greatest blessing of all is to be at the banquet in God’s kingdom!”

¹⁶ Jesus told him:

A man once gave a great banquet and invited a lot of guests. ¹⁷ When the banquet was ready, he sent a servant to tell the guests, “Everything is ready! Please come.”

*13.31 Herod: See the note at 3.1.

See also: 13.27: Psa 6.8. 13.28: Matt 22.13; 25.30. 13.28,29: Matt 8.11,12. 13.30: Matt 19.30; 20.16; Mark 10.31. 13.35: Psa 118.26.

See also: 14.5: Matt 12.11. 14.8–10: Prov 25.6,7. 14.11: Matt 23.12; Luke 18.14.

¹⁸ One guest after another started making excuses. The first one said, "I bought some land, and I've got to look it over. Please excuse me."

¹⁹ Another guest said, "I bought five teams of oxen, and I need to try them out. Please excuse me."

²⁰ Still another guest said, "I have just got married, and I can't be there."

²¹ The servant told his master what happened, and the master became so angry that he said, "Go as fast as you can to every street and alley in town! Bring in everyone who is poor or crippled or blind or lame."

²² When the servant returned, he said, "Master, I've done what you told me, and there is still plenty of room for more people."

²³ His master then told him, "Go out along the back roads and lanes and make people come in, so that my house will be full. ²⁴ Not one of the guests I first invited will get even a bite of my food!"

Being a disciple

This is also told in Matthew 10.37,38

²⁵ Large crowds were walking along with Jesus, when he turned and said:

²⁶ You cannot be my disciple, unless you love me more than you love your father and mother, your wife and children, and your brothers and sisters. You cannot come with me unless you love me more than you love your own life.

²⁷ You cannot be my disciple unless you carry your own cross and come with me.

²⁸ Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. What is the first thing you will do? Won't you sit down and figure out how much it will cost and if you have enough money to pay for it? ²⁹ Otherwise, you will start building the tower, but not be able to finish. Then everyone who sees what is happening will laugh at you. ³⁰ They will say, "You started building, but could not finish the job."

³¹ What will a king do if he has only ten thousand soldiers to defend himself against a king who is about to attack him with twenty thousand soldiers? Before he goes out to battle, won't he first sit down and decide if he can win? ³² If he thinks he won't be able to defend himself, he will

send messengers and ask for peace while the other king is still a long way off. ³³ So then, you cannot be my disciple unless you give away everything you own.

Salt

This is also told in Matthew 5.13; Mark 9.50

Jesus continued:

³⁴ Salt is good, but if it no longer tastes like salt, how can it be made to taste salty again?

³⁵ It is no longer good for the soil or even for the manure pile. People simply throw it out. If you have ears, pay attention!

CHAPTER 15

One sheep

This is also told in Matthew 18.12-14

¹ Tax collectors* and sinners were all crowding around to listen to Jesus. ² So the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law of Moses started grumbling, "This man is friendly with sinners. He even eats with them."

³ Then Jesus told them this story:

⁴ If any of you has a hundred sheep, and one of them gets lost, what will you do? Won't you leave the ninety-nine in the field and go and look for the lost sheep until you find it? ⁵ And when you find it, you will be so glad that you will put it on your shoulder ⁶ and carry it home. Then you will call in your friends and neighbours and say, "Let's celebrate! I've found my lost sheep."

⁷ Jesus said, "In the same way there is more happiness in heaven because of one sinner who turns to God than over ninety-nine good people who don't need to."

One coin

⁸ Jesus told the people another story:

What will a woman do if she has ten silver coins and loses one of them? Won't she light a lamp, sweep the floor, and look carefully until she finds it? ⁹ Then she will call in her friends and neighbours and say, "Let's celebrate! I've found the coin I lost."

¹⁰ Jesus said, "In the same way God's angels are happy when even one person turns to him."

See also: 14.26; Matt 10.37. 14.27; Matt 10.38; 16.24; Mark 8.34; Luke 9.23.

*15.1 Tax collectors: See the note at 3.12.

See also: 15.1,2; Luke 5.29,30.

Two sons

¹¹ Jesus also told them another story:

Once a man had two sons. ¹² The younger son said to his father, “Give me my share of the property.” So the father divided his property between his two sons.

¹³ Not long after that, the younger son packed up everything he owned and left for a foreign country, where he wasted all his money in wild living. ¹⁴ He had spent everything, when a bad famine spread through that whole land. Soon he had nothing to eat.

¹⁵ He went to work for a man in that country, and the man sent him out to take care of his pigs.* ¹⁶ He would have been glad to eat what the pigs were eating,* but no one gave him a thing.

¹⁷ Finally, he came to his senses and said, “My father’s workers have plenty to eat, and here I am, starving to death! ¹⁸ I will go to my father and say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer good enough to be called your son. Treat me like one of your workers.’”

²⁰ The younger son got up and started back to his father. But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt sorry for him. He ran to his son and hugged and kissed him.

²¹ The son said, “Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son.”

²² But his father said to the servants, “Hurry and bring the best clothes and put them on him. Give him a ring for his finger and sandals* for his feet. ²³ Get the best calf and prepare it, so we can eat and celebrate. ²⁴ This son of mine was dead, but has now come back to life.

He was lost and has now been found.” And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ The elder son had been out in the field. But when he came near the house, he heard the music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants over and asked, “What’s going on here?”

²⁷ The servant answered, “Your brother has come home safe and sound, and your father ordered us to kill the best calf.” ²⁸ The elder brother got so angry that he would not even go into the house.

His father came out and begged him to go in. ²⁹ But he said to his father, “For years I have worked for you like a slave and have always obeyed you. But you have never even given me a little goat, so that I could give a dinner for my friends. ³⁰ This other son of yours wasted your money on prostitutes. And now that he has come home, you ordered the best calf to be killed for a feast.”

³¹ His father replied, “My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we should be glad and celebrate! Your brother was dead, but he is now alive. He was lost and has now been found.”

CHAPTER 16

A dishonest manager

¹ Jesus said to his disciples:

A rich man once had a manager to take care of his business. But he was told that his manager was wasting money. ² So the rich man called him in and said, “What is this I hear about you? Tell me what you have done! You are no longer going to work for me.”

³ The manager said to himself, “What shall I do now that my master is going to fire me? I can’t dig ditches, and I’m ashamed to beg. ⁴ I know what I’ll do, so that people will welcome me into their homes after I’ve lost my job.”

⁵ Then one by one he called in the people who were in debt to his master. He asked the first one, “How much do you owe my master?”

⁶ “A hundred barrels of olive oil,” the man answered.

So the manager said, “Take your bill and sit down and quickly write ‘fifty’.”

***15.15 pigs:** The Jewish religion taught that pigs were not fit to eat or even to touch. A Jewish man would have felt terribly insulted if he had to feed pigs, much less eat with them.

***15.16 what the pigs were eating:** The Greek text has “(bean) pods”, which came from a tree in Palestine. These were used to feed animals. Poor people sometimes ate them too.

***15.22 ring . . . sandals:** These show that the young man’s father fully accepted him as his son. A ring was a sign of high position in the family. Sandals showed that he was a son instead of a slave, since slaves did not usually wear sandals.

⁷ The manager asked someone else who was in debt to his master, “How much do you owe?”

“A thousand sacks* of wheat,” the man replied.

The manager said, “Take your bill and write ‘eight hundred’.”

⁸ The master praised his dishonest manager for looking out for himself so well. That’s how it is! The people of this world look out for themselves better than the people who belong to the light.

⁹ My disciples, I tell you to use wicked wealth to make friends for yourselves. Then when it is gone, you will be welcomed into an eternal home. ¹⁰ Anyone who can be trusted in little matters can also be trusted in important matters. But anyone who is dishonest in little matters will be dishonest in important matters.

¹¹ If you cannot be trusted with this wicked wealth, who will trust you with true wealth? ¹² And if you cannot be trusted with what belongs to someone else, who will give you something that will be your own? ¹³ You cannot be the slave of two masters. You will like one more than the other or be more loyal to one than to the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Some sayings of Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 11.12,13; 5.31,32; Mark 10.11,12

¹⁴ The Pharisees really loved money. So when they heard what Jesus said, they made fun of him. ¹⁵ But Jesus told them:

You are always making yourselves look good, but God sees what is in your heart. The things that most people think are important are worthless as far as God is concerned.

¹⁶ Until the time of John the Baptist, people had to obey the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets.* But since God’s kingdom has been preached, everyone is trying hard to get in. ¹⁷ Heaven and earth will disappear before the smallest letter of the Law does.

***16.7 a thousand sacks:** The Greek text has “a hundred measures”, and each measure is about 300 kilogrammes.

***16.16 the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets:** The Jewish Scriptures, that is, the Old Testament.

See also: 16.13; Matt 6.24. 16.16; Matt 11.12,13. 16.17; Matt 5.18.

¹⁸ It is a terrible sin* for a man to divorce his wife and marry another woman. It is also a terrible sin for a man to marry a divorced woman.

Lazarus and the rich man

Jesus continued:

¹⁹ There was once a rich man who wore expensive clothes and every day ate the best food. ²⁰ But a poor beggar named Lazarus was brought to the gate of the rich man’s house. ²¹ He was happy just to eat the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table. His body was covered with sores, and dogs kept coming up to lick them. ²² The poor man died, and angels took him to the place of honour next to Abraham.*

The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ He went to hell* and was suffering terribly. When he looked up and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side, ²⁴ he said to Abraham, “Have pity on me! Send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and touch my tongue. I’m suffering terribly in this fire.”

²⁵ Abraham answered, “My friend, remember that while you lived, you had everything good, and Lazarus had everything bad. Now he is happy, and you are in pain. ²⁶ And besides, there is a deep ditch between us, and no one from either side can cross over.”

²⁷ But the rich man said, “Abraham, then please send Lazarus to my father’s home. ²⁸ Let him warn my five brothers, so they won’t come to this horrible place.”

²⁹ Abraham answered, “Your brothers can read what Moses and the prophets* wrote. They should pay attention to that.”

³⁰ Then the rich man said, “No, that’s not enough! If only someone from the dead would go to them, they would listen and turn to God.”

***16.18 a terrible sin:** The Greek text uses a word that means the sin of being unfaithful in marriage.

***16.22 the place of honour next to Abraham:** The Jewish people thought that heaven would be a banquet that God would give for them. Abraham would be the most important person there, and the guest of honour would sit next to him.

***16.23 hell:** The Greek text has “hades”, which the Jewish people often thought of as the place where the dead wait for the final judgment.

***16.29 Moses and the prophets:** See the note at 16.16.

See also: 16.18; Matt 5.32; 1 Cor 7.10,11.

³¹ So Abraham said, “If they won’t pay attention to Moses and the prophets, they won’t listen even to someone who comes back from the dead.”

CHAPTER 17

Faith and service

This is also told in Matthew 18.6,7,21,22; Mark 9.42

¹ Jesus said to his disciples:

There will always be something that causes people to sin. But anyone who causes them to sin is in for trouble. A person who causes even one of my little followers to sin ² would be better off thrown into the ocean with a heavy stone tied around their neck.

³ So be careful what you do.

Correct any followers* of mine who sin, and forgive the ones who say they are sorry. ⁴ Even if one of them ill-treats you seven times in one day and says, “I am sorry,” you should still forgive that person.

⁵ The apostles said to the Lord, “Make our faith stronger!”

⁶ Jesus replied:

If you had faith no bigger than a tiny mustard seed, you could tell this mulberry tree to pull itself up, roots and all, and to plant itself in the ocean. And it would!

⁷ If your servant comes in from ploughing or from taking care of the sheep, would you say, “Welcome! Come on in and have something to eat?” ⁸ No, you wouldn’t say that. You would say, “Prepare me something to eat. Get ready to serve me, so I can have my meal. Then later on you can eat and drink.” ⁹ Servants don’t deserve special thanks for doing what they are supposed to do. ¹⁰ And that’s how it should be with you. When you’ve done all you should, then say, “We are merely servants, and we have simply done our duty.”

Ten men with leprosy

¹¹ On his way to Jerusalem, Jesus went along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

¹² As he was going into a village, ten men with leprosy* came towards him. They stood

at a distance ¹³ and shouted, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

¹⁴ Jesus looked at them and said, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.”*

On their way they were healed. ¹⁵ When one of them discovered that he was healed, he came back, shouting praises to God. ¹⁶ He bowed down at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. The man was from the country of Samaria.

¹⁷ Jesus asked, “Weren’t ten men healed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Why was this foreigner the only one who came back to thank God?” ¹⁹ Then Jesus told the man, “You may get up and go. Your faith has made you well.”

God’s kingdom

This is also told in Matthew 24.23–28,37–41

²⁰ Some Pharisees asked Jesus when God’s kingdom would come. He answered, “God’s kingdom isn’t something you can see.

²¹ There is no use saying, ‘Look! Here it is’ or ‘Look! There it is.’ God’s kingdom is here with you.”*

²² Jesus said to his disciples:

The time will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not. ²³ When people say to you, “Look there,” or “Look here,” don’t go looking for him. ²⁴ The day of the Son of Man will be like lightning flashing across the sky. ²⁵ But first he must suffer terribly and be rejected by the people of today. ²⁶ When the Son of Man comes, things will be just as they were when Noah lived. ²⁷ People were eating, drinking, and getting married right up to the day when Noah went into the big boat. Then the flood came and drowned everyone on earth.

²⁸ When Lot* lived, people were also eating and drinking. They were buying, selling, planting, and building. ²⁹ But on the very day Lot left Sodom, fiery flames poured down from the sky and killed everyone. ³⁰ The same will happen on the day when the Son of Man appears.

***17.14 show yourselves to the priests:** See the note at 5.14.

***17.27,28 Noah . . . Lot:** When God destroyed the earth by a flood, he saved Noah and his family. And when God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and the evil people who lived there, he rescued Lot and his family (see Genesis 19.1–29).

See also: 17.14: Lev 14.1–32. 17.26: Gen 6.5–8. 17.27: Gen 7.6–24. 17.28,29: Gen 18.20–19.25.

***17.3 followers:** The Greek text has “brothers”, which is often used in the New Testament for followers of Jesus.

***17.12 leprosy:** See the note at 4.27.

See also: 17.3: Matt 18.15.

³¹ At that time no one on a rooftop* should go down into the house to get anything. No one in a field should go back to the house for anything. ³² Remember what happened to Lot's wife.*

³³ People who try to save their lives will lose them, and those who lose their lives will save them. ³⁴ On that night two people will be sleeping in the same bed, but only one will be taken. The other will be left.

³⁵⁻³⁶ Two women will be together grinding wheat, but only one will be taken. The other will be left.†

³⁷ Then Jesus' disciples spoke up, "But where will this happen, Lord?"

Jesus said, "Where there is a corpse, there will always be vultures."*†

CHAPTER 18

A widow and a judge

¹ Jesus told his disciples a story about how they should keep on praying and never give up:

² In a town there was once a judge who didn't fear God or care about people.

³ In that same town there was a widow who kept going to the judge and saying, "Make sure that I get fair treatment in court."

⁴ For a while the judge refused to do anything. Finally, he said to himself, "Even though I don't fear God or care about people, ⁵ I will help this widow because she keeps on bothering me. If I don't help her, she will wear me out."

⁶ The Lord said:

Think about what that crooked judge said.

⁷ Won't God protect his chosen ones who pray to him day and night? Won't he be

concerned for them? ⁸ He will hurry and help them. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find on this earth anyone with faith?

A Pharisee and a tax collector

⁹ Jesus told a story to some people who thought they were better than others and who looked down on everyone else:

¹⁰ Two men went into the temple to pray.* One was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.* ¹¹ The Pharisee stood over by himself and prayed,† "God, I thank you that I am not greedy, dishonest, and unfaithful in marriage like other people. And I am really glad that I am not like that tax collector over there. ¹² I go without eating* for two days a week, and I give you one tenth of all I earn."

¹³ The tax collector stood off at a distance and did not think he was good enough even to look up towards heaven. He was so sorry for what he had done that he pounded his chest and prayed, "God, have pity on me! I am such a sinner."

¹⁴ Then Jesus said, "When the two men went home, it was the tax collector and not the Pharisee who was pleasing to God. If you put yourself above others, you will be put down. But if you humble yourself, you will be honoured."

Jesus blesses little children

This is also told in Matthew 19.13-15; Mark 10.13-16

¹⁵ Some people brought their little children for Jesus to bless. But when his disciples saw them doing this, they told the people to stop bothering him. ¹⁶ So Jesus called the children over to him and said, "Let the children come to me! Don't try to stop them. People who are like these children belong to God's kingdom.† ¹⁷ You will never get into God's kingdom unless you enter it like a child!†"

*17.31 rooftop: See the note at 5.19.

*17.32 what happened to Lot's wife: She turned into a block of salt when she disobeyed God (see Genesis 19.26).

*17.37 Where there is a corpse, there will always be vultures: This saying may mean that when anything important happens, people soon know about it. Or the saying may mean that whenever something bad happens, curious people gather around and stare. But the word translated "vulture" also means "eagle" and may refer to the Roman army, which had an eagle as its symbol.

See also: 17.31: Matt 24.17,18; Mark 13.15,16.

17.32: Gen 19.26. 17.33: Matt 10.39; 16.25; Mark 8.35; Luke 9.24; John 12.25.

*18.10 into the temple to pray: Jewish people usually prayed there early in the morning and late in the afternoon.

*18.10 tax collector: See the note at 3.12.

*18.12 without eating: See the note at 2.37.

See also: 18.14: Matt 23.12; Luke 14.11.

A rich and important man

This is also told in Matthew 19.16–30; Mark 10.17–31

¹⁸ An important man asked Jesus, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?”

¹⁹ Jesus said, “Why do you call me good? Only God is good. ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘Be faithful in marriage. Do not murder. Do not steal. Do not tell lies about others. Respect your father and mother.’ ”

²¹ He told Jesus, “I have obeyed all these commandments since I was a young man.”

²² When Jesus heard this, he said, “There is one thing you still need to do. Go and sell everything you own! Give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven. Then come and be my follower.” ²³ When the man heard this, he was sad, because he was very rich.

²⁴ Jesus saw how sad the man was. So he said, “It’s terribly hard for rich people to get into God’s kingdom! ²⁵ In fact, it’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to get into God’s kingdom.”

²⁶ When the crowd heard this, they asked, “How can anyone ever be saved?”

²⁷ Jesus replied, “There are some things that people cannot do, but God can do anything.”

²⁸ Peter said, “Remember, we left everything to be your followers!”

²⁹ Jesus answered, “You can be sure that anyone who gives up home or wife or brothers or family or children because of God’s kingdom ³⁰ will be given much more in this life. And in the future world they will have eternal life.”

Jesus again tells about his death

This is also told in Matthew 20.17–19; Mark 10.32–34

³¹ Jesus took the twelve apostles aside and said:

We are now on our way to Jerusalem. Everything that the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will happen there. ³² He will be handed over to foreigners,* who will make fun of him, ill-treat him, and spit on him. ³³ They will beat him and kill him, but three days later he will rise to life.

³⁴ The apostles did not understand what Jesus was talking about. They could not understand, because the meaning of what he said was hidden from them.

***18.32 foreigners:** The Romans, who ruled Judea at this time.

See also: **18.20:** a Exod 20.14; Deut 5.18; b Exod 20.13; Deut 5.17; c Exod 20.15; Deut 5.19; d Exod 20.16; Deut 5.20; e Exod 20.12; Deut 5.16.

Jesus heals a blind beggar

This is also told in Matthew 20.29–34; Mark 10.46–52

³⁵ When Jesus was coming close to Jericho, a blind man sat begging beside the road.

³⁶ The man heard the crowd walking by and asked what was happening. ³⁷ Some people told him that Jesus from Nazareth was passing by. ³⁸ So the blind man shouted, “Jesus, Son of David,* have pity on me!” ³⁹ The people who were going along with Jesus told the man to be quiet. But he shouted even louder, “Son of David, have pity on me!”

⁴⁰ Jesus stopped and told some people to bring the blind man over to him. When the blind man was getting near, Jesus asked, ⁴¹ “What do you want me to do for you?”

“Lord, I want to see!” he answered.

⁴² Jesus replied, “Look and you will see! Your eyes are healed because of your faith.”

⁴³ Straight away the man could see, and he went with Jesus and started thanking God. When the crowds saw what happened, they praised God.

CHAPTER 19

Zacchaeus

¹ Jesus was going through Jericho, ² where a man named Zacchaeus lived. He was in charge of collecting taxes* and was very rich. ^{3–4} Jesus was heading his way, and Zacchaeus wanted to see what he was like. But Zacchaeus was a short man and could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree.

⁵ When Jesus got there, he looked up and said, “Zacchaeus, hurry down! I want to stay with you today.” ⁶ Zacchaeus hurried down and gladly welcomed Jesus.

⁷ Everyone who saw this started grumbling, “This man Zacchaeus is a sinner! And Jesus is going home to eat with him.”

⁸ Later that day Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “I will give half of my property to the poor. And I will now pay back four times as much* to everyone I have ever cheated.”

***18.38 Son of David:** The Jewish people expected the Messiah to be from the family of King David, and for this reason the Messiah was often called the “Son of David”.

***19.2 in charge of collecting taxes:** See the note at 3.12.

***19.8 pay back four times as much:** Both Jewish and Roman law said that a person must pay back four times the amount that was taken.

⁹ Jesus said to Zacchaeus, “Today you and your family have been saved,* because you are a true son of Abraham.*

¹⁰ The Son of Man came to look for and to save people who are lost.”

A story about ten servants

This is also told in Matthew 25.14–30

¹¹ The crowd was still listening to Jesus as he was getting close to Jerusalem. Many of them thought that God’s kingdom would soon appear,¹² and Jesus told them this story:

A prince once went to a foreign country to be crowned king and then to return.¹³ But before leaving, he called in ten servants and gave each of them some money. He told them, “Use this to earn more money until I get back.”

¹⁴ But the people of his country hated him, and they sent messengers to the foreign country to say, “We don’t want this man to be our king.”

¹⁵ After the prince had been made king, he returned and called in his servants. He asked them how much they had earned with the money they had been given.

¹⁶ The first servant came and said, “Sir, with the money you gave me I have earned ten times as much.”

¹⁷ “That’s fine, my good servant!” the king said. “Since you have shown that you can be trusted with a small amount, you will be given ten cities to rule.”

¹⁸ The second one came and said, “Sir, with the money you gave me, I have earned five times as much.”

¹⁹ The king said, “You will be given five cities.”

²⁰ Another servant came and said, “Sir, here is your money. I kept it safe in a handkerchief.²¹ You are a hard man, and I was afraid of you. You take what isn’t yours, and you harvest crops you didn’t plant.”

²² “You worthless servant!” the king told him. “You have condemned yourself by what you have just said. You knew that I am a hard man, taking what isn’t mine and harvesting what I haven’t planted.

²³ Why didn’t you put my money in the bank? On my return, I could have had the money together with interest.”

²⁴ Then he said to some other servants standing there, “Take the money away from him and give it to the servant who earned ten times as much.”

²⁵ But they said, “Sir, he already has ten times as much!”

²⁶ The king replied, “Those who have something will be given more. But everything will be taken away from those who don’t have anything.²⁷ Now bring me the enemies who didn’t want me to be their king. Kill them while I watch!”

Jesus’ last week: his trial and death

Jesus enters Jerusalem

This is also told in Matthew 21.1–11; Mark 11.1–11; John 12.12–19

²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying all this, he went on towards Jerusalem.²⁹ As he was getting near Bethphage and Bethany on the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples on ahead.³⁰ He told them, “Go into the next village, where you will find a young donkey that has never been ridden. Untie the donkey and bring it here.³¹ If anyone asks why you are doing that, just say, ‘The Lord’ needs it.’”

³² They went off and found everything just as Jesus had said.³³ While they were untying the donkey, its owners asked, “Why are you doing that?”

³⁴ They answered, “The Lord’ needs it.”

³⁵ Then they led the donkey to Jesus. They put some of their clothes on its back and helped Jesus get on.³⁶ And as he rode along, the people spread clothes on the road* in front of him.³⁷ When Jesus was setting off down the Mount of Olives, his large crowd of disciples were happy and praised God because of all the miracles they had seen.

³⁸ They shouted,

“Blessed is the king who comes
in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven
and glory to God.”

***19.9 saved:** Zacchaeus was Jewish, but it is only now that he is rescued from sin and placed under God’s care.

***19.9 son of Abraham:** As used in this verse, the words mean that Zacchaeus is truly one of God’s special people.

See also: **19.10:** Matt 18.11. **19.11–27:** Matt 25.14–30.

***19.36 spread clothes on the road:** This was one way that the Jewish people welcomed a famous person.

See also: **19.26:** Matt 13.12; Mark 4.25; Luke 8.18. **19.38:** Psa 118.26.

³⁹ Some Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, make your disciples stop shouting!”

⁴⁰ But Jesus answered, “If they keep quiet, these stones will start shouting.”

⁴¹ When Jesus came closer and could see Jerusalem, he cried ⁴² and said:

Today your people don’t know what will bring them peace! Now it is hidden from them. ⁴³ Jerusalem, the time will come when your enemies will build walls around you to attack you. Armies will surround you and close in on you from every side.

⁴⁴ They will level you to the ground and kill your people. Not one stone in your buildings will be left on top of another. This will happen because you did not see that God had come to save you.*

Jesus in the temple

This is also told in Matthew 21.12–17; Mark 11.15–19; John 2.13–22

⁴⁵ When Jesus entered the temple, he started chasing out the people who were selling things. ⁴⁶ He told them, “The Scriptures say, ‘My house should be a place of worship.’ But you have made it a place where robbers hide!”

⁴⁷ Each day, Jesus kept on teaching in the temple. So the chief priests, the teachers of the Law of Moses, and some other important people tried to have him killed. ⁴⁸ But they could not find a way to do it, because everyone else was eager to listen to him.

CHAPTER 20

A question about Jesus’ authority

This is also told in Matthew 21.23–27; Mark 11.27–33

¹ One day, Jesus was teaching in the temple and telling the good news. So the chief priests, the teachers, and the nation’s leaders ² asked him, “What right do you have to do these things? Who gave you this authority?”

³ Jesus replied, “I want to ask you a question. ⁴ Who gave John the right to baptize? Was it God in heaven or merely some human being?”

⁵ They talked this over and said to each other, “We can’t say that God gave John this

right. Jesus will ask us why we didn’t believe John. ⁶ And we can’t say that it was merely some human who gave John the right to baptize. The crowd will stone us to death, because they think John was a prophet.”

⁷ So they told Jesus, “We don’t know who gave John the right to baptize.”

⁸ Jesus replied, “Then I won’t tell you who gave me the right to do what I do.”

Tenants of a vineyard

This is also told in Matthew 21.33–46; Mark 12.1–12

⁹ Jesus told the people this story:

A man once planted a vineyard and let it. Then he left the country for a long time.

¹⁰ When it was time to harvest the crop, he sent a servant to ask the tenants for his share of the grapes. But they beat up the servant and sent him away without anything. ¹¹ So the owner sent another servant. The tenants also beat him up. They insulted him terribly and sent him away without a thing. ¹² The owner sent a third servant. He was also beaten terribly and thrown out of the vineyard.

¹³ The owner then said to himself, “What am I going to do? I know what. I’ll send my son, the one I love so much. They will surely respect him!”

¹⁴ When the tenants saw the owner’s son, they said to one another, “Some day he will own the vineyard. Let’s kill him! Then we can have it all for ourselves.” ¹⁵ So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

Jesus asked, “What do you think the owner of the vineyard will do? ¹⁶ I’ll tell you what. He will come and kill those tenants and let someone else have his vineyard.”

When the people heard this, they said, “This must never happen!”

¹⁷ But Jesus looked straight at them and said, “Then what do the Scriptures mean when they say, ‘The stone that the builders tossed aside is now the most important stone of all?’ ¹⁸ Anyone who stumbles over this stone will get hurt, and anyone it falls on will be smashed to pieces.”

¹⁹ The chief priests and the teachers of the Law of Moses knew that Jesus was talking about them when he was telling this story. They wanted to arrest him at once, but they were afraid of the people.

*19.44 that God had come to save you: The Jewish people looked for the time when God would come and rescue them from their enemies. But when Jesus came, many of them refused to obey him.

See also: 19.46: Isa 56.7; Jer 7.11. 19.47: Luke 21.37.

See also: 20.9: Isa 5.1. 20.17: Psa 118.22.

Paying taxes

This is also told in Matthew 22.15–22; Mark 12.13–17

²⁰ Jesus' enemies kept watching him closely, because they wanted to hand him over to the Roman governor. So they sent some men who pretended to be good. But they were really spies trying to catch Jesus saying something wrong. ²¹ The spies said to him, "Teacher, we know that you teach the truth about what God wants people to do. And you treat everyone with the same respect, no matter who they are. ²² Tell us, should we pay taxes to the Emperor or not?"

²³ Jesus knew that they were trying to trick him. So he told them, ²⁴ "Show me a coin." Then he asked, "Whose picture and name are on it?"

"The Emperor's," they answered.

²⁵ Then he told them, "Give the Emperor what belongs to him and give God what belongs to God." ²⁶ Jesus' enemies could not catch him saying anything wrong there in front of the people. They were amazed at his answer and kept quiet.

Life in the future world

This is also told in Matthew 22.23–33; Mark 12.18–27

²⁷ The Sadducees did not believe that people would rise to life after death. So some of them came to Jesus ²⁸ and said:

Teacher, Moses wrote that if a married man dies and has no children, his brother should marry the widow. Their first son would then be thought of as the son of the dead brother.

²⁹ There were once seven brothers. The first one married, but died without having any children. ³⁰ The second one married his brother's widow, and he also died without having any children. ³¹ The same thing happened to the third one. Finally, all seven brothers married that woman and died without having any children. ³² At last the woman died. ³³ When God raises people from death, whose wife will this woman be? All seven brothers had married her.

³⁴ Jesus answered:

The people in this world get married. ³⁵ But in the future world no one who is worthy to rise from death will either marry ³⁶ or die. They will be like the angels and will be

God's children, because they have been raised to life.

³⁷ In the story about the burning bush, Moses clearly shows that people will live again. He said, "The Lord is the God worshipped by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."* ³⁸ So the Lord isn't the God of the dead, but of the living. This means that everyone is alive as far as God is concerned.

³⁹ Some of the teachers of the Law of Moses said, "Teacher, you have given a good answer!" ⁴⁰ From then on, no one dared to ask Jesus any questions.

About David's son

This is also told in Matthew 22.41–46; Mark 12.35–37

⁴¹ Jesus asked, "Why do people say that the Messiah will be the son of King David?*

⁴² In the book of Psalms, David himself says,

'The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit at my right side*

⁴³ until I make your enemies
into a footstool for you.'

⁴⁴ David spoke of the Messiah as his Lord, so how can the Messiah be his son?"

Jesus and the teachers of the Law of Moses

This is also told in Matthew 23.1–36; Mark 12.38–40; Luke 11.37–54

⁴⁵ While everyone was listening to Jesus, he said to his disciples:

⁴⁶ Guard against the teachers of the Law of Moses! They love to walk around in long robes, and they like to be greeted in the market. They want the front seats in the meeting places and the best seats at banquets. ⁴⁷ But they cheat widows out of their homes and then pray long prayers just to show off. These teachers will be punished most of all.

***20.37 "The Lord is the God worshipped by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob":** Jesus argues that if God is worshipped by these three, they must be alive, because he is the God of the living.

***20.41 the son of King David:** See the note at 18.38.

***20.42 right side:** The place of power and honour.

CHAPTER 21

A widow's offering

This is also told in Mark 12.41-44

¹ Jesus looked up and saw some rich people tossing their gifts into the offering box.

² He also saw a poor widow putting in two pennies. ³ And he said, "I tell you that this poor woman has put in more than all the others. ⁴ Everyone else gave what they didn't need. But she is very poor and gave everything she had."

The temple will be destroyed

This is also told in Matthew 24.1,2; Mark 13.1,2

⁵ Some people were talking about the beautiful stones used to build the temple and about the gifts that had been placed in it. Jesus said, ⁶ "Do you see these stones? The time is coming when not one of them will be left in place. They will all be knocked down."

Warning about trouble

This is also told in Matthew 24.3-14; Mark 13.3-13

⁷ Some people asked, "Teacher, when will all this happen? How can we know when these things are about to take place?"

⁸ Jesus replied:

Don't be fooled by those who will come and claim to be me. They will say, "I am Christ!" and "Now is the time!" But don't follow them. ⁹ When you hear about wars and riots, don't be afraid. These things will have to happen first, but that isn't the end.

¹⁰ Nations will go to war against one another, and kingdoms will attack each other. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and in many places people will starve to death and suffer terrible diseases. All sorts of frightening things will be seen in the sky.

¹² Before all this happens, you will be arrested and punished. You will be tried in your meeting places and put in jail. Because of me you will be placed on trial before kings and governors. ¹³ But this will be your chance to tell about your faith.

¹⁴ Don't worry about what you will say to defend yourselves. ¹⁵ I will give you the wisdom to know what to say. None of your enemies will be able to oppose you or to say that you are wrong. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed

by your own parents, brothers, family, and friends. Some of you will even be killed.

¹⁷ Because of me, you will be hated by everyone. ¹⁸ But don't worry! ¹⁹ You will be saved by being faithful to me.

Jerusalem will be destroyed

This is also told in Matthew 24.15-21; Mark 13.14-19

Jesus continued:

²⁰ When you see Jerusalem surrounded by soldiers, you will know that it will soon be destroyed. ²¹ If you are living in Judea at that time, run to the mountains. If you are in the city, leave it. And if you are out in the country, don't go back into the city.

²² This time of punishment is what is written about in the Scriptures. ²³ It will be an awful time for women who are expecting babies or nursing young children! Everywhere in the land people will suffer horribly and be punished.

²⁴ Some of them will be killed by swords. Others will be carried off to foreign countries. Jerusalem will be overrun by foreign nations until their time comes to an end.

When the Son of Man appears

This is also told in Matthew 24.29-31; Mark 13.24-27

Jesus continued:

²⁵ Strange things will happen to the sun, moon, and stars. The nations on earth will be afraid of the roaring sea and tides, and they won't know what to do. ²⁶ People will be so frightened that they will faint because of what is happening to the world. Every power in the sky will be shaken. ²⁷ Then the Son of Man will be seen, coming in a cloud with great power and glory. ²⁸ When all this starts happening, stand up straight and be brave. You will soon be set free.

A lesson from a fig tree

This is also told in Matthew 24.32-35; Mark 13.28-31

²⁹ Then Jesus told them a story:

When you see a fig tree or any other tree ³⁰ putting out leaves, you know that summer will soon come. ³¹ So, when you

***21.26 Every power in the sky will be shaken:** In ancient times people thought that the stars were spiritual powers.

See also: 21.22: Hos 9.7. 21.25: Isa 13.10; Ezek 32.7; Joel 2.31; Rev 6.12,13. 21.27: Dan 7.13; Rev 1.7.

see these things happening, you know that God's kingdom will soon be here. ³² You can be sure that some of the people of this generation will still be alive when all this takes place. ³³ The sky and the earth won't last for ever, but my words will.

A warning

Jesus continued:

³⁴ Don't spend all your time thinking about eating or drinking or worrying about life. If you do, the final day will suddenly catch you ³⁵ like a trap. That day will surprise everyone on earth. ³⁶ Watch out and keep praying that you can escape all that is going to happen and that the Son of Man will be pleased with you.

³⁷ Jesus taught in the temple each day, and he spent each night on the Mount of Olives.

³⁸ Everyone got up early and came to the temple to hear him teach.

CHAPTER 22

A plot to kill Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 26.1-5,14,16; Mark 14.1,2,10,11; John 11.45-53

¹ The Festival of Thin Bread, also called Passover, was near. ² The chief priests and the teachers of the Law of Moses were looking for a way to get rid of Jesus, because they were afraid of what the people might do. ³ Then Satan entered the heart of Judas Iscariot,* who was one of the twelve apostles.

⁴ Judas went to talk with the chief priests and the officers of the temple police about how he could help them arrest Jesus. ⁵ They were very pleased and offered to pay Judas some money. ⁶ He agreed and started looking for a good chance to betray Jesus when the crowds were not around.

Jesus eats with his disciples

This is also told in Matthew 26.17-25; Mark 14.12-21; John 13.21-30

⁷ The day had come for the Festival of Thin Bread, and it was time to kill the Passover lambs. ⁸ So Jesus said to Peter and John, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us to eat."

⁹ But they asked, "Where do you want us to prepare it?"

¹⁰ Jesus told them, "As you go into the city, you will meet a man carrying a jar of water.* Follow him into the house ¹¹ and say to the owner, 'Our teacher wants to know where he can eat the Passover meal with his disciples.'¹² The owner will take you upstairs and show you a large room ready for you to use. Prepare the meal there."

¹³ Peter and John left. They found everything just as Jesus had told them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

The Lord's Supper

This is also told in Matthew 26.26-30; Mark 14.22-26; 1 Corinthians 11.23-25

¹⁴ When the time came for Jesus and the apostles to eat, ¹⁵ he said to them, "I have very much wanted to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ I tell you that I will not eat another Passover meal until it is finally eaten in God's kingdom."

¹⁷ Jesus took a cup of wine in his hands and gave thanks to God. Then he told the apostles, "Take this wine and share it with each other. ¹⁸ I tell you that I will not drink any more wine until God's kingdom comes."

¹⁹ Jesus took some bread in his hands and gave thanks for it. He broke the bread and handed it to his apostles. Then he said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Eat this as a way of remembering me!"

²⁰ After the meal he took another cup of wine in his hands. Then he said, "This is my blood. It is poured out for you, and with it God makes his new agreement. ²¹ The one who will betray me is here at the table with me! ²² The Son of Man will die in the way that has been decided for him, but it will be terrible for the one who betrays him!"

²³ Then the apostles started arguing about who would ever do such a thing.

An argument about greatness

²⁴ The apostles got into an argument about which one of them was the greatest. ²⁵ So Jesus told them:

Foreign kings order their people around, and powerful rulers call themselves

***22.10 a man carrying a jar of water:** A male slave carrying water would probably mean that the family was rich.

See also: **22.20:** Jer 31.31-34. **22.21:** Psa 41.9. **22.24:** Matt 18.1; Mark 9.34; Luke 9.46. **22.25,26:** Matt 20.25-27; Mark 10.42-44.

***22.3 Iscariot:** See the note at 6.16.

See also: **21.37:** Luke 19.47. **22.1:** Exod 12.1-27.

everyone's friends.* ²⁶ But don't be like them. The most important one of you should be like the least important, and your leader should be like a servant.

²⁷ Who do people think is the greatest, a person who is served or one who serves? Isn't it the one who is served? But I have been with you as a servant.

²⁸ You have stayed with me in all my troubles. ²⁹ So I will give you the right to rule as kings, just as my Father has given me the right to rule as a king. ³⁰ You will eat and drink with me in my kingdom, and you will each sit on a throne to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

Jesus' disciples will be tested

This is also told in Matthew 26.31-35; Mark 14.27-31; John 13.36-38

³¹ Jesus said, "Simon, listen to me! Satan has demanded the right to test each one of you, as a farmer does when he separates wheat from the husks.* ³² But Simon, I have prayed that your faith will be strong. And when you have come back to me, help the others."

³³ Peter said, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to jail and even to die with you."

³⁴ Jesus replied, "Peter, I tell you that before a cock crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you don't know me."

Money bags, travelling bags, and swords

³⁵ Jesus asked his disciples, "When I sent you out without a money bag or a travelling bag or sandals, did you need anything?"

"No!" they answered.

³⁶ Jesus told them, "But now, if you have a money bag, take it with you. Also take a travelling bag, and if you don't have a sword,* sell some of your clothes and buy

one. ³⁷ Do this because the Scriptures say, 'He was considered a criminal.' This was written about me, and it will soon come true."³⁸

The disciples said, "Lord, here are two swords!"

"Enough of that!" Jesus replied.

Jesus prays

This is also told in Matthew 26.36-46; Mark 14.32-42

³⁹ Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives, as he often did, and his disciples went with him. ⁴⁰ When they got there, he told them, "Pray that you won't be tested."

⁴¹ Jesus walked on a little way before he knelt down and prayed, ⁴² "Father, if you will, please don't make me suffer by making me drink from this cup.* But do what you want, and not what I want."

⁴³ Then an angel from heaven came to help him. ⁴⁴ Jesus was in great pain and prayed so sincerely that his sweat fell to the ground like drops of blood.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Jesus got up from praying and went over to his disciples. They were asleep and worn out from being so sad. ⁴⁶ He said to them, "Why are you asleep? Wake up and pray that you won't be tested."

Jesus is arrested

This is also told in Matthew 26.47-56; Mark 14.43-50; John 18.3-11

⁴⁷ While Jesus was still speaking, a crowd came up. It was led by Judas, one of the twelve apostles. He went over to Jesus and greeted him with a kiss.*

⁴⁸ Jesus asked Judas, "Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

⁴⁹ When Jesus' disciples saw what was about to happen, they asked, "Lord, should we attack them with a sword?" ⁵⁰ One of the disciples even struck at the high priest's servant with his sword and cut off the servant's right ear.

⁵¹ "Enough of that!" Jesus said. Then he touched the servant's ear and healed it.

⁵² Jesus spoke to the chief priests, the temple police, and the leaders who had come to arrest him. He said, "Why do you come

***22.25 everyone's friends:** This translates a Greek word that rulers sometimes used as a title for themselves or for special friends.

***22.31 separates wheat from the husks:** See the note at 3.17.

***22.36 money bag . . . travelling bag . . . sword:** These were things that someone would take on a dangerous journey. Jesus was telling his disciples to be ready for anything that might happen. They seem to have understood what he meant (see 22.49-51).

See also: 22.26: Matt 23.11; Mark 9.35.

22.27: John 13.12-15. 22.30: Matt 19.28.

22.35: Matt 10.9,10; Mark 6.8,9; Luke 9.3; 10.4.

***22.42 making me drink from this cup:** In the Scriptures "to drink from a cup" sometimes means to suffer.

***22.47 greeted him with a kiss:** It was the custom for people to greet each other with a kiss on the cheek.

See also: 22.37: Isa 53.12.

out with swords and clubs and treat me like a criminal? ⁵³ I was with you every day in the temple, and you didn't arrest me. But this is your time, and darkness* is in control."

Peter says he doesn't know Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 26.57,58,67-75; Mark 14.53,54,66-72; John 18.12-18,25-27

⁵⁴ Jesus was arrested and led away to the house of the high priest, while Peter followed at a distance. ⁵⁵ Some people built a fire in the middle of the courtyard and were sitting around it. Peter sat there with them, ⁵⁶ and a servant girl saw him. Then after she had looked at him carefully, she said, "This man was with Jesus!"

⁵⁷ Peter said, "Woman, I don't even know that man!"

⁵⁸ A little later someone else saw Peter and said, "You are one of them!"

"No, I'm not!" Peter replied.

⁵⁹ About an hour later another man insisted, "This man must have been with Jesus. They both come from Galilee."

⁶⁰ Peter replied, "I don't know what you are talking about!" At once, while Peter was still speaking, a cock crowed.

⁶¹ The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered that the Lord had said, "Before a cock crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you don't know me." ⁶² Then Peter went out and cried hard.

⁶³ The men who were guarding Jesus made fun of him and beat him. ⁶⁴ They put a blindfold on him and said, "Tell us who struck you!" ⁶⁵ They kept on insulting Jesus in many other ways.

Jesus is questioned by the council

This is also told in Matthew 26.59-66; Mark 14.55-64; John 18.19-24

⁶⁶ At daybreak the nation's leaders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law of Moses got together and brought Jesus before their council. ⁶⁷ They said, "Tell us! Are you the Messiah?"

Jesus replied, "If I said so, you wouldn't believe me. ⁶⁸ And if I asked you a question, you wouldn't answer. ⁶⁹ But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right side of God All-Powerful."

⁷⁰ Then they asked, "Are you the Son of God?"*

Jesus answered, "You say I am!"

⁷¹ They replied, "Why do we need more witnesses? He said it himself!"

CHAPTER 23

Pilate questions Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 27.1,2,11-14; Mark 15.1-5; John 18.28-38

¹ Everyone in the council got up and led Jesus off to Pilate. ² They started accusing him and said, "We caught this man trying to get our people to riot and to stop paying taxes to the Emperor. He also claims that he is the Messiah, our king."

³ Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Those are your words," Jesus answered.

⁴ Pilate told the chief priests and the crowd, "I don't find him guilty of anything."

⁵ But they all kept on saying, "He has been teaching and causing trouble all over Judea. He started in Galilee and has now come all the way here."

Jesus is brought before Herod

⁶ When Pilate heard this, he asked, "Is this man from Galilee?" ⁷ After Pilate learnt that Jesus came from the region ruled by Herod,* he sent him to Herod, who was in Jerusalem at that time.

⁸ For a long time Herod had wanted to see Jesus and was very happy because he finally had this chance. He had heard many things about Jesus and hoped to see him perform a miracle.

⁹ Herod asked him a lot of questions, but Jesus did not answer. ¹⁰ Then the chief priests and the teachers of the Law of Moses stood up and accused him of all kinds of bad things.

¹¹ Herod and his soldiers made fun of Jesus and insulted him. They put a fine robe on him and sent him back to Pilate. ¹² That same day Herod and Pilate became friends, even though they had been enemies before this.

***22.53 darkness:** Darkness stands for the power of the devil.

See also: **22.53:** Luke 19.47; 21.37.

***22.70 Son of God:** This was one of the titles used for the kings of Israel.

***23.7 Herod:** See the note at 3.1.

The death sentence

This is also told in Matthew 27.15–26; Mark 15.6–15; John 18.39–19.16

¹³ Pilate called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people. ¹⁴ He told them, “You brought Jesus to me and said he was a troublemaker. But I have questioned him here in front of you, and I have not found him guilty of anything that you say he has done. ¹⁵ Herod didn’t find him guilty either and sent him back. This man doesn’t deserve to be put to death! ^{16–17} I will just have him beaten with a whip and set free.”

¹⁸ But the whole crowd shouted, “Kill Jesus! Give us Barabbas!” ¹⁹ Now Barabbas was in jail because he had started a riot in the city and had murdered someone.

²⁰ Pilate wanted to set Jesus free, so he spoke again to the crowds. ²¹ But they kept shouting, “Nail him to a cross! Nail him to a cross!”

²² Pilate spoke to them a third time, “But what crime has he done? I have not found him guilty of anything for which he should be put to death. I will have him beaten with a whip and set free.”

²³ The people kept on shouting as loud as they could for Jesus to be put to death.

²⁴ Finally, Pilate gave in. ²⁵ He freed the man who was in jail for rioting and murder, because he was the one the crowd wanted to be set free. Then Pilate handed Jesus over for them to do what they wanted with him.

Jesus is nailed to a cross

This is also told in Matthew 27.31–44; Mark 15.21–32; John 19.17–27

²⁶ As Jesus was being led away, some soldiers grabbed hold of a man from Cyrene named Simon. He was coming in from the fields, but they put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

²⁷ A large crowd was following Jesus, and in the crowd a lot of women were crying and weeping for him. ²⁸ Jesus turned to the women and said:

Women of Jerusalem, don’t cry for me! Cry for yourselves and for your children.

²⁹ Some day people will say, “Women who never had children are really fortunate!” ³⁰ At that time everyone will say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” They will say to the hills, “Hide us!” ³¹ If this can

happen when the wood is green, what do you think will happen when it is dry?*

³² Two criminals were led out to be put to death with Jesus. ³³ When the soldiers came to the place called “The Skull”,* they nailed Jesus to a cross. They also nailed the two criminals to crosses, one on each side of Jesus.

^{34–35} Jesus said, “Father, forgive these people! They don’t know what they’re doing.”

While the crowd stood there watching Jesus, the soldiers gambled for his clothes. The leaders insulted him by saying, “He saved others. Now he should save himself, if he really is God’s chosen Messiah!”

³⁶ The soldiers made fun of Jesus and brought him some wine. ³⁷ They said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!”

³⁸ Above him was a sign that said, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹ One of the criminals hanging there also insulted Jesus by saying, “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and save us!”

⁴⁰ But the other criminal told the first one off, “Don’t you fear God? Aren’t you getting the same punishment as this man? ⁴¹ We got what was coming to us, but he didn’t do anything wrong.” ⁴² Then he said to Jesus, “Remember me when you come into power!”

⁴³ Jesus replied, “I promise that today you will be with me in paradise.”*

The death of Jesus

This is also told in Matthew 27.45–56; Mark 15.33–41; John 19.28–30

⁴⁴ Around midday the sky turned dark and stayed that way until the middle of the afternoon. ⁴⁵ The sun stopped shining, and

*23.31 If this can happen when the wood is green, what do you think will happen when it is dry?: This saying probably means, “If this can happen to an innocent person, what do you think will happen to one who is guilty?”

*23.33 “The Skull”: The place was probably given this name because it was near a large rock in the shape of a human skull.

*23.43 paradise: In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, this word is used for the Garden of Eden. In New Testament times it was sometimes used for the place where God’s people are happy and at rest, as they wait for the final judgment.

See also: 23.34; Psa 22.18. 23.35; Psa 22.7. 23.36; Psa 69.21. 23.45; Exod 26.31–33.

the curtain in the temple* split down the middle. ⁴⁶ Jesus shouted, “Father, I put myself in your hands!” Then he died.

⁴⁷ When the Roman officer saw what had happened, he praised God and said, “Jesus must really have been a good man!”

⁴⁸ A crowd had gathered to see the terrible sight. Then after they had seen it, they felt brokenhearted and went home. ⁴⁹ All Jesus’ close friends and the women who had come with him from Galilee stood at a distance and watched.

Jesus is buried

This is also told in Matthew 27.57–61; Mark 15.42–47; John 19.38–42

^{50–51} There was a man named Joseph, who was from Arimathea in Judea. Joseph was a good and honest man, and he was eager for God’s kingdom to come. He was also a member of the Jewish council, but he did not agree with what they had decided.

⁵² Joseph went to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. ⁵³ He took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in fine cloth. Then he put it in a tomb that had been cut out of solid rock and had never been used. ⁵⁴ It was Friday, and the Sabbath was about to begin.*

⁵⁵ The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and watched how Jesus’ body was placed in the tomb.

⁵⁶ Then they went to prepare some sweet-smelling spices for his burial. But on the Sabbath they rested, as the Law of Moses commands.

Jesus is alive

CHAPTER 24

This is also told in Matthew 28.1–10; Mark 16.1–8; John 20.1–10

¹ Very early on Sunday morning the women went to the tomb, carrying the spices that they had prepared. ² When they found the stone rolled away from the entrance, ³ they went in.

***23.45 curtain in the temple:** There were two curtains in the temple. One was at the entrance, and the other separated the holy place from the most holy place that the Jewish people thought of as God’s home on earth. The second curtain is probably the one which is meant.

***23.54 The Sabbath was about to begin:** The Sabbath begins at sunset on Friday.

See also: **23.46:** Psa 31.5. **23.49:** Luke 8.2,3. **23.56:** Exod 20.10; Deut 5.14.

But they did not find the body of the Lord⁴ Jesus, ⁴ and they did not know what to think.

Suddenly two men in shining white clothes stood beside them. ⁵ The women were afraid and bowed to the ground. But the men said, “Why are you looking in the place of the dead for someone who is alive? ⁶ Jesus isn’t here! He has been raised from death. Remember that while he was still in Galilee, he told you, ⁷ ‘The Son of Man will be handed over to sinners who will nail him to a cross. But three days later he will rise to life.’” ⁸ Then they remembered what Jesus had said.

^{9–10} Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and some other women were the ones who had gone to the tomb. When they returned, they told the eleven apostles and the others what had happened. ¹¹ The apostles thought it was all nonsense, and they would not believe.

¹² But Peter ran to the tomb. And when he stooped down and looked in, he saw only the burial clothes. Then he returned, wondering what had happened.¹

Jesus appears. He is taken to heaven

Jesus appears to two disciples

This is also told in Mark 16.12,13

¹³ That same day two of Jesus’ disciples were going to the village of Emmaus, which was about eleven kilometres from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ As they were talking and thinking about what had happened, ¹⁵ Jesus came near and started walking along beside them. ¹⁶ But they did not know who he was.

¹⁷ Jesus asked them, “What were you talking about as you walked along?”

The two of them stood there looking sad and gloomy. ¹⁸ Then the one named Cleopas asked Jesus, “Are you the only person from Jerusalem who didn’t know what was happening there these last few days?”

¹⁹ “What do you mean?” Jesus asked.

They answered:

Those things that happened to Jesus from Nazareth. By what he did and said he showed that he was a powerful prophet, who pleased God and all the people. ²⁰ Then the chief priests and our leaders had him arrested and sentenced to die on a cross.

See also: **24.6,7:** Matt 16.21; 17.22,23; 20.18,19; Mark 8.31; 9.31; 10.33,34; Luke 9.22; 18.31–33.

²¹ We had hoped that he would be the one to set Israel free! But it has already been three days since all this happened.

²² Some women in our group surprised us. They had gone to the tomb early in the morning, ²³ but did not find the body of Jesus. They came back, saying that they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he is alive. ²⁴ Some men from our group went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said. But they didn't see Jesus either.

²⁵ Then Jesus asked the two disciples, "Why can't you understand? How can you be so slow to believe all that the prophets said?"

²⁶ Didn't you know that the Messiah would have to suffer before he was given his glory?"

²⁷ Jesus then explained everything written about himself in the Scriptures, beginning with the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets.*

²⁸ When the two of them came near the village where they were going, Jesus seemed to be going further. ²⁹ They begged him, "Stay with us! It's already late, and the sun is going down." So Jesus went into the house to stay with them.

³⁰ After Jesus sat down to eat, he took some bread. He blessed it and broke it. Then he gave it to them. ³¹ At once they knew who he was, but he disappeared. ³² They said to each other, "When he talked with us along the road and explained the Scriptures to us, didn't it warm our hearts?" ³³ So they got up at once and returned to Jerusalem.

The two disciples found the eleven apostles and the others gathered together. ³⁴ And they learnt from the group that the Lord was really alive and had appeared to Peter. ³⁵ Then the disciples from Emmaus told what happened on the road and how they knew he was the Lord when he broke the bread.

What Jesus' followers must do

This is also told in Matthew 28.16–20; Mark 16.14–18; John 20.19–23; Acts 1.6–8

³⁶ While Jesus' disciples were talking about what had happened, Jesus appeared and greeted them. ³⁷ They were frightened and terrified because they thought they were seeing a ghost.

³⁸ But Jesus said, "Why are you so frightened? Why do you doubt?" ³⁹ Look at my

hands and my feet and see who I am! Touch me and find out for yourselves. Ghosts don't have flesh and bones as you see I have."

⁴⁰ After Jesus said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ The disciples were so glad and amazed that they could not believe it. Jesus then asked them, "Do you have something to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of baked fish. ⁴³ He took it and ate it as they watched.

⁴⁴ Jesus said to them, "While I was still with you, I told you that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Books of the Prophets, and in the Psalms* had to happen."

⁴⁵ Then he helped them understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them:

The Scriptures say that the Messiah must suffer, then three days later he will rise from death. ⁴⁷ They also say that all people of every nation must be told in my name to turn to God, in order to be forgiven. So beginning in Jerusalem, ⁴⁸ you must tell everything that has happened. ⁴⁹ I will send you the one my Father has promised,* but you must stay in the city until you are given power from heaven.

Jesus returns to heaven

This is also told in Mark 16.19,20; Acts 1.9–11

⁵⁰ Jesus led his disciples out to Bethany, where he raised his hands and blessed them.

⁵¹ As he was doing this, he left and was taken up to heaven.⁵² After his disciples had worshipped him,⁵³ they returned to Jerusalem and were very happy. ⁵³ They spent their time in the temple, praising God.

***24.44 Psalms:** The Jewish Scriptures were made up of three parts: (1) the Law of Moses, (2) the Books of the Prophets, and (3) the Writings, which included the Psalms. Sometimes the Scriptures were just called the Law or the Law (of Moses) and the Books of the Prophets.

***24.49 the one my Father has promised:** Jesus means the Holy Spirit.

See also: **24.49:** Acts 1.4. **24.50,51:** Acts 1.9–11.

Additional notes

***1.3 a careful study:** Or "a study from the beginning".

***1.78 like the sun that rises in the sky:** Or "like the Messiah coming from heaven."

***2.37 And now she was eighty-four years old:** Or "And now she had been a widow for eighty-four years."

***2.49 in my Father's house:** Or "doing my Father's work".

***24.27 the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets:** See the note at 16.16.

4.44 Judea: Some manuscripts have "Galilee".

6.6 On another Sabbath: Some manuscripts have a reading which may mean "the Sabbath after the next".

6.35 without expecting to be paid back: Some manuscripts have "without giving up on anyone".

7.50 saved: Or "healed". The Greek word may have either meaning.

8.26 Gerasa: Some manuscripts have "Gergesa".

8.37 Gerasa: See the note at 8.26.

8.43 She had spent everything she had on doctors: Some manuscripts do not have these words.

8.45 from every side: Some manuscripts add "and you ask, 'Who touched me?' "

9.24 life: In verses 24,25 a Greek word which often means "soul" is translated "life" and "yourself".

9.31 Jesus' death: In Greek this is "his departure", which probably includes his rising to life and his return to heaven.

9.54 to destroy these people: Some manuscripts add "as Elijah did".

9.55 what they had said: Some manuscripts add, "and said, 'Don't you know what spirit you belong to? The Son of Man did not come to destroy people's lives, but to save them.' "

10.9 will soon be here: Or "is already here".

10.11 will soon be here: See the note at 10.9.

10.21 the Holy Spirit: Some manuscripts have "his spirit".

11.3 the food we need: Or "food for today" or "food for the coming day".

11.28 "That's true, but the people who are really blessed . . . message": Or "That's not true, the people who are blessed . . . message." "

11.40 Didn't God make both the outside and the inside?: Or "Doesn't the person who washes the outside always wash the inside too?"

12.25 live longer: Or "grow taller".

17.21 here with you: Or "in your hearts".

17.35,36 will be left: Some manuscripts add, "Two men will be in the same field, but only one will be taken. The other will be left."

18.11 stood over by himself and prayed: Some manuscripts have "stood up and prayed to himself".

18.16 People who are like these children belong to God's kingdom: Or "God's kingdom belongs to people who are like these children."

19.31 The Lord: Or "The master of the donkey".

19.34 The Lord: See the note at 19.31.

21.18 But don't worry: The Greek text has "Not a hair of your head will be lost", which means, "There's no need to worry".

22.43,44 Then an angel . . . like drops of blood: Verses 43,44 are not in some manuscripts.

22.70 You say I am: Or "That's what you say."

23.16,17 set free: Some manuscripts add, "Pilate said this, because at every Passover he was supposed to set one prisoner free for the Jewish people."

23.34,35 Jesus said, "Father, forgive these people! They don't know what they're doing.": These words are not in some manuscripts.

24.3 the Lord: These words are not in some manuscripts.

24.12 what had happened: Verse 12 is not in some manuscripts.

24.51 and was taken up to heaven: These words are not in some manuscripts.

24.52 After his disciples had worshipped him: These words are not in some manuscripts.