



# Matthew

## AUTHOR

Though the author of this gospel is unnamed, the early church consistently considered it to be the work of the apostle Matthew (also known as Levi). Though a Jew by birth, his duties as a Roman tax collector would have made fluency in Greek necessary as a complement to his Aramaic. Recent literary critics have argued that the writer of Matthew used Mark as his source. However, the early church, together with many evangelical scholars through the generations, has argued for the priority of Matthew.

## DATE

The evidence for the date of Matthew is inconclusive. Because the book was written primarily to the Jews, many scholars feel it was written before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

## BACKGROUND

### *Setting*

A city along the coast of Phoenicia or Syria, such as Antioch, is generally accepted as the place where Matthew wrote his book (see Matt. 17:24, 27). Though a Greek-speaking city, Antioch had a large Jewish population. The book does not state specifically where it was written, yet it is probable that it originated somewhere in Rome's Syrian province.

### *Purpose*

The author sought to show that the Messiah, whom the prophets predicted in the Old Testament, had come in the Person of Jesus.

### *Audience*

The Gospel of Matthew, though one of four accounts covering the life and ministry of Jesus, was written especially for the Jews, who knew the Old Testament prophecies. The promised kingdom was first offered to them, and they were foremost among those responsible for spreading the Good News.



## *Literary Characteristics*

Matthew is the bridge between the Old Testament and New Testament. It contains more than 50 direct quotations from the Old Testament — more than the other three gospels combined — as well as many other affirming statements such as “you have heard,” “it is written,” and “that which was spoken.” The book is chronologically arranged, yet with a topical structure. Many of Jesus’ teachings, as well as His healings, other miracles, and the parables concerning the kingdom, are grouped together.

## THEMES

The major theme is that what the Old Testament foretold about the Messiah has been fulfilled in Jesus, and thus the book pays detailed attention to the lineage of Christ (Matt. 1). Because the lineage of royalty was important to the Jews, Matthew traced Jesus not only to Abraham, the father of the Jews, but also to the kingly lineage of David.

The book also delineates what a disciple’s life should be. The Sermon on the Mount and related teachings give not only the code of conduct God requires but, more importantly, the quality of the relationship Jesus desired with His disciples. Related to the discipleship theme is the key phrase, “the kingdom of heaven.” This theme encompasses both the daily life of each disciple and the future coming of Christ.

## OUTLINE

- I. The Messiah’s Coming (1:1—2:23)**
  - A. His genealogy (1:1–17)**
  - B. His birth (1:18–25)**
  - C. His admirers (2:1–12)**
  - D. His escape to Egypt and return to Nazareth (2:13–23)**
- II. The Messiah’s Unveiling (3:1—4:11)**
  - A. His introduction by John the Baptist (3:1–12)**
  - B. His baptism (3:13–17)**
  - C. His temptation (4:1–11)**
- III. The Messiah’s Manifesto (4:12—20:34)**
  - A. His first disciples (4:12–22)**
  - B. The beginning of His teaching (4:23—7:29)**
  - C. His credentials in the form of miracles (8:1—11:19)**
  - D. The beginning of opposition (11:20—12:50)**
  - E. His parables about the kingdom (13:1–58)**
  - F. The death of John the Baptist (14:1–12)**
  - G. Miracles over nature (14:13–36)**
  - H. The growth of opposition (15:1—16:12)**
  - I. Peter’s confession (16:13–28)**



- J. The Transfiguration (17:1–13)
  - K. Additional healing and teaching in Galilee (17:14–27)
  - L. Lifestyles in the kingdom (18:1–35)
  - M. The teaching of Jesus in Judea (19:1—20:34)
- IV. The Messiah's Passion (21:1—28:20)
- A. His triumphal entry (21:1–11)
  - B. A sampling of His judgment (21:12—23:39)
  - C. A description of His return (24:1—25:46)
  - D. His last Passover and the Last Supper (26:1–35)
  - E. His agony in Gethsemane (26:36–46)
  - F. His betrayal, arrest, and trials (26:47—27:31)
  - G. His death and burial (27:32–66)
  - H. His Resurrection (28:1–20)

### *The Genealogy of Jesus Christ*

**1** The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

<sup>2</sup>Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. <sup>3</sup>Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. <sup>4</sup>Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. <sup>5</sup>Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, <sup>6</sup>and Jesse begot David the king.

David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife<sup>a</sup>* of Uriah. <sup>7</sup>Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa.<sup>a</sup> <sup>8</sup>Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. <sup>9</sup>Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. <sup>10</sup>Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon,<sup>a</sup>

and Amon begot Josiah. <sup>11</sup>Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

<sup>12</sup>And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. <sup>13</sup>Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. <sup>14</sup>Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. <sup>15</sup>Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. <sup>16</sup>And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

<sup>17</sup>So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon *are* fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ *are* fourteen generations.

1:6 <sup>a</sup> Words in italic type have been added for clarity. They are not found in the original Greek. 1:7 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Asaph*. 1:10 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Amos*.



#### ENGAGEMENT

### A STEP IN COMMITMENT

Engagement or betrothal, in Jewish culture, was a formal bond between a man and a woman, almost as binding as marriage itself, yet without physical intimacy. According to the Law of Moses, the penalty for carelessly breaking this commitment through fornication, adultery, incest, or rape was death by stoning (Deut. 22:23–30). Under some circumstances, the engagement could be broken by a bill of divorcement.

The time period for an engagement was usually about a year. Mary and Joseph were betrothed or engaged but did not live together during that engagement period. Joseph is called Mary's "husband" (Matt. 1:19), although the relationship was still physically celibate.

In modern culture, engagement is considered a couple's promise of intent for uniting in marriage, although it is not binding. In fact, engagement is seen as the time of deepening intimacy in which a couple has the freedom to make sure that marriage is the step they ought to take. Becoming engaged is the first step toward the joining of two lives, the blending of two personalities and families, replete with the potential of many generations to come.

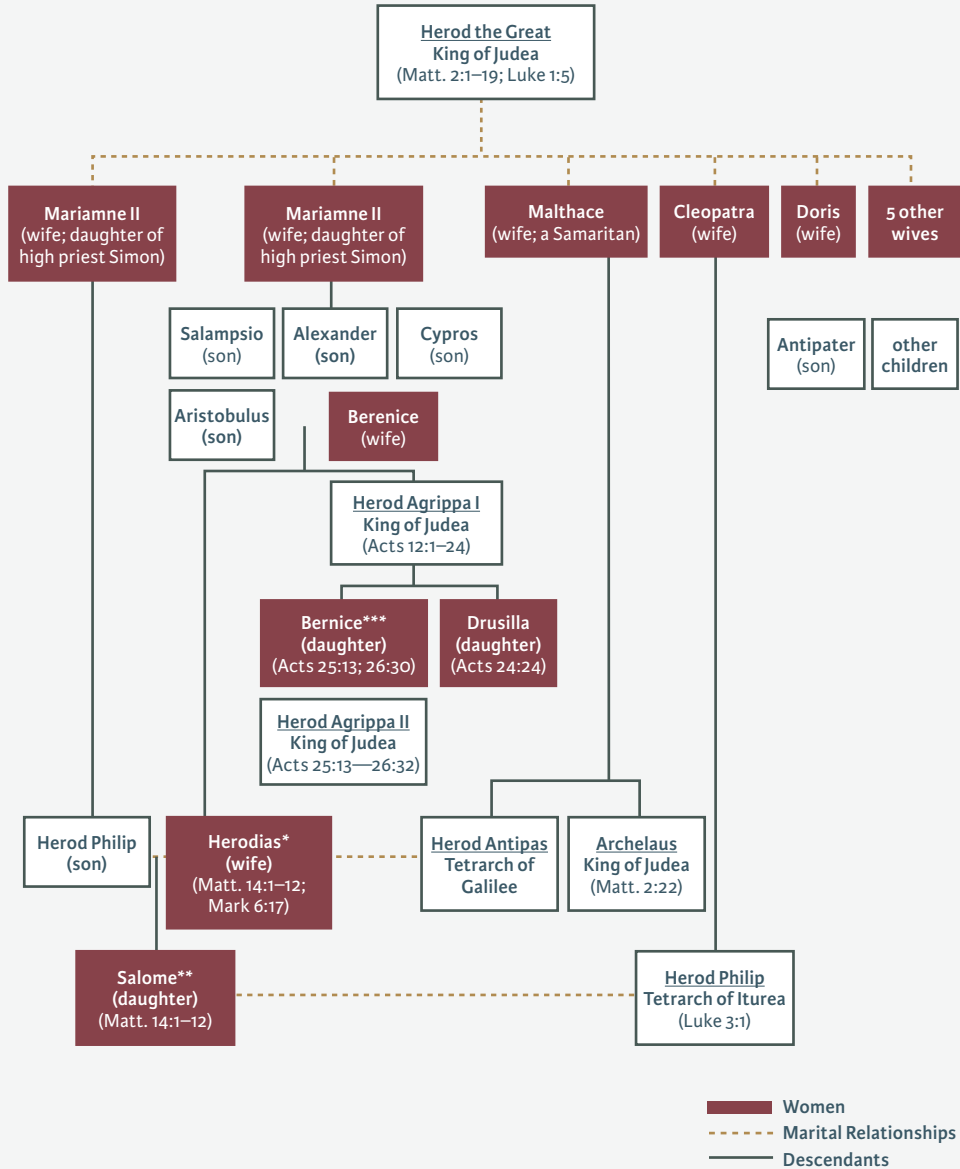
*See also Gen. 24:1–67; 29:15—30:43; notes on Commitment (Matt. 16); Dating (1 Tim. 4); Dowry (1 Kin. 9); Marriage (Gen. 2; 2 Sam. 6; Prov. 5; Hos. 2; Amos 3; 2 Cor. 13; Heb. 12); Romance (Song 2); Weddings (John 2); portrait of Rebekah (Gen. 24)*

**1:1** In the lineage of the Messiah, Matthew highlighted the calling of one man (Abraham) to father the Jewish nation and the calling of one man from that nation (David) to father the line of the kings. If there had been any doubts about Jesus being a son of David, His claim to kingship would have been invalid. "Begot" can mean direct descent instead of direct parentage (v. 2).

**1:2–6** Although the ancestral list does not include everyone, five women are mentioned: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Uriah's wife

(Bathsheba), and Mary. Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba were connected with sexual sins; Rahab and Ruth were not Jewish, and Ruth belonged to the nation of Moab, which had its origin in incest (see Gen. 19:30–37; Deut. 23:3); Mary was a humble Jewish maiden. The fact that Gentile women were included showed in a dramatic way the inclusion of the Gentiles in the blessings of God's redemptive plan. These women were part of God's unique providence in preparing for and bringing the Messiah to His people.

# The Family Tree of Herod the Great



\* Herodias—wife of Herod Philip, wife of Herod Antipas, mother of Salome  
 \*\* Salome—daughter of Herodias and Herod Philip, wife of another Herod Philip  
 \*\*\* Bernice—daughter of Herod Agrippa I, mistress of Titus, consort of Herod Agrippa II

*Christ Born of Mary*

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. <sup>20</sup>But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

<sup>22</sup>So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: <sup>23</sup>*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*”<sup>a</sup> which is translated, “God with us.”

<sup>24</sup>Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, <sup>25</sup>and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son.<sup>a</sup> And he called His name JESUS.

*Wise Men from the East*

**2** Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Je-

rusalem, <sup>2</sup>saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

<sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup>And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

<sup>5</sup>So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> *‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’*”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup>And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found *Him*, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”

<sup>9</sup>When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced

1:23 <sup>a</sup> Isaiah 7:14. Words in oblique type in the New Testament are quoted from the Old Testament. 1:25 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *a Son*. 2:6 <sup>a</sup> Micah 5:2

**1:19** The engagement period was legally binding, requiring a divorce to break it. The engagement period lasted as long as a year, perhaps to provide assurance that the woman was not pregnant by another man (see Engagement). Matthew, as Luke, affirms the virgin conception (vv. 18–25; Luke 1:26–38) and attributes that conception to the Holy Spirit (see Is. 7, The Virgin Birth). Only through the virgin conception could Jesus be both God and man and thus make atonement for sin.

**1:21** Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua (Heb. lit. *Yahweh saves*); Christ (Gk. *christos*) or Messiah (Heb. *mashiach*) is His title, meaning “anointed one.” The royal lineage of Jesus is through Mary, the mother who gave Him birth, and her husband Joseph, who was Jesus’ legal father (v. 20). Most important, Jesus was God’s eternal Son (see Matt. 2:15).

**1:23** The process of naming in biblical times was important in expressing the character and work of the person named (see Is. 45, Naming of Children).

**2:1** The account of the Magi is found only in Matthew, the book that presents Jesus as the Jewish King. The “wise men” (Gk. *magoi*) were magicians or astrologers. They probably came from Persia or Babylon (where wise men were part of the priestly order). Historians had predicted a world ruler from Judea at this time. The belief that a phenomenon of stars an-

nounced special births was widely held. The names of the wise men are not given, but three gifts are mentioned: gold, associated with royalty; frankincense, a costly incense; and myrrh, a prized perfume (v. 11). These men viewed the phenomenon of stars at the time of Jesus’ birth in a distant land, and they could have taken up to two years to reach Judea. The wise men came to the house, not the stable (v. 11), and saw the Child, not the baby (vv. 9, 11).

**2:3, 4** The chief priests and scribes were the ones who had supposedly been watching for this event for hundreds of years. Scribes practiced the highly prized skill of writing and specialized in copying official records, Scripture, and commentaries on Scripture. They had developed additional laws and traditions first to explain Scripture and ultimately to be obeyed as Scripture. For them, Jesus did not qualify as the Messiah because He did not fit these new laws and traditions. They were numbered among the chief opponents to the One about whom Scripture spoke (see Matt. 23:1–39; 26:57; 27:17–26, 39–43).

**2:5, 6** Bethlehem is the place where Ruth (the great grandmother of David) met Boaz (Ruth 1:22—2:6) and where David was born and reared (1 Sam. 16:1, 12, 13; see also 2 Sam. 5:2; Mic. 5:2). This small hamlet is within walking distance of Jerusalem, less than ten miles away.



with exceedingly great joy. <sup>11</sup>And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

<sup>12</sup>Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

### *The Flight into Egypt*

<sup>13</sup>Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.”

<sup>14</sup>When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, <sup>15</sup>and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “*Out of Egypt I called My Son.*”<sup>a</sup>

### *Massacre of the Innocents*

<sup>16</sup>Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

<sup>18</sup> “*A voice was heard in Ramah,  
Lamentation, weeping, and great  
mourning,  
Rachel weeping for her children,  
Refusing to be comforted,  
Because they are no more.*”<sup>a</sup>

### *The Home in Nazareth*

<sup>19</sup>Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, <sup>20</sup>saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child’s life are dead.” <sup>21</sup>Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

<sup>22</sup>But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

### *John the Baptist Prepares the Way*

**3** In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, <sup>2</sup>and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” <sup>3</sup>For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

“*The voice of one crying in the  
wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the LORD;  
Make His paths straight.’*”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Now John himself was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him <sup>6</sup>and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup>But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned

2:15 <sup>a</sup> Hosea 11:1    2:18 <sup>a</sup> Jeremiah 31:15    3:3 <sup>a</sup> Isaiah 40:3

**2:16** Herod the Great built the temple in Jerusalem and also completed various palaces and numerous public works projects. His love for power and heavy taxation pleased Rome but alienated the Jews. A man of terrible paranoia, he did not hesitate to eliminate anyone who might threaten his position (see chart, The Family Tree of Herod the Great). Slaughtering a group of Jewish toddlers in a small town would have been typical of Herod.

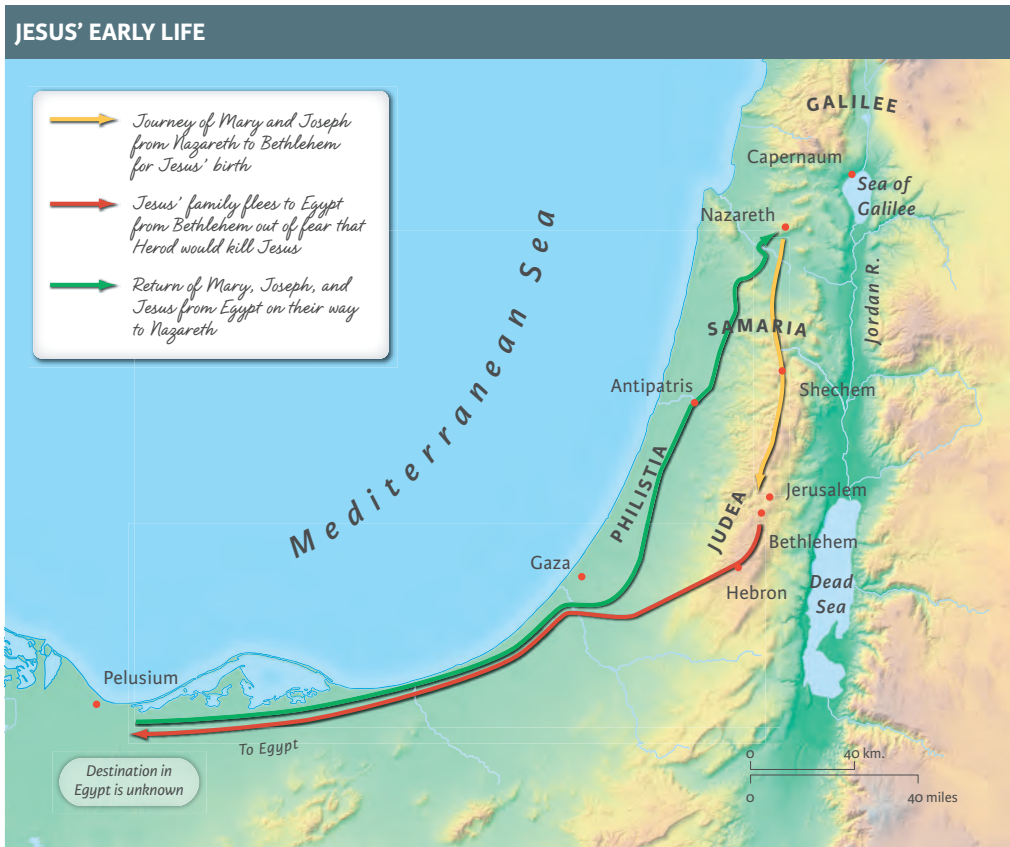
**2:23** Mary received the announcement of Jesus’ birth in Nazareth, where she and Joseph had been reared (Luke 1:26, 27; 2:39; see also Matt. 13:53–58).

**3:1** John was born to the priest Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth, a relative of Jesus’ mother Mary, in their old age. John is similar to Elijah in that he was sent by God, he did not hesitate

to point out evil, he offended many, his message called the people back to God’s righteous ways, and he pointed beyond himself to the Messiah (see Mal. 4:3–6; Matt. 17:1–3).

**3:6** Baptism (Gk. *baptisma*, lit. “immersion,” “dipping,” “submerging”) was a well-known ceremony used both for proselytes coming into Judaism and for a sign of repentance (Lev. 15:13; Num. 19; Is. 1:16; 44:3; Jer. 4:14; Ezek. 36:25; Zech. 13:1). In Judaism, self-immersion was the practice. For John, baptism called for an administrator. For Christians, baptism is a testimony that pictures the death, burial, and Resurrection of Christ.

**3:7** The Pharisees were an influential religious group (see chart, Jewish Sects).



you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup>Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup>and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. <sup>10</sup>And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup>I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.<sup>a</sup> <sup>12</sup>His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but

He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

### *John Baptizes Jesus*

<sup>13</sup>Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup>And John *tried* to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"

<sup>15</sup>But Jesus answered and said to him, "**Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.**" Then he allowed Him.

<sup>16</sup>When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold,

3:11 <sup>a</sup> M-Text omits *and fire*.

**3:9** The Jews felt that being descendants of Abraham ensured their standing with God. John informed them that no one had special privileges with God, and no one was indispensable (Matt. 21:43).

**3:10–12** The severity and immediacy of judgment is indicated by two metaphors: the ax at the root of the tree and the winnowing or separating the grain from the chaff. When

tossed in the air, the grain would fall to the ground while the empty shells or chaff blew away. This separation process is also pictured as the division of the sons of the kingdom from the sons of the wicked one (Matt. 13:38), the wise from the foolish (Matt. 7:24–27), and the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:31–46).

**3:16** Through Jesus' baptism He proclaimed publicly His son-



the heavens were opened to Him, and He<sup>a</sup> saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. <sup>17</sup>And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

### *Satan Tempts Jesus*

**4** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. <sup>3</sup>Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”

<sup>4</sup>But He answered and said, “*It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’*”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup>and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

*‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’*

and,

*‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’*”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, “*It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’*”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup>And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”

<sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to him, “*Away with you,<sup>a</sup> Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship*

*the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’*”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

### *Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry*

<sup>12</sup>Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. <sup>13</sup>And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup>that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

<sup>15</sup> “*The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,  
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles:*

<sup>16</sup> *The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light,  
And upon those who sat in the region  
and shadow of death  
Light has dawned.*”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>17</sup>From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”

### *Four Fishermen Called as Disciples*

<sup>18</sup>And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup>Then He said to them, “*Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.*”<sup>20</sup>They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

<sup>21</sup>Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John

<sup>3:16</sup> <sup>a</sup> Or *he* <sup>4:4</sup> <sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 8:3 <sup>4:6</sup> <sup>a</sup> Psalm 91:11, 12 <sup>4:7</sup> <sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 6:16 <sup>4:10</sup> <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *Get behind Me.* <sup>b</sup> Deuteronomy 6:13 <sup>4:16</sup> <sup>a</sup> Isaiah 9:1, 2

ship, identified Himself with the people He came to save, and set forth His redemptive mission. The triune God is presented: Jesus is the Son in the flesh; the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove; the Father makes His voice heard from heaven (see Mark 1:10, 11, note).

**4:1, 2** The Spirit was responsible for both the encounter and the 40-day fast. The biblical concept of “tempting” is a testing to demonstrate genuineness, faithfulness, and character (see Heb. 2, Temptation). Jesus did not pretend to be tempted; His temptation was real. These temptations affirmed His qualification to be God’s Messiah and our Redeemer.

**4:3** All references to the tempter are personal, establishing beyond doubt that Satan is not just an evil influence but a person (see chart, A Portrait of the Adversary).

**4:3–10** Jesus’ defense consisted of two things:

- Scripture—The first words of Jesus as He entered His public ministry were, “It is written” (v. 4).
- Immediate obedience.

These same weapons are available to believers. Satan did not attempt to argue with Scripture. Jesus eventually received from the Father all Satan had offered to Him: the provision of bread (Matt. 14:13–21), angels to minister to Him (Matt. 4:11), and rule over both earth and heaven (Matt. 28:18).

**4:11** Though Satan finally departed, this occasion was not the sum of Jesus’ earthly temptations. Jesus was tempted many other times (Matt. 26:38; Mark 8:33; Luke 22:28; John 6:15; 7:1–9; Heb. 2:18; 4:15, 16).

his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, <sup>22</sup>and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

### *Jesus Heals a Great Multitude*

<sup>23</sup>And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. <sup>24</sup>Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. <sup>25</sup>Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

### *The Beatitudes*

**5** And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. <sup>2</sup>Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

- 3 “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,  
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 Blessed *are* those who mourn,  
For they shall be comforted.
- 5 Blessed *are* the meek,  
For they shall inherit the earth.
- 6 Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst  
for righteousness,  
For they shall be filled.
- 7 Blessed *are* the merciful,  
For they shall obtain mercy.
- 8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart,  
For they shall see God.
- 9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers,  
For they shall be called sons of God.

**5:1—7:29** The Sermon on the Mount is the first in a series of five discourses about the Christian life, both present and future. Its basic premise is that the Christian life has no neutral zones free from God. The Lord is sovereign, all-powerful, and omnipresent (see Job 23; 42; Jer. 23, Attributes of God). Believers do not make Him the Sovereign or Lord of their lives; He already is. Whether or not they are living as His subjects does not affect His sovereignty; their obedience or lack of it simply determines what kind of kingdom subjects they are.

**5:3—12** Beatitudes are found elsewhere in Scripture, most often in the Psalms, though there are usually no more than two or three together (see chart, Beatitudes in the Book of Revelation). The distinctiveness of these Beatitudes is that they are directly related to the kingdom of heaven, and the blessings

<sup>10</sup> Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,  
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

WORRY . . . COMPROMISES YOUR JOY,  
CRAMPS YOUR PEACE, AND CONFINES  
YOUR FREEDOM.

*June Hunt*

### *Believers Are Salt and Light*

<sup>13</sup>“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

<sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. <sup>16</sup>Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

### *Christ Fulfills the Law*

<sup>17</sup>“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup>For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. <sup>19</sup>Whoever therefore

promised are due to the presence and activity of Jesus (see chart, Beatitudes for Women).

**5:13—16** Both salt and light are forces that change an alien environment permanently. Salt enhances flavor and preserves or slows decay only if the salt itself stays pure. Sodium chloride, a stable compound, cannot lose its saltiness, but it can lose its effectiveness by being diluted. This point is the application for Christians. Light symbolizes purity and divine revelation. If Christians were only slowing the decay, their mission would seem rather bleak, but they are also to be beacons of light to those who will respond.

**5:17** The Law and the Prophets refers to the OT. Jesus is the subject and the goal of the OT and the fulfillment of its prophecies (Matt. 1:22; 2:6, 15, 17, 18, 23; 3:3; 4:14—16).



## REARRIAGE

## AN AWESOME CHALLENGE

The question of remarriage is closely related to the matter of divorce. The Scripture lifts up permanent, monogamous union as the plan of the Creator (Matt. 19:4–6). To understand the strong language of Scripture concerning this matter, look at the whole of Scripture to see how God regards marriage. The marriage bond between husband and wife is the same kinship bond that exists between parents and children and between God and His creation (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:6).

Some argue that remarriage is never permissible (Mark 10:11, 12). Others note that the divorce teaching of Jesus includes an “exception” (Matt. 5:32; 19:9) and conclude that this implies permission to remarry. Still others suggest that the understood meaning of “divorce” in ancient law included freedom to remarry, suggesting that remarriage is forbidden only after an invalid divorce. Finally, there are those who deny that Jesus gives a justification for divorce in the modern sense, although they allow that remarriage is permissible if reconciliation with a divorced spouse is rendered impossible because of death or remarriage of the divorced spouse to another partner (1 Cor. 7:10, 11), or if the divorced spouse is a non-believer opposed to reconciliation (1 Cor. 7:15).

Despite these differences of biblical interpretation, some important conclusions can be drawn:

- Once remarriage follows divorce, there is no turning back (Deut. 24:1–4), and the tearing apart of a marriage is painful, leaving its scars on all who are touched by the tragedy.
- God sees the one-flesh relationship as permanent and binding because it is the picture He has chosen to portray His relationship to His children, and thus He guards the home with great zeal (Mal. 2:16).
- Jesus gives no divine directive nor even acceptable excuses for breaking this holy covenant but rather observes that the hardness of the human heart makes such tragedy a reality in this sinful world (Matt. 19:8).
- The role of the church and of believers must always be redemptive. With God, forgiveness is as if it never happened. No sin or tragedy is beyond God’s forgiveness.

After seeking and receiving God’s forgiveness, a woman who remarries has a new understanding of God’s incredible grace. She must then seek anew an understanding of God’s plan for marriage (Gen. 2:24), commit herself wholeheartedly to pursuing His plan, and consider her vows of marriage binding before the Lord (Matt. 19:5, 6).

See also Luke 16:18; Rom. 7:2, 3; 1 Cor. 7:10–16, 27, 28; notes on Commitment (Matt. 16); Divorce (Matt. 19); Marriage (Gen. 2; 2 Sam. 6; Prov. 5; Hos. 2; Amos 3; 2 Cor. 13; Heb. 12); Step-parenthood (Gen. 35)

breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>20</sup> For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

### *Murder Begins in the Heart*

<sup>21</sup>“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘*You shall not murder*,<sup>a</sup> and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’<sup>22</sup> But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause<sup>a</sup> shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to

5:21 <sup>a</sup>Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17 5:22 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits without a cause.

**5:21–43** Jesus repudiated wrong thoughts and attitudes with astounding severity. “Raca” (Aram. lit. “empty headed”) was a term of dehumanization (v. 22). “Fool” (Gk. *moros*) may also be understood as “rebel.” Jesus identified wrong attitudes

as triggering other sins (vv. 21, 22). A woman’s personal relationships directly affect her relationship (though not her position) with God (see Matt. 6:14, 15).

his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. <sup>23</sup>Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup>Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup>Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

PEOPLE BEFORE THINGS; PEOPLE BEFORE  
PROJECTS; FAMILY BEFORE FRIENDS; HUSBAND  
BEFORE CHILDREN; HUSBAND BEFORE  
PARENTS; TITHE BEFORE WANTS; BIBLE  
BEFORE OPINIONS; JESUS BEFORE ALL.

*Jo Ann Leavell*

### *Adultery in the Heart*

<sup>27</sup>"You have heard that it was said to those of old,<sup>a</sup> 'You shall not commit adultery.'<sup>b</sup> <sup>28</sup>But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup>If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. <sup>30</sup>And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

### *Marriage Is Sacred and Binding*

<sup>31</sup>"Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'<sup>32</sup>But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality<sup>a</sup> causes her to com-

mit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

### *Jesus Forbids Oaths*

<sup>33</sup>"Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.'<sup>34</sup>But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; <sup>35</sup>nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup>Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

### *Go the Second Mile*

<sup>38</sup>"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'<sup>a</sup> <sup>39</sup>But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. <sup>40</sup>If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. <sup>41</sup>And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. <sup>42</sup>Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

### *Love Your Enemies*

<sup>43</sup>"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor'<sup>a</sup> and hate your enemy.'<sup>44</sup>But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,<sup>a</sup> <sup>45</sup>that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup>For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup>And if you greet your brethren<sup>a</sup> only, what do you do more

5:27 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *to those of old*. <sup>b</sup> Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18 5:32 <sup>a</sup> Or *fornication*  
5:38 <sup>a</sup> Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21  
5:43 <sup>a</sup> Compare Leviticus 19:18 5:44 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits three clauses from this verse, leaving, "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."  
5:47 <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *friends*.

**5:31, 32** The OT allowed a man to give his wife a "certificate of divorce" if she found no favor because of uncleanness (Deut. 24:1). This permission was abused, and men divorced

their wives for many different reasons. Jesus rejected this practice because of the sanctity of marriage (see Matt. 19, Divorce).

## *Beatitudes for Women*

BLESSED ARE ...	CHARACTER QUALITY	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES
those who are poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3)	Humility	Stripped of pride and sensitive to God's ministry on their behalf	Is. 61:1; Luke 4:16–21; 7:22
those who mourn (Matt. 5:4)	Sensitivity	Responsive to personal sinfulness and tenderhearted toward one another	Is. 61:2; Eccl. 3:1–8; Luke 19:41; John 11:33, 35
those who are meek (Matt. 5:5)	Meekness	Demonstration of self-control and submission	Matt. 6:33; 1 Pet. 3:1–7
those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5:6)	Obedience	Desire to hear and do the will of God	Luke 1:53
those who are merciful (Matt. 5:7)	Compassion	Outworking of faith to meet the needs of others	Luke 1:58
those who are pure in heart (Matt. 5:8)	Holiness	Lifestyle of set-apartness, including thoughts and actions	Ps. 24:4–6
those who are peacemakers (Matt. 5:9)	Reconciliation	Forbearance instead of retaliation; forgiveness of wrongs; restoration of fellowship	Rom. 3:25; 12:18; Eph. 4:32; Phil. 1:3–5; Titus 3:2; 1 John 1:7
those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matt. 5:10)	Commitment	Steadfast loyalty that cannot be broken	Luke 13:35; 2 Thess. 2:15–17; 2 Tim. 2:3
those who are reviled and persecuted (Matt. 5:11)	Patience	Willingness to endure suffering	1 Pet. 2:19–21; 3:14; Rev. 12:11

than others? Do not even the tax collectors<sup>b</sup> do so? <sup>48</sup>Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

### *Do Good to Please God*

**6** “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your

Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.<sup>a</sup>

### *The Model Prayer*

<sup>5</sup>“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. <sup>6</sup>But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.<sup>a</sup> <sup>7</sup>And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For they

<sup>5:47</sup> <sup>b</sup> NU-Text reads *Gentiles*.

<sup>6:4</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *openly*.

<sup>6:6</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *openly*.

## Lessons From the Model Prayer

**Prepare**

- Pure heart and motive (Matt. 6:5–8).
- Private conversation intent on invoking His presence (Matt. 6:6).
- Meaningful communication (Matt. 6:7, 8; Luke 18:1–8).
- Presentation of specific requests (Matt. 6:9–13; see 1 Sam. 12:23, 24).

**Pray**

PHRASE	MEANING	REFERENCES
“Our Father in heaven” (Matt. 6:9).	Recognize who He is—the PERSON.	Rom. 8:15; see Is. 64:8
“Hallowed be Your name” (Matt. 6:9).	Adore Him because of who He is—PRAISE.	Ps. 18:3; 96:8
“Your kingdom come/ Your will be done” (Matt. 6:10)	Seek and do God’s will. His Word is the path to finding His will—PURPOSE.	1 John 5:14
“Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11).	Ask God to meet even your most mundane needs to accomplish your spiritual duties—PETITION.	Phil. 4:9
“And forgive us” (Matt. 6:12).	Ask God to forgive your debts or your failures to give obedience due Him—PARDON.	Ps. 66:18; Hos. 14:2
“And do not lead us into temptation” (Matt. 6:13).	Seek a way of escape from the evil of temptation—PROTECTION, not removal from any trials but from judgment that comes when you are overcome by trials.	1 Cor. 10:13; James 1:2, 3
“For Yours is the kingdom” (Matt. 6:13).	This benediction is also a doxology—PRAISE AND PERSON.	

*This model teaches the manner and method of prayer and shares matters for which to pray.*

think that they will be heard for their many words.

<sup>8</sup>“Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. <sup>9</sup>In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.

<sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done

On earth as *it is* in heaven.

<sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread.

<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts,  
As we forgive our debtors.

<sup>13</sup> And do not lead us into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.  
For Yours is the kingdom and the power  
and the glory forever. Amen.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>14</sup>“For if you forgive men their trespasses,  
your heavenly Father will also forgive you.  
<sup>15</sup>But if you do not forgive men their trespasses,  
neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

6:13 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *For Yours* through *Amen*.

**6:9–13** The model prayer illustrates how to pray rather than prescribing necessary words to use (see chart, Lessons from the Model Prayer). The Jews did not address God directly as Father but used this personal title to describe God’s relationship

to Israel or to refer to Him as Creator. “Our Father” was a new title used by Jesus, who chose the term “Abba” (carrying the more intimate sense of “daddy”) and invited all who belong to Him to do the same (see Gal. 4:6).





## PRIORITIES

## PLANNING YOUR DAYS

Often women are overwhelmed by too many things to do (see Luke 10:40) because there are many good choices concerning how to apportion their time (Eccl. 3:1–8). To set priorities is to determine what is important to you and how your time is to be apportioned—that is, who and what will take precedence over other parts of life.

Scripture contains guidelines for God's order (Ps. 119:105, 130):

- Your personal relationship to Jesus Christ (Matt. 6:33; Phil. 3:8);
- Your commitment to home and family—especially spouse and children (Gen. 2:24; Ps. 127:3; Eph. 5:22, 25; 6:4; 1 Tim. 3:2–5; 5:8; 1 Pet. 3:7) and even to the extended family, as so beautifully portrayed in the relationship between Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 1:16, 17);
- Your responsibility to employer and tasks assigned (see 1 Thess. 4:11, 12); and
- Your service to God through ministries in the church and involvement in the community (see Col. 3:17).

Once you have these divinely appointed criteria in mind, you are ready to sort out the opportunities that come (Ps. 32:8) and move forward in the most effective and productive management of time and resources. A very practical way of accomplishing this is to list all the tasks before you, consider each prayerfully as to merit and timeliness (see Col. 2:5), arrange them in order of importance, then proceed to do the most important things first (see 1 Cor. 14:40).

To be consistent in your priorities, consider these admonitions: assign God first place (Matt. 6:33); consult with the Father regularly in your quiet time (Ps. 55:17; Luke 5:15, 16); examine your own heart (Eccl. 3:1); and keep yourself spiritually fit (Is. 30:15). Jesus met with the Father in intensive prayer and meditation to determine His priorities and to prepare Himself for each day (see Luke 5:15, 16).

Note also these cautions: Put people before things (see 2 Cor. 8:5). Do not limit your investment in those you love, and others who cross your path, to money and gifts. Look for ways to invest yourself, your time, your energies. Family must be more important than occupation since Scripture clearly states that there is no success if the family is lost (1 Tim. 3:5; 5:8; Titus 2:4, 5). Sometimes you must say “no,” as did even Jesus when some seemingly good requests for His time did not fit the overall plan for His ministry (Luke 4:42, 43). The underlying principle in determining priorities is always that spiritual values must overshadow worldly pursuits (2 Cor. 4:18).

See also Prov. 16:3; Luke 12:31; Eph. 5:15, 16; notes on Goal Setting (Is. 58); Organization (John 9); Time Management (Ps. 31)

### *Fasting to Be Seen Only by God*

<sup>16</sup>“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may ap-

pear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. <sup>17</sup>But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>so that you do not appear to men to

**6:16–18** Fasting (v. 18), together with prayer (v. 6) and good deeds (v. 2), are outworkings of the Christian life that are exclusively between the believer and God. Fasting (Heb. *tsum*, lit. “to cover over”—as the mouth; Gk. *nesteia*, lit. “to abstain from food”) could be observed completely for a short time or from certain foods for a longer period (Dan. 10:3). The ancient Israelites practiced fasting on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:29–31; 23:27–32, in which “afflict your souls” is a reference to fasting). At various other times fasting was practiced as a sign of mourning (1 Sam. 31:13; Esth. 4:1–3), as an act of

personal or corporate repentance (1 Sam. 7:6; Dan. 9:3–19), as a means of gaining God's attention on behalf of suffering or sickness (2 Sam. 12:16–23), in a critical time of decision making (2 Chr. 20:1–18; Esth. 4:16; 1 Cor. 7:5), or as the natural result of urgent prayer (2 Cor. 6:5; 11:27). Jesus assumed that His disciples would fast. He Himself fasted for 40 days to prepare for His ministry and to fortify His soul for His confrontation with Satan (Matt. 4:1, 2). He affirmed fasting as an accompaniment to times of intense prayer (Matt. 17:21). Early Christians fasted in preparation for major events (Acts 13:2, 3;

be fasting, but to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.<sup>a</sup>

### *Lay Up Treasures in Heaven*

<sup>19</sup>“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

### *The Lamp of the Body*

<sup>22</sup>“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

### *You Cannot Serve God and Riches*

<sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

### *Do Not Worry*

<sup>25</sup>“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup>Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

<sup>28</sup>“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; <sup>29</sup>and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

<sup>31</sup>“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ <sup>32</sup>For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup>But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. <sup>34</sup>Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

### *Do Not Judge*

**7** “Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup>For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. <sup>3</sup>And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup>Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

<sup>6</sup>“Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

6:18 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *openly*.

14:23). The purpose of a spiritual fast is always the same: to draw the believer closer to God (Joel 2:12–15). From the most humble circumstances, one reaches out to God. The Lord is not moved by fasting itself but rather by the turning of the hearts of His people toward righteousness (Acts 10:30–33). The Bible repeatedly cautions that true fasting is not merely abstinence from food (Matt. 9:14, 15). Fasting must be accompanied by sincere repentance and good works (Is. 58:3–7) and must never be done to impress others, as mere ritualism or as a source of spiritual pride (Luke 18:10–14; see also Dan. 2:23, note; Luke 24:47, note; Jer. 33; Heb. 4; 1 John 5; 3 John, Prayer; Eph. 6, Spiritual Warfare; Esth. 2, Esther).

**6:24** *Mammon* (Aram.), a reference to wealth and riches, is offered as one of two options: a relationship with God or with possessions (see vv. 19–21).

**6:25** Worry has the connotation of dividing, separating, and distracting. A woman cannot worry and trust God at the same time because worry destroys the single-hearted devotion Jesus described (v. 33).

**7:1–6** Judge (Gk. *krinō*) here has the sense of “condemn” or “avenge.” The reference is not to a legal judgment but to a critical spirit. The foolishness of a judgmental attitude is illustrated in the hyperbole of the speck and the plank (vv. 3–5). Jesus also used the term “hypocrite” (Gk. lit. “to judge under”) to describe the insincerity of the Pharisees and scribes (see chart, Jewish Sects). Though a critical spirit is condemned, discernment enables the believer to confront and restore fellow believers who have erred. Dogs were wild animals, and swine were the ultimate example of sacrilege for the Jews. They picture all that is vicious, unclean, and abominable; they describe

*Keep Asking, Seeking, Knocking*

<sup>7</sup>“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>9</sup>Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup>Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? <sup>11</sup>If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! <sup>12</sup>Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

*The Narrow Way*

<sup>13</sup>“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. <sup>14</sup>Because<sup>a</sup> narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

*You Will Know Them by Their Fruits*

<sup>15</sup>“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup>You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup>Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup>Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup>Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

*I Never Knew You*

<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. <sup>22</sup>Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ <sup>23</sup>And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

*Build on the Rock*

<sup>24</sup>“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: <sup>25</sup>and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

<sup>26</sup>“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: <sup>27</sup>and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

<sup>28</sup>And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, <sup>29</sup>for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

*Jesus Cleanses a Leper*

**8** When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. <sup>2</sup>And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

7:14 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *How . . . !*

committed God-haters, of whom we are to be aware and from whom we are to separate ourselves (vv. 15–20).

**7:7** Continual prayer is the secret to accomplishment: asking, seeking, and knocking. The goal is not a fixed time of prayer but rather a lifestyle in which prayer becomes like the air we breathe. The promise is absolute. Even if the instructions previously given seem impossible to follow, God will give believers the ability to follow them when they abide in Him (John 15:4–7). Answered prayer is guaranteed because these prayers are based upon the relationship of the disciples of Jesus with God, who responds to them as Father. Their prayers may not be answered as specifically requested because they do not have the Father’s perspective on what is ultimately best.

**7:12** Jesus framed this principle, known as “The Golden Rule,” positively, rather than negatively. By doing so, He included omissions (what should not be done) as well as com-

missions (what should be done). This epigram expresses the heart of the Christian life.

**7:15–20** The criteria for judging or the means for discerning what is truth and what is not is set forth here. These verses might seem in conflict with the admonition to avoid a judgmental spirit (vv. 1–5), but the intervening passage concerning prayer serves as a bridge. Through prayer, believers determine their own faults. Once they deal with themselves, they have access to a clear view of problems in others. Only God is the ultimate Judge (vv. 21, 22).

**8:2, 3** Whether the leprosy of that time is the same as the modern disease is uncertain. The disease was destructive, debilitating, and highly infectious. To the Jews, leprosy also was a sign of being cursed (Num. 12:10–12) and resulted in ceremonial defilement (Lev. 13:3; 22:4; see Lev. 10, Clean vs. Unclean). Jesus again demonstrated His uniqueness by making the unclean clean.

## Peter's Mother-in-Law

Each of the synoptic gospels includes the account of Jesus' healing the mother of Peter's wife. The significance of the story is twofold: first, the immediate restoration to health, and second, its symbolic nature. Matthew uses the incident to stress Christ's sovereignty; Mark, to illustrate His servanthood; Luke, to demonstrate His compassionate humanity.

In a home in Capernaum, described by Mark as that of Peter and Andrew, the woman lay ill. Luke, the physician, informs us that her fever was high, and the accounts together tell us that the family requested Jesus to heal her. She was important to them as well as to Jesus. He took her by the hand, her strength returned immediately, and she got up and began serving the guests.

Jesus' miracle in raising this woman to life not only showed love for her and her family, but also reinforced His valuation of women in a society where many considered them to be inferior.

The healing also calls attention to Jesus' pity for His own race. He displayed His power to a Jewish mother, a symbol of His deep desire that His own nation return to their covenant-keeping God. It is one more touch of God's indescribable love. The woman responded by serving Him, a stellar example to every woman who feels His touch.

See also Mark 1:29–31; Luke 4:38, 39; charts on In-Law or In-Love; Women and Jesus

<sup>3</sup>Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, **"I am willing; be cleansed."** Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

<sup>4</sup>And Jesus said to him, **"See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."**

### *Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant*

<sup>5</sup>Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, <sup>6</sup>saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented."

<sup>7</sup>And Jesus said to him, **"I will come and heal him."**

<sup>8</sup>The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>9</sup>For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

<sup>10</sup>When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, **"Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great**

**faith, not even in Israel! <sup>11</sup>And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>12</sup>But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." <sup>13</sup>Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you."** And his servant was healed that same hour.

### *Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed*

<sup>14</sup>Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. <sup>15</sup>So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.<sup>a</sup>

### *Many Healed in the Evening*

<sup>16</sup>When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, <sup>17</sup>that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

8:15 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *Him*.

**8:5** Centurions were Roman military officers, typically in charge of 100 soldiers, representing the emperor's authority (see Mark 15:39; Acts 10; 27:3). Usually they pursued military service as a career.

**8:11, 12** Instead of limiting the kingdom to the physical descendants of Abraham (as the Jews did), Jesus taught that it was open to all. Faith alone would determine a position in God's family (see Matt. 3:9, note).

## *Women Healed by Jesus*

WOMAN	HER FAITH	JESUS' RESPONSE	HER RESPONSE
Peter's mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14, 15; Mark 1:30, 31; Luke 4:38, 39).	None stated, although her family's faith was demonstrated.	He saw, touched, and healed her fever.	She arose and served those present.
All who were sick (Matt. 8:16, 17; Mark 1:32–34).	The people came in faith.	He cast out the spirits and healed all who were sick.	None stated.
The hemorrhaging woman (Matt. 9:20–22; Mark 5:25– 34; Luke 8:43–48).	Her faith caught the attention of Jesus.	He felt her touch, saw her, and healed her.	She must have rejoiced in the healing she sought.
The Canaanite woman's daughter (Matt. 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30).	The mother expressed her faith by her persistence. She worshiped Jesus.	He heard and answered her request and healed her daughter.	None stated.
The infirm woman (Luke 13:11–13).	Her faith was not stated.	He saw, called, and healed her.	She responded to His healing, being made straight and glorifying God.

*“He Himself took our infirmities  
And bore our sicknesses.”<sup>a</sup>*

### *The Cost of Discipleship*

<sup>18</sup>And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. <sup>19</sup>Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.”

<sup>20</sup>And Jesus said to him, “**Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.**”

<sup>21</sup>Then another of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

<sup>22</sup>But Jesus said to him, “**Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.**”

### *Wind and Wave Obey Jesus*

<sup>23</sup>Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. <sup>24</sup>And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat

was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. <sup>25</sup>Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!”

<sup>26</sup>But He said to them, “**Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?**” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. <sup>27</sup>So the men marveled, saying, “Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”

### *Two Demon-Possessed Men Healed*

<sup>28</sup>When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes,<sup>a</sup> there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. <sup>29</sup>And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

<sup>30</sup>Now a good way off from them there

8:17 <sup>a</sup> Isaiah 53:4    8:28 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Gadarenes*.

**8:28–34** The region of the Gergesenes lay in the Gentile territory of the Decapolis. This fact explains the presence of pigs, which would have been repulsive to the Jews. Jesus was seeking rest, not ministry. Two men are mentioned here, while only one is cited in the record of the same incident in Mark and Luke. Perhaps Matthew had personal knowledge of a second

man, or one man may have been more prominent and thus the only one of two mentioned. Demon possession is to be distinguished from mental or emotional illness. It involves evil spirits who, though unseen, indwell and control individuals and their actions. The demons in these verses spoke and were spoken to, but they were no match for Jesus.



was a herd of many swine feeding. <sup>31</sup>So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away<sup>a</sup> into the herd of swine.”

<sup>32</sup>And He said to them, “Go.” So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

<sup>33</sup>Then those who kept *them* fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what *had happened* to the demon-possessed *men*. <sup>34</sup>And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged *Him* to depart from their region.

### *Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic*

**9** So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. <sup>2</sup>Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.”

<sup>3</sup>And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!”

<sup>4</sup>But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? <sup>5</sup>For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? <sup>6</sup>But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” <sup>7</sup>And he arose and departed to his house.

<sup>8</sup>Now when the multitudes saw *it*, they marveled<sup>a</sup> and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

### *Matthew the Tax Collector*

<sup>9</sup>As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him.

<sup>10</sup>Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the ta-

ble in the house, *that* behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. <sup>11</sup>And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

<sup>12</sup>When Jesus heard *that*, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. <sup>13</sup>But go and learn what *this* means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’<sup>a</sup> For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”<sup>b</sup>

### *Jesus Is Questioned About Fasting*

<sup>14</sup>Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast often,<sup>a</sup> but Your disciples do not fast?”

<sup>15</sup>And Jesus said to them, “Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. <sup>16</sup>No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. <sup>17</sup>Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

### *A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed*

<sup>18</sup>While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.” <sup>19</sup>So Jesus arose and followed him, and so *did* His disciples.

<sup>20</sup>And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. <sup>21</sup>For

8:31 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *send us*. 9:8 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *were afraid*. 9:13 <sup>a</sup> Hosea 6:6 <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *to repentance*. 9:14 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text brackets *often* as disputed.

**9:14** Eating in biblical times had ramifications beyond physical nourishment or social enjoyment. It could have religious significance when accompanying worship, festivals, and covenant-making. Fasting (or “afflicting” the soul) could also have religious significance such as repentance (Lev. 16:29–31), obedience, responding to a loss (2 Sam. 1:12), preparation for a great event (1 Sam. 7:6), and preparation for communication with God (Deut. 9:9; see Matt. 6:16–18, note).

**9:20–22** The woman had several things against her:

- 1) She was a woman (see The Hemorrhaging Woman);
- 2) She approached Jesus at one of the busiest times of His ministry; and
- 3) Her bleeding was considered unclean, and rabbis were not to touch or to be touched by someone bleeding (Lev. 15:25–33).



## The Hemorrhaging Woman Who Was Healed

For 12 years this woman had suffered with chronic hemorrhaging. Visiting physicians had only given her more pain, depleted her funds, and left her worse than when she began. She had tried everything. She could have become a legitimate cynic. Then she heard about Jesus.

Her approach to Jesus was different from most. She came from behind and touched the edge of His outer garment, hoping no one, including Jesus, would notice. We are not told whether she felt unworthy to talk to Him, fearful because of her uncleanness (see Lev. 15:25–33), or concerned that there would be no chance of an audience with Him in such a crowd. We are told that she had enough faith in the person of Christ to believe that just touching His clothes would prove life-changing, and she was right. Though the passage makes clear that her body was healed at the time she reached out to him, that was not enough for Jesus. He wanted to give her more.

Jesus came to an abrupt halt and demanded, “Who touched Me?” The disciples were incredulous. “What was He talking about?” They saw the many, but He saw the one. Power had gone out of Him, but His power had not been depleted. The healing had not been completed. She was more than a hemorrhaging body; she was a needy woman. When this woman contacted God—He knew and she knew, though no other was aware. Jesus would not move until she approached Him.

Her approach was three-faceted: She came forward trembling with fear, fell down at His feet, and told the whole truth. He gave her a fourfold response: He called her “daughter” (an intimate and endearing term), assured her that her body was healed (by her faith, not His clothes), sent her away free from all anxiety (go in peace), and healed (Gk. *sozo*, “saved,” Mark 5:34) her soul.

Between the healing of a demon-possessed man and the raising of a dead girl, this woman’s situation could be considered a lesser concern by human measurements, but not by Christ. He stops for everyone.

*See also Mark 5:25–34; Luke 8:43–48; notes on Healing (James 5)*

she said to herself, “If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.” <sup>22</sup>But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, “**Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.**” And the woman was made well from that hour.

<sup>23</sup>When Jesus came into the ruler’s house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, <sup>24</sup>He said to them, “**Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.**” And they ridiculed Him. <sup>25</sup>But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. <sup>26</sup>And the report of this went out into all that land.

### *Two Blind Men Healed*

<sup>27</sup>When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, “Son of David, have mercy on us!”

<sup>28</sup>And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, “**Do you believe that I am able to do this?**”

They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”

<sup>29</sup>Then He touched their eyes, saying, “**According to your faith let it be to you.**” <sup>30</sup>And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, “**See that no one knows it.**” <sup>31</sup>But when they had departed,

The other gospels give more details (Mark 5:25–34; Luke 8:43–48). Though the woman was healed when she touched Jesus, she needed an encounter with Him. She is the only person Jesus addressed as daughter.

**9:25** Peter, James, and John were the only ones invited to be at the Transfiguration and at the intimate prayer time in

Gethsemane. Perhaps this occasion was considered as important because it was the first time Jesus raised someone from the dead. Jesus had shown His power over diseases, physical infirmities, supernatural beings, and nature. Here He showed His power over death (see Mark 5, Jairus’s Resurrected Daughter).

## *Women and the Parables of Jesus*

PARABLE	AUDIENCE	APPLICATION
The lamp under a basket (Matt. 5:14–16; Mark 4:21, 22; Luke 8:16, 17).	To the disciples.	Life and words should give personal testimony to God's redemptive and transforming grace.
The marriage (Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19, 20; Luke 5:34, 35).	To the Pharisees and the disciples of John.	Joy will be found in Christ's companionship.
The patched garment (Matt. 9:16; Mark 2:21; Luke 5:36).	To the Pharisees and the disciples of John.	Jesus did not come to adapt to the old order of legalism but to make all things new.
The children in the marketplace (Matt. 11:16, 17; Luke 7:31, 32).	To the multitudes concerning John the Baptist.	Those who rejected Jesus and John could not be pleased. Beware of focusing on personal whims.
The leaven (Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:20, 21).	To the multitude on the seashore.	Beware of sin that makes its way into life to corrupt and draw away from the good and true.
The pearl of great price (Matt. 13:45, 46).	To the disciples.	The relative value of the gospel exceeded all else.
The wedding garment (Matt. 22:10–14).	To the chief priests and the Pharisees.	Keep your life pure and holy.
The wise and foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1–13).	To the disciples on the Mount of Olives.	Always be prepared and watchful.
The wedding feast (Matt. 22:2–9; Luke 14:16–23).	To the chief priests and the Pharisees.	Do not reject God's invitation to salvation.
The lost coin** (Luke 15:8–10).	To the Pharisees and scribes.	Remember Christ's love for sinners and His determination to draw them to Himself.
The persistent widow (Luke 18:1–8).	To the disciples.	Persevere in prayer.

**\*\*Biblical women often wore a frontlet (Heb. *semedi*) on their foreheads. This adornment was made of coins (perhaps part of the woman's dowry) and signified betrothal or marriage. The monetary value of the coins was not as important as the sentimental value and symbolism of commitment.**

**A parable is a lesson from daily life that teaches a spiritual truth. Jesus often told parables to provide an understanding of life, especially life in God's kingdom. Thirty-five percent of all gospel teaching is written in parables.**

they spread the news about Him in all that country.

### *A Mute Man Speaks*

<sup>32</sup>As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. <sup>33</sup>And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!"

<sup>34</sup>But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."

### *The Compassion of Jesus*

<sup>35</sup>Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.<sup>a</sup> <sup>36</sup>But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary<sup>a</sup> and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

9:35 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *among the people*. 9:36 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *harassed*.

**9:35** Jesus healed every kind of sickness, not necessarily every case of sickness.

<sup>37</sup>Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. <sup>38</sup>Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

A CHILD'S SECURITY IS BASED NOT ON  
HOW MUCH HIS PARENTS LOVE HIM,  
BUT ON HOW MUCH HIS PARENTS  
LOVE EACH OTHER.

*Susan Alexander Yates*

### *The Twelve Apostles*

**10** And when He had called His twelve disciples to *Him*, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. <sup>2</sup>Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup>Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was<sup>a</sup> Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup>Simon the Cananite,<sup>a</sup> and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

### *Sending Out the Twelve*

<sup>5</sup>These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. <sup>6</sup>But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup>And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ <sup>8</sup>Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead,<sup>a</sup> cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. <sup>9</sup>Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, <sup>10</sup>nor bag for *your* journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.

<sup>11</sup>“Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. <sup>12</sup>And when you go into a house-

hold, greet it. <sup>13</sup>If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup>And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. <sup>15</sup>Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

### *Persecutions Are Coming*

<sup>16</sup>“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. <sup>17</sup>But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. <sup>18</sup>You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup>But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; <sup>20</sup>for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

<sup>21</sup>“Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. <sup>22</sup>And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup>When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

<sup>24</sup>“A disciple is not above *his* teacher, nor a servant above his master. <sup>25</sup>It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul,<sup>a</sup> how much more *will they call* those of his household! <sup>26</sup>Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

10:3 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Lebbaeus, whose surname was*.

10:4 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Cananaean*. 10:8 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads

*raise the dead, cleanse the lepers*; M-Text omits *raise the dead*.

10:25 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *Beelzebul*.

**10:1** Jesus' disciples first learned about Him; then He sent them out. In each list of the Twelve, Peter is first and Judas Iscariot is last (see Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:14–16). These men with such diverse personalities, backgrounds, education, and vocations were not the usual choices for a religious movement.

**10:9–19** Their mission was to be shared by others who

would offer them hospitality and support. The worthiness of a person was determined by his response to Jesus (see vv. 37, 38). To turn the disciples away meant they were turning away the Messiah, which meant the Messiah would turn away from them (see v. 33). Sodom and Gomorrah pictured the certainty and completeness of God's judgment.

*Jesus Teaches the Fear of God*

<sup>27</sup>“Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. <sup>28</sup>And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. <sup>30</sup>But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup>Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

*Confess Christ Before Men*

<sup>32</sup>“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. <sup>33</sup>But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

*Christ Brings Division*

<sup>34</sup>“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. <sup>35</sup>For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; <sup>36</sup>and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’<sup>a</sup> <sup>37</sup>He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. <sup>38</sup>And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. <sup>39</sup>He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

*A Cup of Cold Water*

<sup>40</sup>“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. <sup>41</sup>He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward.

And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. <sup>42</sup>And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.”

*John the Baptist Sends Messengers to Jesus*

**11** Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.

<sup>2</sup>And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of<sup>a</sup> his disciples<sup>3</sup> and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>*The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.* <sup>6</sup>And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”

<sup>7</sup>As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup>But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. <sup>9</sup>But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>For this is *he* of whom it is written:

*‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,  
Who will prepare Your way before You.’<sup>a</sup>*

<sup>11</sup>“Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least

10:36 <sup>a</sup> Micah 7:6 11:2 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *by* for *two of*.  
11:10 <sup>a</sup> Malachi 3:1

**10:37** God is in a category separate from all else. He does not ask any woman to love her family less. However, even the closest human relationship must not stand between or supersede an individual’s primary loyalty to the Lord (Matt. 16:24).

**10:39** Sacrifice indicates a deliberate act of bringing a possession to the altar — abdicating all rights, stepping away, and leaving it there. Jesus asked His followers to sacrifice financial security (vv. 9, 10), personal defense (vv. 19–21), physical safety (vv. 22–31), earthly status (vv. 32, 33), family relationships (v. 37), personal agendas (v. 38), and even life itself (v. 39). The

rewards promised are great: the meeting of personal needs (Matt. 6:30, 31); the ability to deliver God’s words (Matt. 10:19, 20); the Lord’s eternal protection (v. 28); value in the eyes of the Father (v. 31); membership in God’s family (Matt. 12:49, 50); a role in His agenda (Matt. 10:24–26); and genuine life (v. 39).

**11:10, 11** Although John’s mission was to announce the coming of the Messiah, his understanding was veiled. The disciples who witnessed the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the glorification of Jesus had an even greater message to share.



in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup>And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. <sup>13</sup>For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. <sup>14</sup>And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who is to come. <sup>15</sup>He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

<sup>16</sup>“But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to their companions, <sup>17</sup>and saying:

‘We played the flute for you,  
And you did not dance;  
We mourned to you,  
And you did not lament.’

<sup>18</sup>For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ <sup>19</sup>The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ But wisdom is justified by her children.”<sup>a</sup>

### *Woe to the Impenitent Cities*

<sup>20</sup>Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: <sup>21</sup>“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>22</sup>But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. <sup>23</sup>And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be<sup>a</sup> brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. <sup>24</sup>But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

### *Jesus Gives True Rest*

<sup>25</sup>At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. <sup>26</sup>Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. <sup>27</sup>All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*. <sup>28</sup>Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For My yoke *is* easy and My burden *is* light.”

### *Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath*

**12** At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. <sup>2</sup>And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to Him, “Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!”

<sup>3</sup>But He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: <sup>4</sup>how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? <sup>5</sup>Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? <sup>6</sup>Yet I say to you that in this place there is *One* greater than the temple. <sup>7</sup>But if you had known what *this* means, ‘*I desire mercy and not sacrifice*,’<sup>a</sup> you would not have

11:19 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *works*. 11:23 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be*. 12:7 <sup>a</sup> Hosea 6:6

**11:25** The kingdom Jesus offered is available and understandable to anyone who is interested. The “wise and prudent” were those who were self-sufficient and prided themselves on their great understanding of spiritual things (see Matt. 9:12).

**11:27** Jesus claimed to have an exclusive relationship with the Father and to be the exclusive Way to the Father (see John 10:15; 14:6).

**11:28, 29** Jesus is the touchstone for everything. Individuals are to “come” and “take” His yoke, and He does the rest. A person who labors is struggling, and one with a heavy burden is overloaded. The yoke was a double harness in which two animals pulled together. Often, one harness was larger and meant

for the stronger, more experienced animal, while the smaller was used for the animal being trained. The yoke of Jesus clearly implies that even though individuals are free from the Law, they are not to make their own rules. Rather, they are to be harnessed to Him, living life His way.

**12:1–8** The yoke the religious leaders had put on the people is illustrated. The rules God gave concerning the Sabbath were few and to the point. By contrast, the Jewish additions were numerous and detailed. At the heart of this system was an effort to manipulate God. The idea was that if one could keep and enforce all the added rules, God would have no choice but to bless Israel. This religious system was given precedence

condemned the guiltless. <sup>8</sup>For the Son of Man is Lord even<sup>a</sup> of the Sabbath.”

### *Healing on the Sabbath*

<sup>9</sup>Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. <sup>10</sup>And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—that they might accuse Him.

<sup>11</sup>Then He said to them, “What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? <sup>12</sup>Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.”

<sup>13</sup>Then He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. <sup>14</sup>Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.

PROPER PARENTING GOD’S WAY  
IS TO PONDER AND PRAY.

*Joyce Rogers*

### *Behold, My Servant*

<sup>15</sup>But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes<sup>a</sup> followed Him, and He healed them all. <sup>16</sup>Yet He warned them not to make Him known, <sup>17</sup>that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

<sup>18</sup> “Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen,  
My Beloved in whom My soul is well  
pleased!  
I will put My Spirit upon Him,  
And He will declare justice to the  
Gentiles.

<sup>19</sup> He will not quarrel nor cry out,  
Nor will anyone hear His voice in the  
streets.

<sup>20</sup> A bruised reed He will not break,  
And smoking flax He will not quench,  
Till He sends forth justice to victory;  
<sup>21</sup> And in His name Gentiles will trust.”<sup>a</sup>

### *A House Divided Cannot Stand*

<sup>22</sup>Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and<sup>a</sup> mute man both spoke and saw. <sup>23</sup>And all the multitudes were amazed and said, “Could this be the Son of David?”

<sup>24</sup>Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, “This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub,<sup>a</sup> the ruler of the demons.”

<sup>25</sup>But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.

<sup>26</sup>If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? <sup>27</sup>And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. <sup>28</sup>But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

<sup>29</sup>Or how can one enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. <sup>30</sup>He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

### *The Unpardonable Sin*

<sup>31</sup>“Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. <sup>32</sup>Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy

12:8 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *even*. 12:15 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text brackets *multitudes* as disputed. 12:21 <sup>a</sup> Isaiah 42:1–4 12:22 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *blind and*. 12:24 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *Beelzebub*.

over everything, including God’s glory and the welfare of His people.

**12:31** The unpardonable sin is defined as continually attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan in full knowledge that the work is God’s. All sin can and will be forgiven when there is genuine repentance. Even blasphemy, or profaning God’s name in some way, can be forgiven when God’s forgiveness is sought. However, blasphemy of the Holy Spirit

ascribes to Satan what is done by God, and that cannot be forgiven. To be against Jesus in this way requires that the perpetrator know precisely what he is doing and knowingly and willingly credit Satan rather than the Holy Spirit with the work of God. Why would someone do this? Because to admit these miracles were from God would require acknowledging and following Jesus as Messiah, resulting in abandoning his own way (see Is. 53:6).



Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

### *A Tree Known by Its Fruit*

<sup>33</sup>“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup>Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. <sup>35</sup>A good man out of the good treasure of his heart<sup>a</sup> brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. <sup>36</sup>But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. <sup>37</sup>For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

### *The Scribes and Pharisees Ask for a Sign*

<sup>38</sup>Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”

<sup>39</sup>But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup>For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. <sup>41</sup>The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. <sup>42</sup>The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

### *An Unclean Spirit Returns*

<sup>43</sup>“When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. <sup>44</sup>Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. <sup>45</sup>Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.”

### *Jesus’ Mother and Brothers Send for Him*

<sup>46</sup>While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. <sup>47</sup>Then one said to Him, “Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You.”

<sup>48</sup>But He answered and said to the one who told Him, “Who is My mother and who are My brothers?” <sup>49</sup>And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! <sup>50</sup>For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.”

### *The Parable of the Sower*

**13** On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. <sup>2</sup>And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

<sup>3</sup>Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: “Behold, a sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and

12:35 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit of his heart.

**12:38–40** In the face of miracles, healings, and deliverances from demon possession, the Pharisees and scribes wanted yet another “sign.” They were not seeking the truth but were seeking to entrap. As He often did, Jesus gave new meaning to a simple historical event with which His hearers were familiar (Jon. 1:17–2:10). The remarkable deliverance of Jonah from the fish after three days was presented as a precursor of Jesus’ death, burial, and His Resurrection on the third day (Matt. 12:40).

**12:46–50** Jesus was not diminishing the importance of family ties, nor was He anything other than caring and courteous in relating to His mother and other family members (see Matt. 10:37, note). Rather, He introduced an entirely new category of spiritual commitment. Jesus knew that He must give priority to doing the Father’s will.

**13:3** Parables (Gk. *parabole*, lit. “a placing beside”) are simple, short stories in the form of a “type,” “figure,” or “illustration” with two levels of meaning. They present a comparison or contrast in order to stimulate thought, decision, and action. Parables are the most difficult yet powerful form of literature to create (see chart, Women and the Parables of Jesus). Their power comes both in the simplicity and brevity of their teaching as well as in the memory tool they provide. Approximately one-third of Jesus’ teaching was done in parables that revealed the nature of the kingdom of God. Here, the first four were given to the general public, and the last four were given to the disciples.

**13:3–9** The foundational parable is set apart from the others since it is the key to the rest. The kingdom of God that Jesus offered to the Jews involved their receiving this message. The

devoured them. <sup>5</sup>Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. <sup>7</sup>And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

### *The Purpose of Parables*

<sup>10</sup>And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”

<sup>11</sup>He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. <sup>12</sup>For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. <sup>13</sup>Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. <sup>14</sup>And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

*‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,*

*And seeing you will see and not perceive;*

<sup>15</sup> *For the hearts of this people have grown dull.*

*Their ears are hard of hearing,*

*And their eyes they have closed,*

*Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,*

*Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,*

*So that I should<sup>a</sup> heal them.’<sup>b</sup>*

<sup>16</sup>But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; <sup>17</sup>for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

### *The Parable of the Sower Explained*

<sup>18</sup>“Therefore hear the parable of the sow-

er: <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. <sup>20</sup>But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup>yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. <sup>22</sup>Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. <sup>23</sup>But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

### *The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares*

<sup>24</sup>Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup>but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. <sup>26</sup>But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. <sup>27</sup>So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ <sup>28</sup>He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ <sup>29</sup>But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.””

### *The Parable of the Mustard Seed*

<sup>31</sup>Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, <sup>32</sup>which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater

13:15 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *would*. <sup>b</sup> Isaiah 6:9, 10

parable of the soils is a parable of hearing. This parable warned that unless the mind and the heart would hear and accept the Word of God, the teaching of parables would be meaningless.

**13:10–15** Jesus’ parables were a teaching method designed to

reveal spiritual truths in such a way that those who wanted to respond would understand and receive more (vv. 9, 12, 43). Those who chose not to respond would not completely understand, and what little understanding they did have would disappear.

than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.”

### *The Parable of the Leaven*

<sup>33</sup>Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures<sup>a</sup> of meal till it was all leavened.”

### *Prophecy and the Parables*

<sup>34</sup>All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, <sup>35</sup>that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

*“I will open My mouth in parables;  
I will utter things kept secret from the  
foundation of the world.”<sup>a</sup>*

### *The Parable of the Tares Explained*

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.”

<sup>37</sup>He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. <sup>39</sup>The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup>Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, <sup>42</sup>and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

### *The Parable of the Hidden Treasure*

<sup>44</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

### *The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price*

<sup>45</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, <sup>46</sup>who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

### *The Parable of the Dragnet*

<sup>47</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, <sup>48</sup>which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. <sup>49</sup>So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, <sup>50</sup>and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

<sup>51</sup>Jesus said to them,<sup>a</sup> “Have you understood all these things?”

They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>52</sup>Then He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning<sup>a</sup> the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure *things new and old.*”

### *Jesus Rejected at Nazareth*

<sup>53</sup>Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there. <sup>54</sup>When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this *Man* get this wisdom and *these* mighty works? <sup>55</sup>Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses,<sup>a</sup> Simon, and Judas? <sup>56</sup>And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this *Man* get all these things?” <sup>57</sup>So they were offended at Him.

But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.” <sup>58</sup>Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

### *John the Baptist Beheaded*

**14** At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus <sup>2</sup>and said to his

<sup>13:33</sup> <sup>a</sup> Greek *sata*, approximately two pecks in all

<sup>13:35</sup> <sup>a</sup> Psalm 78:2 <sup>13:51</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Jesus said to them.*

<sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *Lord.* <sup>13:52</sup> <sup>a</sup> Or for <sup>13:55</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Joseph.*

**14:1** Herod the tetrarch or Antipas was the ruler responsible for the death of John the Baptist (see chart, The Family Tree of

Herod the Great). “Herod” was a dynastic title used to describe many different rulers. This family was ruthless with each other

## *Herodias and Salome :* A MANIPULATIVE MOTHER AND SEDUCTIVE DAUGHTER

Herodias, who lived in Tiberias, the capital city built by her husband on the southwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, was a woman out of control. Crafty, ambitious, greedy, and politically astute, Herodias would stop at nothing to attain what she wanted.

Herodias and her first husband, her uncle Philip, had a daughter named Salome. When Herod Antipas, the brother of Philip and the stepbrother of Herodias' father Aristobulus, visited Philip, he and Herodias were immediately attracted to one another. Herod Antipas was a far more powerful man than Philip. Herodias saw her chance for more power, a better position, and an increase in wealth. She insisted Herod divorce his wife; she divorced her husband, and they married. This incestuous marriage was very offensive to the Jews.

Herodias definitely brought out the worst in Herod as is apparent in the account of the beheading of the fearless preacher John the Baptist, the only one who dared to stand up and reprove this unscrupulous couple. Herodias hated John the Baptist because he did not hesitate publicly to call her alliance with Herod "sin." She wanted to sentence John to death (Mark 6:19), but Herod was awed and fascinated by John. He liked to hear him speak, even though John confronted him with the truth, and he feared the reaction of the people if this popular preacher were harmed.

Herodias' resentment and anger festered like a sore. Her opportunity for revenge finally came on Herod's birthday. The military and political leaders came to help him celebrate at a great feast in his palace at Machaerus. Herodias' sensuous teenaged daughter, Salome, danced so alluringly that Herod loudly offered the girl anything she wanted up to half his kingdom. Her mother was ready with what she wanted, and it was not half a kingdom. Herodias knew that her husband was an unprincipled, cruel man. He was also boisterous and proud, and the embarrassment of backing down on his offer to Salome in front of all these people would be a humiliation he could not tolerate, even at the expense of an innocent man's life. Sometimes simple manipulation can outdo any political maneuvering and power.

Obviously, Herodias had entangled her daughter Salome in her obsession since the daughter added to her mother's request. Not only did Salome ask for John's head, but she also demanded it "immediately" and "on a platter." Obsessions of hate not only take over a person's life but usually infect others as well. By example, influence, and manipulation, Herodias led her young daughter into sin—as an accomplice in the murder of a godly preacher. Her husband and daughter were merely tools in the hand of Herodias, who had planned and orchestrated the tragic crime.

*See also Mark 6:14–29; Luke 3:19, 20; notes on Dancing (Ex. 15); Family (1 Sam. 3); Motherhood (Ezek. 16)*

servants, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." <sup>3</sup>For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put *him* in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. <sup>4</sup>Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." <sup>5</sup>And although he wanted to put him to death, he

feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

<sup>6</sup>But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. <sup>7</sup>Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask.

<sup>8</sup>So she, having been prompted by her

as well as with outsiders. No one was safe. Herod the Great, the father of Antipas, had numerous members of his own family put to death, including his favorite wife Mariamne. To have ascended to power in such a family revealed the ruthlessness

and ingenuity of Herod Antipas. He helped depose his brother Archelaus, stole his brother Philip's wife Herodias, and was devoted to whomever had the most power in Rome at the time (see Herodias and Salome).



mother, said, “Give me John the Baptist’s head here on a platter.”

<sup>9</sup>And the king was sorry; nevertheless, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he commanded *it* to be given to *her*. <sup>10</sup>So he sent and had John beheaded in prison. <sup>11</sup>And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought *it* to her mother. <sup>12</sup>Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

### *Feeding the Five Thousand*

<sup>13</sup>When Jesus heard *it*, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. <sup>14</sup>And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. <sup>15</sup>When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food.”

<sup>16</sup>But Jesus said to them, “**They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.**”

<sup>17</sup>And they said to Him, “We have here only five loaves and two fish.”

<sup>18</sup>He said, “**Bring them here to Me.**” <sup>19</sup>Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. <sup>20</sup>So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. <sup>21</sup>Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

### *Jesus Walks on the Sea*

<sup>22</sup>Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. <sup>23</sup>And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by

Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. <sup>24</sup>But the boat was now in the middle of the sea,<sup>a</sup> tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

<sup>25</sup>Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. <sup>26</sup>And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear.

<sup>27</sup>But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “**Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.**”

<sup>28</sup>And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”

<sup>29</sup>So He said, “**Come.**” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. <sup>30</sup>But when he saw that the wind *was* boisterous,<sup>a</sup> he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”

IF YOU CAN'T FEED A HUNDRED, FEED ONE.

*Mother Teresa*

<sup>31</sup>And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “**O you of little faith, why did you doubt?**” <sup>32</sup>And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

<sup>33</sup>Then those who were in the boat came and<sup>a</sup> worshiped Him, saying, “Truly You are the Son of God.”

### *Many Touch Him and Are Made Well*

<sup>34</sup>When they had crossed over, they came to the land of<sup>a</sup> Gennesaret. <sup>35</sup>And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick,<sup>36</sup> and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched *it* were made perfectly well.

14:24 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *many furlongs away from the land*.

14:30 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text brackets *that* and *boisterous* as disputed.

14:33 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *came and*. 14:34 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *came to land at*.

**14:13** Solitude was an important part of Jesus’ life (see Matt. 4:1–11; 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42; 5:16; John 17).

**14:21** The size of a crowd was often numbered only by counting the men (in this case, 5,000). The number could possibly have been three times as great when women and children

were included. The feeding of the 5,000, one of three miracles through which food or drink was provided (Matt. 15:32–38; John 2:1–10), is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels (Mark 6:35–44; Luke 9:12–17; John 6:5–13).

*Defilement Comes from Within*

**15** Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.”

<sup>3</sup>He answered and said to them, “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? <sup>4</sup>For God commanded, saying, ‘Honor your father and your mother’;<sup>a</sup> and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’<sup>b</sup> <sup>5</sup>But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God”—<sup>6</sup>then he need not honor his father or mother.’<sup>a</sup> Thus you have made the commandment<sup>b</sup> of God of no effect by your tradition. <sup>7</sup>Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

<sup>8</sup> *“These people draw near to Me with their mouth,*

*And<sup>a</sup> honor Me with their lips,  
But their heart is far from Me.*

<sup>9</sup> *And in vain they worship Me,  
Teaching as doctrines the  
commandments of men.”<sup>a</sup>*

<sup>10</sup>When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear and understand: <sup>11</sup>Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.”

<sup>12</sup>Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?”

<sup>13</sup>But He answered and said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. <sup>14</sup>Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”

<sup>15</sup>Then Peter answered and said to Him, “Explain this parable to us.”

<sup>16</sup>So Jesus said, “Are you also still without understanding? <sup>17</sup>Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? <sup>18</sup>But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. <sup>19</sup>For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. <sup>20</sup>These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”

*A Gentile Shows Her Faith*

<sup>21</sup>Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>22</sup>And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.”

<sup>23</sup>But He answered her not a word.

And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, “Send her away, for she cries out after us.”

<sup>24</sup>But He answered and said, “I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

<sup>25</sup>Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, help me!”

<sup>26</sup>But He answered and said, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”

<sup>27</sup>And she said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.”

<sup>28</sup>Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you

15:4 <sup>a</sup> Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16 <sup>b</sup> Exodus 21:17

15:6 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *or mother*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text reads *word*.

15:8 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *draw near to Me with their mouth, And*.

15:9 <sup>a</sup> Isaiah 29:13

**15:1–7** The Pharisees’ chief concern was to keep their own traditions, while Jesus’ concern was to do God’s will. The food regulations were a prominent part of the Pharisees’ traditions (see Lev. 10, Clean vs. Unclean). Jesus condemned the Pharisees for putting their traditions before God’s commandments and the people’s good. He referred to a practice called “Corban” in which a person dedicated selected possessions to God, while still having the use of them (see Mark 7:8–13). If someone (even parents) had a need, the individual would claim the injunction instructing him not to break vows (Num. 30:2). Such action elevated the law of “Corban” above God’s Law to “Honor your father and your mother” (Ex. 20:12).

**15:7** The Pharisees were described as “hypocrites” by Jesus.

This theatrical term described an actor who played a part “underneath the mask.” Jesus accused the Pharisees of putting on a mask of holiness.

**15:21–28** See Syro-Phoenician Woman.

**15:22** The Canaanites were Israel’s ancient enemies. They were a perverse people who were in the land when Abraham arrived. Because of the atrocities they practiced in their religion, such as temple prostitution and child sacrifice, and because of their refusal to repent and turn to Him, God had ordered their destruction (see Num. 33:50–55; Deut. 7:1–11). The Jews reserved “Son of David” for the legitimate king of Israel. A Canaanite would not want to recognize such a title.



## Syro-Phoenician Woman

A mother's heart is one of the most potent motivators known. A Syro-Phoenician (or Canaanite) woman exhibited this during one of Jesus' teaching tours. We do not know her name, but we do know this mother had insight, courage, persistence, and initiative.

Obviously, Jesus' reputation had reached beyond Palestine. Most likely His healing ministry had made the news in Tyre and Sidon, but few would cross cultural and religious lines to approach Him. This woman was one of the few. What motivated her to take such initiative on her own? Her mother's heart.

There were at least three barriers that could have discouraged her from accomplishing her task: She was a Gentile (Matt. 15:24); she was a Canaanite (see v. 22, note); and she was a woman (John 4:27). But the magnitude of a mother's love pulled her as irresistibly as the moon pulls the tides.

This mother used a threefold approach: She acknowledged Jesus as the rightful King by calling Him "Son of David" (see Matt. 15:22, note); she acknowledged Him as her King and Master by calling Him Lord; and she prayed the simple prayer, "Have mercy on me" (v. 22), "help me" (v. 25). These expressions are irresistible to God.

Her persistence during this brief encounter with Jesus revealed not only a mother's determination but also her growing faith. Notice: It was not her love for her daughter that impressed Him the most (though that surely pleased Him) but her great faith (v. 28).

There is an uncanny parallel between this woman and Rahab in the Old Testament (Josh. 2). Both women came from the hopelessly perverted Canaanites; both showed a strong love for family; both showed courage, persistence, and boldness by stepping away from their religious backgrounds on their own; both evaluated Israel's God and found Him superior to their gods (in fact, they gave *Yahweh* more credit than the Israelites did); both made a commitment to Israel's God; and both received what they were seeking.

God has a special understanding for the mother's heart (Is. 49:15; 66:12, 13; Luke 13:34). More than anything else we remember this woman's persistent, even obstinate, faith. She would not give up.

See also Mark 7:24–30; notes on Motherhood (Is. 49); Perseverance (Rev. 14); Prayer (Jer. 33)

as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

### Jesus Heals Great Multitudes

<sup>29</sup>Jesus departed from there, skirted the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the mountain and sat down there. <sup>30</sup>Then great multitudes came to Him, having with them the lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them. <sup>31</sup>So the multitude marveled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

### Feeding the Four Thousand

<sup>32</sup>Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way."

<sup>33</sup>Then His disciples said to Him, "Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?"

<sup>34</sup>Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?"

And they said, "Seven, and a few little fish."

**15:32–39** The feeding of the 4,000 had many similarities to the feeding described in Matthew 14:13–21. The people had been listening to His teaching; they were in a rural area; the food was the same; Jesus blessed and broke it; the disciples

served it. But there are also marked differences: The number of people; the time they spent with Him; the different seashore; the initial amount of food; the amount left over.

<sup>35</sup>So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. <sup>36</sup>And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke *them* and gave *them* to His disciples; and the disciples *gave* to the multitude. <sup>37</sup>So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left. <sup>38</sup>Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. <sup>39</sup>And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.<sup>a</sup>

### *The Pharisees and Sadducees Seek a Sign*

**16** Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. <sup>2</sup>He answered and said to them, “When it is evening you say, ‘*It will be fair weather, for the sky is red*’; <sup>3</sup>and in the morning, ‘*It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening*.’ Hypocrites!<sup>a</sup> You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot *discern* the signs of the times. <sup>4</sup>A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet<sup>a</sup> Jonah.” And He left them and departed.

### *The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees*

<sup>5</sup>Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. <sup>6</sup>Then Jesus said to them, “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.”

<sup>7</sup>And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “*It is* because we have taken no bread.”

<sup>8</sup>But Jesus, being aware of *it*, said to them, “O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread?<sup>a</sup> <sup>9</sup>Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? <sup>10</sup>Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? <sup>11</sup>How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?—*but* to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” <sup>12</sup>Then they understood that He did not tell *them* to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

### *Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ*

<sup>13</sup>When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”

<sup>14</sup>So they said, “Some *say* John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

<sup>15</sup>He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

<sup>16</sup>Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

<sup>17</sup>Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup>And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup>And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and

15:39 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Magadan*. 16:3 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Hypocrites*. 16:4 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *the prophet*.

16:8 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *you have no bread*.

**16:5–12** Leaven or yeast was a small substance that permeated the entire product (see Luke 12:1, note).

**16:16** Peter declared that Jesus was not one among many—He was someone set apart from all others. “The Christ” is the Greek title for the promised Messiah for whom the Jews had been waiting. “Son of the living God” was a new title. In the OT, divine sonship referred to angels (as special messengers of God), to Israel (as a nation elected to perform the service of God), or to a king (one who had been given authority by God over Israel and other nations). Peter not only affirmed Jesus to be the Messiah; he identified the Messiah as the Son of God. Though the disciples had heard the Father call Jesus His beloved Son (Matt. 3:17) and had heard Jesus address God as Father numerous times (Matt. 11:27), this confession went beyond that to express the understanding of their hearts.

**16:18** Simon was Peter’s given name; he was the son (Aram.

*bar*) of Jonah (v. 17). The two words for “rock” differ: “You are Peter” (Gk. *petros*, lit. “a small stone”) and “on this rock” (Gk. *petra*, lit. “a massive rock”). There are three possible interpretations:

- 1) If Jesus were speaking in Aramaic and both references were Cephas, Peter is identified as the “rock”;
- 2) Peter is the “small rock” (Gk. *petros*), and Jesus is the “massive boulder” (Gk. *petra*) upon whom the church is built (see 1 Cor. 3:11); or
- 3) Peter is addressed, and his confession is the *petra* or “rock” on which the church would be built.

*Hades* (Gk. lit. “the place of the dead”) was often used as an idiom for the powers of death. Jesus’ point is that death itself cannot destroy the church or keep it from going forward.

**16:19** The binding and loosing is a reference to the distribution of the gospel. Peter and all believers were given the



## COMMITMENT

## FOLLOWING JESUS

“Following Jesus” is the definition of “commitment.” Commitment demands a choice. Jesus wasted no time getting to the heart of commitment: Either the disciples would be committed to Him and deny their own desires, or they would be determined to go their own ways and deny Him (Matt. 10:32–37). The choice to commit is the same for all believers — either we deny ourselves or deny Him; either we go His way or we pursue our way.

Talk about Christ would be meaningless without the walk with Him. The disciples were to take up their crosses. Carrying the cross beam was a public declaration of Rome’s authority. Jesus challenged them to put themselves voluntarily under God’s authority, doing His will His way. Commitment demands action; it cannot be divorced from responsibility. It extends beyond our relationship to the heavenly Father to other areas of life. Ruth’s words of commitment to Naomi did not speak as loudly as did her actions. She left her family and homeland to return with Naomi to Bethlehem (Ruth 1:16, 17).

Commitment definitely limits choices because it is exclusive. For example, in a commitment to marriage, God’s plan is for one woman and one man to commit to each other exclusively and permanently (Matt. 19:5, 6).

Jesus demonstrated in the Garden of Gethsemane that the Father’s will always takes precedence over His. The next day, He picked up His Cross, demonstrating that He would do the Father’s will the Father’s way.

Commitment builds up faith and develops character. It is a spiritual discipline (Prov. 16:3). It is a lifetime venture, requiring time, work, and determination (Matt. 16:24).

See also Eccl. 5:4, 5; Matt. 5:33, 37; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:62; 14:27; notes on Decision Making (1 Cor. 8); Integrity (Ps. 27); Marriage (Gen. 2; 2 Sam. 6; Prov. 5; Hos. 2; Amos 3; 2 Cor. 13; Heb. 12); Salvation (Eph. 2); Vows (Num. 30); portrait of Ruth (Ruth 2)

whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed<sup>a</sup> in heaven.”

<sup>20</sup>Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

### *Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection*

<sup>21</sup>From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

<sup>22</sup>Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!”

<sup>23</sup>But He turned and said to Peter, “Get be-

hind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

### *Take Up the Cross and Follow Him*

<sup>24</sup>Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. <sup>25</sup>For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. <sup>26</sup>For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? <sup>27</sup>For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to

16:19 <sup>a</sup> Or will have been bound . . . will have been loosed

gospel (“the keys of the kingdom”) to introduce women and men to Christ and His salvation and thereby build the church (see Matt. 28:19, 20).

**16:22, 23** Peter was unwittingly doing the same thing Satan tried to do in the wilderness temptation — urging Jesus

to act on His own apart from the Father. Jesus’ words did not fit Peter’s agenda, just as His words and deeds did not fit the agenda of the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees. Jesus had only one purpose — to do the Father’s will (Phil. 2:8; Heb. 10:7).

his works. <sup>28</sup>Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”

### *Jesus Transfigured on the Mount*

**17** Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; <sup>2</sup>and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. <sup>3</sup>And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. <sup>4</sup>Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us<sup>a</sup> make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

<sup>5</sup>While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” <sup>6</sup>And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. <sup>7</sup>But Jesus came and touched them and said, “Arise, and do not be afraid.” <sup>8</sup>When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

<sup>9</sup>Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.”

<sup>10</sup>And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

<sup>11</sup>Jesus answered and said to them, “Indeed, Elijah is coming first<sup>a</sup> and will restore all things. <sup>12</sup>But I say to you that Elijah has

come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands.” <sup>13</sup>Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

### *A Boy Is Healed*

<sup>14</sup>And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, <sup>15</sup>“Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic<sup>a</sup> and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. <sup>16</sup>So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.”

<sup>17</sup>Then Jesus answered and said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.” <sup>18</sup>And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

<sup>19</sup>Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”

<sup>20</sup>So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief;<sup>a</sup> for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. <sup>21</sup>However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”<sup>a</sup>

### *Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection*

<sup>22</sup>Now while they were staying<sup>a</sup> in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about

17:4<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *I will*. 17:11<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *first*. 17:15<sup>a</sup> Literally *moonstruck* 17:20<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *little faith*. 17:21<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits this verse. 17:22<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *gathering together*.

**16:28** Three major interpretations are suggested:

- 1) the coming of Christ in judgment to destroy the temple in A.D. 70;
- 2) a reference to Jesus’ Resurrection, Ascension, and the sending of the Holy Spirit to indwell believers;
- 3) a pointing to the Transfiguration in which three of these men would see Jesus in His glorified state.

The latter seems most likely because of the proximity of the Transfiguration account (Matt. 17:1–5).

**17:1** The Transfiguration took place within a week of Christ’s prediction that He would die. The three disciples included were the ones He allowed to witness the raising of Jairus’s daughter (Mark 5:37); they later would accompany Him to the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:33). Though tradition long held this “high mountain” to be Mt. Tabor, there is no record that Jesus was near Mt. Tabor at this time. In addition, archaeological excavations discovered here a fortified city dating

to this time, which would have made it difficult for them to have been in seclusion. Mt. Hermon seems a more likely place. Three events took place: Jesus’ body was transfigured (v. 2); Moses, the giver of the Law and deliverer from bondage in Egypt, and Elijah, the forerunner of John the Baptist and representative of the prophets in the OT, appeared (v. 3); and God spoke from a cloud (v. 5).

**17:5** At Jesus’ baptism the disciples heard God saying the same thing (Matt. 3:17). The message is repeated near the end of His ministry: God is still pleased with His Son. This time the admonition “Hear Him” was added, but they still were not listening.

**17:9** The message must have been confusing. The Transfiguration was not for the masses but for His followers. The timing of this event was important. The disciples were at the crucial point of commitment to Jesus. Everything hinged on who He was to them. In fact, He had recently challenged them with



to be betrayed into the hands of men,<sup>23</sup> and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

### *Peter and His Master Pay Their Taxes*

<sup>24</sup>When they had come to Capernaum,<sup>a</sup> those who received the *temple* tax came to Peter and said, “Does your Teacher not pay the *temple* tax?”

<sup>25</sup>He said, “Yes.”

And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?”

<sup>26</sup>Peter said to Him, “From strangers.”

Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. <sup>27</sup>Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money;<sup>a</sup> take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

### *Who Is the Greatest?*

**18** At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

<sup>2</sup>Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them,<sup>3</sup> and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup>Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>5</sup>Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.

### *Jesus Warns of Offenses*

<sup>6</sup>“Whoever causes one of these little

ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. <sup>7</sup>Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!

<sup>8</sup>“If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. <sup>9</sup>And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

### *The Parable of the Lost Sheep*

<sup>10</sup>“Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>12</sup>“What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? <sup>13</sup>And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that *sheep* than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. <sup>14</sup>Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

### *Dealing with a Sinning Brother*

<sup>15</sup>“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you

<sup>17:24</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Capharnaum* (here and elsewhere).

<sup>17:27</sup> <sup>a</sup> Greek *stater*, the exact amount to pay the temple tax (didrachma) for two **18:11** <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits this verse.

this question (Matt. 16:15). They needed to be prepared for what would seem to be defeat—the Cross.

**17:24–27** The tax in question was not a Roman tax but a Jewish temple tax that paid for the care of the temple (see Ex. 30:12–14; 38:26; 2 Chr. 24:6).

**18:3** The evangelism of children must be a priority for home and church. Jesus used children as illustrations of the faith (trust in and loyalty to) and humility (putting oneself under God’s authority) required to become part of His kingdom. Though God has gifted some with special abilities to teach children, all believers have the assignment to live a godly life before them, tell them about the Lord, and love them (Deut. 6; Matt. 19:14; Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:4). The gospel is to be given to all, and a response is required by all who are old enough to

know the difference between right and wrong (Matt. 28:19, 20). Nowhere in Scripture is there the suggestion that children are incapable of responding to God or of engaging in praise, worship, prayer, and thanksgiving. In fact, Jesus emphasized that, in coming to the Father, children are not required to become like adults, but rather, adults are to become as children.

**18:8, 9** Jesus was not advocating physical mutilation; the body is not responsible for sin. Lust begins in the heart as does pride (see Matt. 5:29, 30). Believers are to cut out of their lives anything that causes them or others to sin.

**18:10** Guardian angels are not promised for each child, although Scripture does teach that angels are concerned about believers and minister to them (see Ps. 91:11; Heb. 1:14).





## CONFLICT

## RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS

Conflict is inevitable in personal relationships. It is humanly impossible to live in total harmony with others at all times. Jesus told His disciples how to settle disputes between believers (Matt. 18:15–20). Paul resolved his conflict with John Mark, which had developed between the first and second missionary journeys (Acts 15:36–41). John warned Christians not to hate each other (1 John 4:20, 21).

The Bible offers several steps to resolving conflict and settling disagreements among people:

- Scripture admonishes the believer to face the conflict — acknowledge its existence and accept its impact. Christ advised His disciples to go immediately and directly to the person and discuss the grievance (Matt. 18:15). Others should be enlisted to mediate the conflict only if the conflict cannot be resolved one-to-one (Matt. 18:16, 17).
- Scripture instructs the believer to forgive the conflict — to put the disagreement behind and move ahead in harmony once it has been resolved. Euodia and Syntyche were encouraged to replace their bitterness with gentleness and to live in peaceful harmony, rejoicing in the Lord (Phil. 4:2–7).
- Scripture encourages the believer to move beyond the conflict. Paul resolved his grudge against Mark and sought opportunities to minister with him (compare Acts 15:36–41 with 2 Tim. 4:9–11; see Eccl. 1, Healing).

Jesus reminded the Pharisees of the greatest commandments — to love the Lord and love your neighbor (Matt. 22:37–40). The desire of God is for His children to live in harmony. Christians are to resolve conflict with others by replacing discord with love. The emphasis is not punitive but redemptive (see 2 Cor. 2:5–11; 2 Thess. 3:14, 15).

See also 1 John 3:10–18; notes on Communication (Prov. 15); Conflict (Song 5); Forgiveness (Ps. 51; Luke 17); Marriage (Gen. 2; 2 Sam. 6; Prov. 5; Hos. 2; Amos 3; 2 Cor. 13; Heb. 12)

and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup>But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that *‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’*<sup>a</sup> <sup>17</sup>And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

<sup>18</sup>“Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

<sup>19</sup>“Again I say<sup>a</sup> to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are

gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

### *The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant*

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”

<sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. <sup>23</sup>Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. <sup>24</sup>And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. <sup>25</sup>But as

18:16 <sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 19:15 18:19 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *Again, assuredly, I say.*

**18:21** Rabbinical tradition taught a repeated sin should be forgiven three times, but on the fourth, there was to be no forgiveness. Peter probably thought he was being generous to forgive “seven times.” Jesus’ answer suggested forgiving an unlimited number of times. He amplified that answer in a parable. The comparison of the debt owed the king and the debt owed the servant is almost ridiculous (see chart, Money

and Measurements in the Bible). The picture is clear: God has forgiven believers an immense debt; they dare not refuse to forgive others for small offenses. The lack of forgiveness is another subtle form of playing god and puts believers in direct opposition to God. Those who are forgiven must forgive if they are to receive forgiveness (see Ps. 51; Luke 17, Forgiveness; chart, Your Path to Freedom).

he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. <sup>26</sup>The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ <sup>27</sup>Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

<sup>28</sup>“But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took *him* by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ <sup>29</sup>So his fellow servant fell down at his feet<sup>a</sup> and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’<sup>b</sup> <sup>30</sup>And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. <sup>32</sup>Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgive you all that debt because you begged me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

<sup>35</sup>“So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”<sup>a</sup>

### Marriage and Divorce

**19** Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, *that* He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. <sup>2</sup>And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.

<sup>3</sup>The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?”

<sup>4</sup>And He answered and said to them,

“Have you not read that He who made<sup>a</sup> *them* at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’<sup>b</sup> <sup>5</sup>and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?<sup>a</sup> <sup>6</sup>So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

<sup>7</sup>They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”

<sup>8</sup>He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. <sup>9</sup>And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality,<sup>a</sup> and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

<sup>10</sup>His disciples said to Him, “If such is the case of the man with *his* wife, it is better not to marry.”

### Jesus Teaches on Celibacy

<sup>11</sup>But He said to them, “All cannot accept this saying, but only *those* to whom it has been given: <sup>12</sup>For there are eunuchs who were born thus from *their* mother’s womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He who is able to accept *it*, let him accept *it*.”

### Jesus Blesses Little Children

<sup>13</sup>Then little children were brought to Him that He might put *His* hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them.

<sup>14</sup>But Jesus said, “**Let the little children come**

18:29 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *at his feet*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *all*. 18:35 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *his trespasses*. 19:4 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *created*. <sup>b</sup> Genesis 1:27; 5:2 19:5 <sup>a</sup> Genesis 2:24 19:9 <sup>a</sup> Or *fornication*

**19:9** Sexual immorality (Gk. *porneia*) is a broad term, referring to a wide range of illicit sexual practices. The presupposition here is that immorality breaks the one-flesh union, which God declared to be part of the marriage relationship. For some, such a violation is a legitimate reason for divorce. However, Jesus was not requiring divorce, even in this case; He was simply noting that Moses gave this permission clause (Deut. 24:1–4) because of “the hardness of . . . hearts” (Matt. 19:8).

**19:10, 11** Jesus was not condemning either marriage or single life but rather pointing out that both had advantages.

Singleness may mean more time for kingdom work, but not everyone can handle single life (see Ps. 62; John 2; 1 Cor. 7; 12, Singleness)

**19:12** The reference is not to physical castration, but to God-directed, self-imposed celibacy (see 1 Cor. 7, Celibacy).

**19:13** Customarily children were brought to rabbis and elders for blessing. The disciples appeared to be rude and thoughtless, especially in the light of Jesus’ recent teaching (Matt. 18:2–6). They may have been annoyed that their private discussion with the Lord was interrupted by the seeming triviality of blessing children.



## DIVORCE

### BREAKING ASUNDER

In interpreting the decree of Moses on divorce (Deut. 24:1), the followers of the Rabbi Shammai believed that divorce should be granted only because of infidelity, while the followers of Rabbi Hillel argued that Mosaic Law permitted divorce for virtually any reason. Jesus shocked His disciples by rejecting both sides of the rabbinic debate (Matt. 19:10). Rather than going immediately to the contested text (Deut. 24:1), Jesus referred back to the beginning of marriage (Matt. 19:4–6). Ultimately the answer to this problematic issue does not lie in legal codes, traditional practices, or human solutions but in God’s creative design (Gen. 2:24). God never accommodates or compromises His principles, but He does redeem and restore any who seek His forgiveness.

Jesus’ view of divorce (Gk. *apostasion*, from *apoluō*, “to send away,” meaning “to remove from the center of a relationship” or “to break fellowship”) can be understood only against the background of His view of permanent monogamy, one man and one woman together for a lifetime. The plan for permanence is clear in the “one-flesh” metaphor used by the Lord. Moses allowed divorce as a human device to protect ill-treated Hebrew women from unscrupulous men who sought to manipulate the betrothal process. The Pharisees took the “permission” of the Law and turned it into a “command” that made human frailty a justification for circumventing God’s divine plan and purpose.

Jesus did not teach that the innocent party must divorce the unfaithful one. The purpose of the “exception” clause in the Mosaic Law, which is repeated again in Jesus’ explanation, is not to encourage divorce. The binding commitment of marriage does not depend upon human wills or upon what any individual does or does not do but rather upon God’s original design and purpose for marriage (Hos. 3:1–3).

God rejects divorce for these reasons:

- Marriage is a divine institution the Lord used to teach His children about their relationship to Him (Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4).
- Marriage is by express command of the Creator and carries His imprimatur (Matt. 19:4, 5).
- Marriage brings two people together as one flesh, testifying to the permanence God planned for this most intimate union (Matt. 19:6).
- Jesus points to the example of the first couple (Matt. 19:8).
- Evil consequences are inevitable when separation comes (Matt. 19:9).

Divorce is never God’s choice. Indeed, God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16). However, whenever divorce occurs for whatever reason, God desires to work redemptively when the person who has experienced this tragedy is repentant and desires reconciliation to God.

See also Ex. 21:7–11; Esth. 1:10–22; Jer. 3:1; Mal. 2:14–16; Luke 16:18; 1 Cor. 7:10–17; notes on Adultery (Hos. 3); Commitment (Matt. 16); Husbands (Job 31; 2 Cor. 6); Marriage (Gen. 2; 2 Sam. 6; Prov. 5; Hos. 2; Amos 3; 2 Cor. 13; Heb. 12); Remarriage (Matt. 5); Vows (Num. 30); Wives (Prov. 31)

to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>15</sup> And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.

#### *Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler*

<sup>16</sup>Now behold, one came and said to Him,

“Good<sup>a</sup> Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

<sup>17</sup>So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good?<sup>a</sup> No one is good but One, that is, God.<sup>b</sup>”

19:16 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits Good. 19:17 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Why do you ask Me about what is good?* <sup>b</sup> NU-Text reads *There is One who is good.*

**19:16–22** Luke identified this young man as a ruler (Luke 8:18). The ruler’s question revealed his problem. He wanted to know what to do to earn eternal life. Jesus’ emphasis was al-

ways on the attitude of the heart, not on deeds. Jesus showed the young man that he had failed, even in the areas in which he thought he had done well. His wealth was not his problem;

But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”

<sup>18</sup>He said to Him, “Which ones?”

Jesus said, “*You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’* <sup>19</sup>*‘Honor your father and your mother,’*<sup>a</sup> and, *‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’*”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>20</sup>The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth.<sup>a</sup> What do I still lack?”

<sup>21</sup>Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

<sup>22</sup>But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

### *With God All Things Are Possible*

<sup>23</sup>Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup>And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>25</sup>When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?”

<sup>26</sup>But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

<sup>27</sup>Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?”

<sup>28</sup>So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of

Israel. <sup>29</sup>And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife<sup>a</sup> or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. <sup>30</sup>But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

IN RAISING CHILDREN, ALL YOU CAN DO  
IS YOUR BEST . . . WE TAKE CARE  
OF THE POSSIBLE AND LEAVE  
THE IMPOSSIBLE TO GOD.

*Ruth Bell Graham*

### *The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard*

**20** “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup>Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup>And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup>and said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. <sup>5</sup>Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. <sup>6</sup>And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle,<sup>a</sup> and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ <sup>7</sup>They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’<sup>a</sup>

<sup>19:19</sup> <sup>a</sup> Exodus 20:12–16; Deuteronomy 5:16–20

<sup>b</sup> Leviticus 19:18 <sup>19:20</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *from my youth*.

<sup>19:29</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *or wife*. <sup>20:6</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *idle*.

<sup>20:7</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the last clause of this verse.

his divided heart was (see Matt. 6:24). The vital message Jesus gave the man was not “Go, sell what you have,” but “Come, follow Me” (see Matt. 5:29, 30; 16:15; 17:9; 18:8, 9).

**19:23–26** Jesus was not condemning wealthy people. For example, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, and Joseph of Arimathea were wealthy. But the Jews often interpreted wealth as a sign of God’s blessing in the sense of a sure ticket to heaven. Instead, Jesus saw the dangers inherent in wealth and taught that only a few, with God’s help (v. 26), could handle wealth properly. The camel was the largest animal commonly seen, and the eye of a needle was the smallest opening. Jesus used a figure of speech that demonstrated the dangers of wealth.

**19:28, 29** Whether or not the 12 disciples would have a

special assignment of judging Israel because of Israel’s rejection of the Messiah is not clear. Jesus elsewhere said all His followers would have a part in judging (Luke 22:30; 1 Cor. 6:2). Clearly, all who have responded to His call to follow Him will receive not only eternal life but also hundredfold rewards.

**20:1** The parable of the laborers is found only in Matthew. Jesus illustrated why and how the last can become the first. Everything God has done for humanity is grace; individuals do not earn His favor, and He is never in their debt. God is sovereign—He is in charge. Rank, position, and reward are His to give to whomever He chooses. This parable illustrates two other points: God’s concern with far more than the amount of work done; the people’s anger with God because He is viewed as generous with others while only being fair with them.

<sup>8</sup>“So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them *their* wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ <sup>9</sup>And when those came who *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. <sup>10</sup>But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. <sup>11</sup>And when they had received *it*, they complained against the landowner, <sup>12</sup>saying, ‘These last *men* have worked *only* one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’ <sup>13</sup>But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? <sup>14</sup>Take *what is yours* and go your way. I wish to give to this last man *the same* as to you. <sup>15</sup>Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?’ <sup>16</sup>So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.”<sup>a</sup>

### *Jesus a Third Time Predicts His Death and Resurrection*

<sup>17</sup>Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, <sup>18</sup>“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, <sup>19</sup>and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again.”

### *Greatness Is Serving*

<sup>20</sup>Then the mother of Zebedee’s sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.

**20:20–24** A few days before Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, Zebedee’s wife made a request for her sons James and John. Though her request suggested dangerous ambition on her part, the angry response of the other 10 disciples was also unwise and reflected similar self-interest. “The cup” was a common expression for great suffering (v. 22; Matt. 26:39; John 18:11; Ps. 75:8; Is. 51:17). Just as His suffering and death must come before His rule, so also their suffering would come before their ruling with Him. Even though they would suffer for Christ, the positions, ranks, and rewards of the kingdom were a matter of God’s sovereign choice (see Matt. 20:1–16). Jesus wanted His disciples to approach Him freely with their requests, but He was disappointed in their inflated view of their own importance and with their lack of spiritual sensitiv-

<sup>21</sup>And He said to her, “What do you wish?”

She said to Him, “Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom.”

<sup>22</sup>But Jesus answered and said, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?”<sup>a</sup>

They said to Him, “We are able.”

<sup>23</sup>So He said to them, “You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with;<sup>a</sup> but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but *it is for those* for whom it is prepared by My Father.”

<sup>24</sup>And when the ten heard *it*, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers.

<sup>25</sup>But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup>Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. <sup>27</sup>And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—<sup>28</sup>just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

### *Two Blind Men Receive Their Sight*

<sup>29</sup>Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. <sup>30</sup>And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!”

20:16 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the last sentence of this verse.

20:22 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.* 20:23 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.*

ity in understanding His mission. They were reaching for glory without a willingness to endure the prerequisite sufferings. The brothers were confident that they were willing to share Jesus’ mission, and indeed Jesus prophesied that they would endure great suffering for the gospel (Acts 12:2; Rev. 1:9).

**20:25** The Jews used the term “Gentiles” to refer to anyone who was not ethnically a Jew. In common usage this term also included the idea that they were pagans, since they usually did not worship the God of Israel.

**20:26, 27** Greatness in His kingdom is servanthood—the opposite of the world’s view of greatness. Servanthood begins in the heart. Again, Jesus is concerned more about the attitudes in the hearts of His followers than with their works (see John 13:1–17).



## Zebedee's Ambitious Wife

When Jesus taught His disciples, the mother of James and John listened with pride in her two sons. Naturally talented and dedicated to the Lord, they were included in Jesus' inner circle. James was a born leader (see Acts 12:17; 15:13). John was commonly called the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (see John 13:23).

This mother's pride also included human (as opposed to godly) ambition, and she knelt before Jesus, requesting special favors (Matt. 20:21). Three times Jesus had foretold that He would be condemned to death, then rise the third day; yet at the Crucifixion, most of His disciples deserted Him, proving that they had heard Him selectively. They heard only the promise that His followers would sit on thrones (Matt. 19:28).

James and John may have urged their mother to speak, but neither they nor their mother understood the basic requirements for spiritual responsibility. Jesus listened to her request, but He posed His question to her sons (see also Mark 10:36). "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Matt. 20:22). They assured Him that they were, and Jesus proceeded to teach them and their mother elementary truths about servant leadership. Jesus did not reject this mother's request for her sons, but rather He corrected it in an unexpected way (vv. 23, 26).

This woman, who undoubtedly loved the Lord passionately, having joined the women who attended Him, is thought to be Salome (not to be confused with Salome, the daughter of Herodias; see Mark 15:40). She followed Jesus to the Cross and to the grave. Her highest fulfillment was to give her two sons to Christ, and the influence of a godly mother is certainly evident in these sons. But like many believers, she failed to grasp the essence of greatness—true humility. To follow Him is to take up one's own cross (see Luke 9:23, 24). Salome teaches us the importance of imitating Christ Who "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45).

See also Matt. 27:56; Mark 10:35–45; 15:40; 16:1; notes on Favoritism (Prov. 28); Motherhood (1 Sam. 1)

<sup>31</sup>Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!"

<sup>32</sup>So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

<sup>33</sup>They said to Him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened." <sup>34</sup>So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.

### The Triumphal Entry

**21** Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage,<sup>a</sup> at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them

and bring them to Me. <sup>3</sup>And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."

<sup>4</sup>All<sup>a</sup> this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

<sup>5</sup> "Tell the daughter of Zion,  
'Behold, your King is coming to you,  
Lowly, and sitting on a donkey,  
A colt, the foal of a donkey.'"<sup>a</sup>

<sup>6</sup>So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. <sup>7</sup>They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him<sup>a</sup> on them. <sup>8</sup>And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and

<sup>21:1</sup> <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *Bethphage*. <sup>21:4</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *All*.  
<sup>21:5</sup> <sup>a</sup> Zechariah 9:9 <sup>21:7</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *and He sat*.

spread *them* on the road. <sup>9</sup>Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

“Hosanna to the Son of David!  
‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of  
the LORD!’<sup>a</sup>  
Hosanna in the highest!”

<sup>10</sup>And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, “Who is this?”

<sup>11</sup>So the multitudes said, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.”

### *Jesus Cleanses the Temple*

<sup>12</sup>Then Jesus went into the temple of God<sup>a</sup> and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. <sup>13</sup>And He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’<sup>a</sup> but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Then *the blind* and *the lame* came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. <sup>15</sup>But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant <sup>16</sup>and said to Him, “Do You hear what these are saying?”

And Jesus said to them, “Yes. Have you never read,

‘Out of the mouth of babes and nursing  
infants  
You have perfected praise?’”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.

### *The Fig Tree Withered*

<sup>18</sup>Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. <sup>19</sup>And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found

nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, “Let no fruit grow on you ever again.” Immediately the fig tree withered away.

### *The Lesson of the Withered Fig Tree*

<sup>20</sup>And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, “How did the fig tree wither away so soon?”

<sup>21</sup>So Jesus answered and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ it will be done. <sup>22</sup>And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”

### *Jesus’ Authority Questioned*

<sup>23</sup>Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, “By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?”

<sup>24</sup>But Jesus answered and said to them, “I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: <sup>25</sup>The baptism of John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?”

And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ <sup>26</sup>But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet.” <sup>27</sup>So they answered Jesus and said, “We do not know.”

And He said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

### *The Parable of the Two Sons*

<sup>28</sup>“But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ <sup>29</sup>He an-

21:9 <sup>a</sup> Psalm 118:26 21:12 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits of God.  
21:13 <sup>a</sup> Isaiah 56:7 <sup>b</sup> Jeremiah 7:11 21:16 <sup>a</sup> Psalm 8:2

**21:9** See Mark 11:9, note.

**21:12, 13** When people came to worship at the temple, they needed animal sacrifices, wood, oil, and other items. Stalls were set up at the temple to sell these necessities, but since these objects sold for temple currency, the people needed to exchange their money. The temple, designed as a house of prayer, had become a marketplace where money changing and bargaining took place.

**21:18, 19** The tree looked like it was bearing figs, but no fruit was there. Just as in Jesus’ cleansing of the temple, His

striking of the tree indicated the imminence of judgment. This miracle of destruction could be understood as an illustrated parable or teaching device. In this case, the fig tree represented Israel (see Hos. 9:10; Nah. 3:12; Zech. 10:2). The tree with its leaves had the marks of fruitfulness, but it bore no fruit. Israel was likewise practicing hypocrisy (Mark 7:6), and for this reason the nation was in line for judgment. Jesus might also have been illustrating religious hypocrites like the ones He had just thrown out of the temple (Matt. 6:2, 5, 16; 7:5; 15:7, 8; 22:18).

**21:28–32** Jesus clearly applied this parable to the religious

swered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went. <sup>30</sup>Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. <sup>31</sup>Which of the two did the will of *his* father?"

They said to Him, "The first."

Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.

### *The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers*

<sup>33</sup>"Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. <sup>34</sup>Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. <sup>35</sup>And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. <sup>36</sup>Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. <sup>37</sup>Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' <sup>38</sup>But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' <sup>39</sup>So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

<sup>40</sup>"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"

<sup>41</sup>They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease *his* vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

<sup>42</sup>Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

*"The stone which the builders rejected  
Has become the chief cornerstone.*

*This was the LORD's doing,  
And it is marvelous in our eyes?"<sup>a</sup>*

<sup>43</sup>"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. <sup>44</sup>And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

<sup>45</sup>Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. <sup>46</sup>But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

### *The Parable of the Wedding Feast*

**22** And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: <sup>2</sup>"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, <sup>3</sup>and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. <sup>4</sup>Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding."' <sup>5</sup>But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. <sup>6</sup>And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*. <sup>7</sup>But when the king heard *about it*, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. <sup>8</sup>Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. <sup>9</sup>Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' <sup>10</sup>So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests.

21:42 <sup>a</sup> Psalm 118:22, 23

leaders confronting Him. The tax collector's status was similar to that of a prostitute in society. Jesus taught that the outcasts of society could enter His kingdom if they would repent, while those who had lived a "religious" life but would not repent were the real outcasts.

**21:33–41** The components of the parable are obvious: The landowner is God; the vineyard is Israel; the vinedressers are the religious leaders; the servants are the prophets (including John the Baptist); and the son is Jesus. The vinedressers have

attempted to usurp the authority of the owner and make the property their own—the essence of rebellion against God. To do so they must kill the son. Jesus had been telling His followers the leaders would kill Him; here He confronted the leaders with the same message.

**21:42–46** The line was clearly drawn and supported by the OT (Ps. 118:22, 23; Is. 28:16). To reject Jesus was and is to reject God (Acts 4:11, 12).

<sup>11</sup>“But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. <sup>12</sup>So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. <sup>13</sup>Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and<sup>a</sup> cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

<sup>14</sup>“For many are called, but few are chosen.”

*The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar?*

<sup>15</sup>Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. <sup>16</sup>And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men. <sup>17</sup>Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

<sup>18</sup>But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, “Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? <sup>19</sup>Show Me the tax money.”

So they brought Him a denarius.

<sup>20</sup>And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?”

<sup>21</sup>They said to Him, “Caesar’s.”

And He said to them, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” <sup>22</sup>When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way.

*The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection?*

<sup>23</sup>The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, <sup>24</sup>saying: “Teacher, Moses said

that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. <sup>25</sup>Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. <sup>26</sup>Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. <sup>27</sup>Last of all the woman died also. <sup>28</sup>Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.”

<sup>29</sup>Jesus answered and said to them, “You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. <sup>30</sup>For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God<sup>a</sup> in heaven. <sup>31</sup>But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, <sup>32</sup>‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’?<sup>a</sup> God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” <sup>33</sup>And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.

*The Scribes: Which Is the First Commandment of All?*

<sup>34</sup>But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. <sup>35</sup>Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, <sup>36</sup>“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

<sup>37</sup>Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’<sup>a</sup> <sup>38</sup>This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup>And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’<sup>a</sup> <sup>40</sup>On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

22:13 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits take him away, and. 22:30 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits of God. 22:32 <sup>a</sup> Exodus 3:6, 15 22:37 <sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5 22:39 <sup>a</sup> Leviticus 19:18

**22:17–19** The trap seemed masterful—His answer would have to support either a rebellion against Rome or a rebellion against God. He effectively diffused their trap, while addressing an issue with which the conquered Jews wrestled—paying taxes to Rome (see Mark 12:14, note).

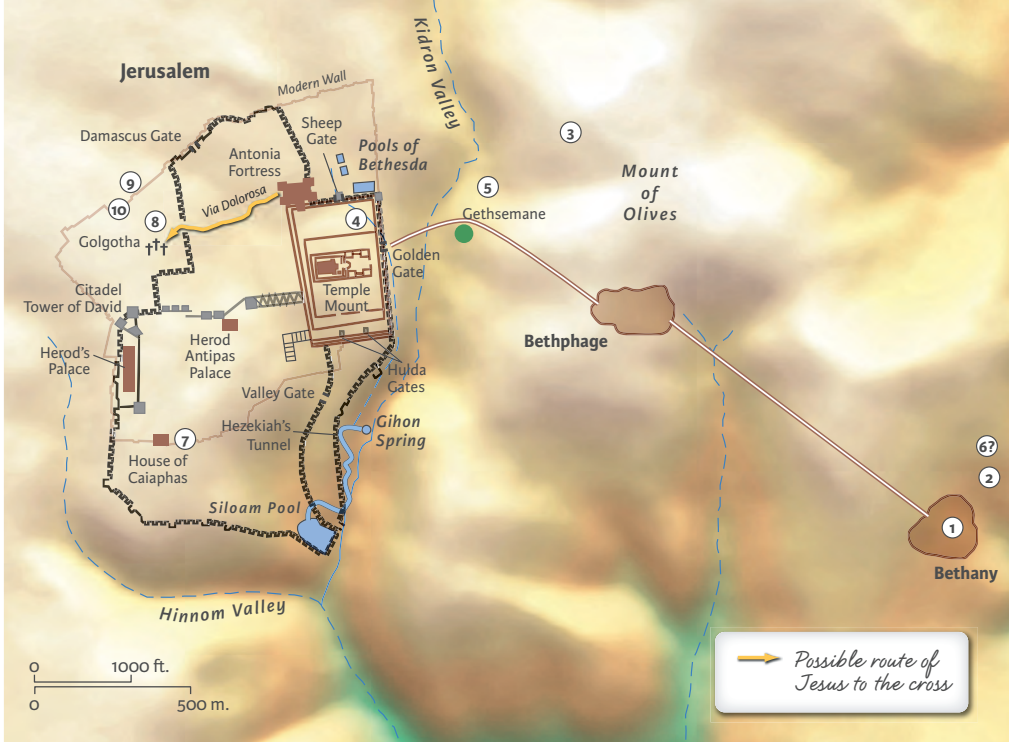
**22:23–33** The Sadducees accepted only the Torah and thus rejected the Resurrection, which is not mentioned in the Pentateuch (Acts 23:8; see chart, Jewish Sects). By appealing to levirate marriage (Matt. 22:25–27; see Deut. 25:5, 6, note) in which a brother marries the childless widow of his deceased brother in order to perpetuate the brother’s lineage, the Sadducees created a hypothetical worst-case scenario to entrap Jesus. Jesus pointed to their misunderstanding of God’s power and ignorance of Scripture and its teaching on the Resurrection (Matt.

22:29; see Is. 26:19). Though marriage as we know it will not exist in heaven, the lack of sexual relationships will in no way hinder the heavenly happiness and fulfillment God has planned for that blessed place. In fact, all relationships will surely surpass even the most joyous pleasure of intimacy on earth.

**22:37–40** The scribes were experts in both theology and legal matters and thus the crafters of a hotly debated test question for Jesus. Jesus answered by linking the two commandments because the first is not possible without the second (see 1 John 4:20), any more than the second could stand without the first. This wholehearted devotion to God is at the heart of the OT Law and the teachings of Jesus. A right relationship to God is the beginning of everything and produces a right relationship to others.



## PASSION WEEK



## The Final Week

## Friday

- 1 Arrives in Bethany**  
John 12:1

## Saturday

- 2 Sabbath — rests**  
No reference in Gospels

## Sunday

- 3 Triumphal Entry**  
Matt. 12:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–44; John 12:12–19

## Monday

- 4 Clears the Temple**  
Matt. 21:10–17; Mark 11:15–18; Luke 19:45–48

## Tuesday

- 5 Controversy and parables**  
Matt. 21:23–24:51; Mark 11:27–13:37; Luke 20:1–21:36

## Wednesday

- 6 Rest**  
No reference in Gospels

## Thursday

- 7 Passover — Last Supper**  
Matt. 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–23; John 13:1–30

## Friday

- 8 Crucifixion**  
Matt. 27:1–66; Mark 15:1–47; Luke 22:66–23:56;  
John 18:28–19:37

## Saturday

- 9 Buried in the tomb**

## Sunday

- 10 Resurrection**  
Matt. 28:1–13; Mark 16:1–20; Luke 24:1–49; John 20:1–31

### Jesus: How Can David Call His Descendant Lord?

<sup>41</sup>While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, <sup>42</sup>saying, “What

do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?”

They said to Him, “The Son of David.”

<sup>43</sup>He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying:

**22:41–46** Prior to this time Jesus had primarily talked about the religious leaders to His disciples and others. In these last confrontations and parables He had dealt with them directly.

They have seen Him and heard the truth and now must answer the most important question: “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is He?” “The Son of David” was not a



44 *“The LORD said to my Lord,  
“Sit at My right hand,  
Till I make Your enemies Your  
footstool!”<sup>a</sup>*

45 If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?” 46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

THE PLEASURE OF SEX, THE COMMUNICATION  
OF LOVE, AND THE DESIRE FOR CHILDREN  
ARE UNIQUELY LINKED.

*Charlene Kaemmerling*

### *Woe to the Scribes and Pharisees*

**23** Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. <sup>3</sup>Therefore whatever they tell you to observe,<sup>a</sup> that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. <sup>4</sup>For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay *them* on men’s shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers. <sup>5</sup>But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. <sup>6</sup>They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, <sup>7</sup>greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’ <sup>8</sup>But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ,<sup>a</sup> and you are all brethren. <sup>9</sup>Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. <sup>10</sup>And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. <sup>11</sup>But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. <sup>12</sup>And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

<sup>13</sup>“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,

hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in *yourselves*, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. <sup>14</sup>Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>15</sup>“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

<sup>16</sup>“Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.’ <sup>17</sup>Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies<sup>a</sup> the gold? <sup>18</sup>And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.’ <sup>19</sup>Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? <sup>20</sup>Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. <sup>21</sup>He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells<sup>a</sup> in it. <sup>22</sup>And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

<sup>23</sup>“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. <sup>24</sup>Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

<sup>25</sup>“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.<sup>a</sup> <sup>26</sup>Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and

22:44 <sup>a</sup> Psalm 110:1 23:3 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits to observe.

23:8 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the Christ. 23:14 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits this verse. 23:17 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads sanctified. 23:21 <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads dwelt. 23:25 <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads unrighteousness.

sufficient answer (v. 42). This title was used for the Messiah in reference to descent from the line of David, but many had not understood (or believed) that the Messiah would also be God’s Son.

**23:5** Phylacteries were leather boxes containing Scripture. They were worn by Jewish men during prayer time on the arm or the forehead. Biblical commands were written on small scrolls and placed in the OT frontlets or NT phylacteries (Ex. 13:9, 16; Deut. 6:8; 11:18). The Pharisees and scribes made their

phylacteries showpieces, drawing attention to their supposed adherence to Scripture.

**23:8–10** Only Jesus was qualified to sit in Moses’ seat.

**23:13–36** Jesus pronounced seven woes, condemning the rejection of the kingdom, false teaching of Scripture, attempts at purification, and attitudes toward the prophets God had sent. Jesus’ language had been strong and pointed. Nevertheless, His heart ached over the situation, and He yearned to forgive and heal (v. 37).

dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

<sup>27</sup>“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness. <sup>28</sup>Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

<sup>29</sup>“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, <sup>30</sup>and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’

<sup>31</sup>“Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. <sup>32</sup>Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*. <sup>33</sup>Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? <sup>34</sup>Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, <sup>35</sup>that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. <sup>36</sup>Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

### *Jesus Laments over Jerusalem*

<sup>37</sup>“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! <sup>38</sup>See! Your house is left to you desolate; <sup>39</sup>for I say to you, you shall see Me no

more till you say, ‘*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!*’”<sup>a</sup>

### *Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple*

**24** Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. <sup>2</sup>And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

### *The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age*

<sup>3</sup>Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

<sup>4</sup>And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup>For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. <sup>6</sup>And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all<sup>a</sup> *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup>For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences,<sup>a</sup> and earthquakes in various places. <sup>8</sup>All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

<sup>9</sup>“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. <sup>10</sup>And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. <sup>11</sup>Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. <sup>12</sup>And because lawlessness will abound, the

<sup>23:39</sup> <sup>a</sup> Psalm 118:26    <sup>24:6</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *all*.

<sup>24:7</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *pestilences*.

**24:1, 2** The destruction of the temple was literally fulfilled in A.D. 70 when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem.

**24:3** The disciples knew that Jesus was the Messiah (Matt. 16:16–20), the temple would be destroyed, and the kingdom was coming (Matt. 20:20–28). Since they did not understand other events must also occur — Jesus’ Crucifixion and death — they might have thought the events Jesus mentioned would all happen soon. Jesus told them they would see some of these things happen in a comparatively short time (persecution, abomination at the temple, destruction of Jerusalem and the temple), but He also made it clear that there would be a time lapse before it all came to pass. The events described

obviously demanded a longer period to transpire: the coming of false prophets, wars and rumors of wars, kingdom rising against kingdom, famine, earthquakes, and the extension of the gospel to the entire world before the kingdom would come literally. The emphasis then would be upon the necessity of faith and obedience even in times of suffering and sorrow rather than on a timetable of events.

**24:4–14** Jesus described the overall future of the world that would include natural disasters, persecution, false prophets, hatred of Christians, betrayal, defection, lawlessness, and lack of love. The gospel would be spread despite all this.

love of many will grow cold. <sup>13</sup>But he who endures to the end shall be saved. <sup>14</sup>And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

### *The Great Tribulation*

<sup>15</sup>“Therefore when you see the ‘*abomination of desolation*,’<sup>a</sup> spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), <sup>16</sup>“then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>17</sup>Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. <sup>18</sup>And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. <sup>19</sup>But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! <sup>20</sup>And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. <sup>21</sup>For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. <sup>22</sup>And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.

<sup>23</sup>“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. <sup>24</sup>For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. <sup>25</sup>See, I have told you beforehand.

<sup>26</sup>“Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it. <sup>27</sup>For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. <sup>28</sup>For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

### *The Coming of the Son of Man*

<sup>29</sup>“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>30</sup>Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup>And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

### *The Parable of the Fig Tree*

<sup>32</sup>“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup>So you also, when you see all these things, know that it<sup>a</sup> is near—at the doors! <sup>34</sup>Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. <sup>35</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

### *No One Knows the Day or Hour*

<sup>36</sup>“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven,<sup>a</sup> but My Father only. <sup>37</sup>But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. <sup>38</sup>For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah en-

24:15 <sup>a</sup> Daniel 11:31; 12:11 24:33 <sup>a</sup> Or He 24:36 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text adds *nor the Son*.

**24:15** The abomination of desolation prophesied by the prophet Daniel (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) is a good example of a prophecy with more than one fulfillment. The term refers to the defilement of the temple, especially the altar of sacrifice. The altar was a picture of the sacrifice of Christ as the only atonement for sin. The “abomination” would cast aside what represented Christ and offer sacrifices to other gods. In 168 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes sacked the temple, erected a statue to Zeus above the altar, and sacrificed swine (unclean animals). Jesus predicted that similar events would happen again.

**24:16–28** Jesus described events that would occur in Jerusalem in the future. There would be a Great Tribulation before He would come to set up His physical kingdom (see Rev. 6; chart, Millennial Views).

**24:30** Jesus’ Incarnation was relatively quiet and uneventful. Only a few witnessed the unusual events: Mary and Joseph had angelic visits; a group of shepherds heard an angelic choir;

wise men from another nation saw a phenomenal star. Jesus came as the Lamb of God to make peace between God and man. When He would come again to set up His kingdom, heaven and earth would dramatically announce Him, and all would see the display. He would come as King in power and glory and declare war against His enemies (see Rev. 6).

**24:34** Generation (Gk. *genea*) may refer to the nation Israel, suggesting her continued existence until the last days; it may mean “age” or “time period,” referring to the dispensation of grace; or it may mean the time period of 30 years. If the latter is the case, then the text would indicate that these signs would begin to be fulfilled before that generation would end.

**24:36–44** Jesus made it clear that while a general time may be determined for His return (when all these events occur), only the Father knows the day and hour. Christ’s coming will surprise everyone. The believer’s responsibility is not to attempt to guess the day but always to be ready.

tered the ark,<sup>39</sup> and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.<sup>40</sup> Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.<sup>41</sup> Two *women* will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.<sup>42</sup> Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour<sup>a</sup> your Lord is coming.<sup>43</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.<sup>44</sup> Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

### *The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant*

<sup>45</sup>“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?<sup>46</sup> Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.<sup>47</sup> Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.<sup>48</sup> But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’<sup>a</sup> <sup>49</sup>and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,<sup>50</sup> the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,<sup>51</sup> and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

### *The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins*

**25** “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.<sup>2</sup> Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.<sup>3</sup> Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,

<sup>4</sup>but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.<sup>5</sup> But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

<sup>6</sup>“And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming;<sup>a</sup> go out to meet him!’<sup>7</sup> Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.<sup>8</sup> And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’<sup>9</sup> But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’<sup>10</sup> And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

<sup>11</sup>“Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’<sup>12</sup> But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’

<sup>13</sup>“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour<sup>a</sup> in which the Son of Man is coming.

### *The Parable of the Talents*

<sup>14</sup>“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.<sup>15</sup> And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.<sup>16</sup> Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.<sup>17</sup> And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.<sup>18</sup> But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money.<sup>19</sup> After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

24:42 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *day*. 24:48 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *his coming*. 25:6 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *is coming*. 25:13 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.

**24:45–51** The servant’s assignment was to be faithful in caring for the household and distributing food. Similarly, the priests and teachers had been given the assignment of caring for the people of Israel. When they failed in their assignment and abused the members of God’s household, their punishment was severe.

**25:1–13** The parable of the 10 virgins is found only in Matthew (see The Wise and Foolish Virgins). Jesus taught this parable a few days before the Crucifixion. He had recently taught about the timing of the kingdom’s appearance (see Matt. 24). Here He used three parables to teach the importance of personal preparation for it.

**25:14–30** The parable of the talents is connected to the

previous parable of the 10 virgins, as it illustrates how to prepare for His coming. A talent could be of gold, silver, or copper. It was measured and valued according to the type of metal and its weight. A Roman-Attic talent is thought to have been worth 6,000 denarii—the amount a day laborer would need 20 years to earn (see chart, Money and Measurements in the Bible). Each person according to his own ability was expected to use what he had been given. The one given five talents and another given two talents both used their talents and received the same reward. The person given one talent did not even try to fulfill the responsibility the master gave him. His talent was taken away; he received no reward; the relationship between him and his master was destroyed.



## The Wise and Foolish Virgins

As part of the Olivet Discourse, Jesus told several parables about the importance of being prepared for His Return. For example, He pointed out that His Coming would be unexpected (Matt. 24:42–44) and that His followers would need to maintain a lifestyle of faithful obedience as they wait for Him (vv. 45–51).

The backdrop for Jesus' next parable was a wedding custom of His day (Matt. 25:1–13). Three events took place: the legal agreement made by the couple's parents; the procession to the bride's house by the bridegroom and his friends and the wedding party's return to the bridegroom's house; and the subsequent marriage feast. Jesus described the second phase in which the bridegroom and his party come to the bride's home, where the bride is awaiting him with the 10 virgins who are her bridesmaids. Since the time of his arrival was uncertain, perhaps even after dark, each young woman needed to have both her lamp and an extra flask of oil for it. The five wise virgins were prepared with additional oil, but the foolish ones were not. When the bridegroom suddenly arrived at midnight, the foolish virgins' lack of preparation was exposed, and they were ultimately denied entrance to the wedding feast.

Jesus' message is clear: His Coming, like that of the bridegroom in the parable, may be delayed; and the women and men who follow Him need continually to be prepared (v. 13).

See also 1 Thess. 5:1–3; notes on Commitment (Matt. 16); Spiritual Discipline (2 Pet. 3); Weddings (John 2)

<sup>20</sup>“So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’<sup>21</sup>His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’<sup>22</sup>He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’<sup>23</sup>His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

<sup>24</sup>“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.’<sup>25</sup>And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, *there* you have *what* is yours.’

<sup>26</sup>“But his lord answered and said to him,

‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.’<sup>27</sup>So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.<sup>28</sup>So take the talent from him, and give *it* to him who has ten talents.

<sup>29</sup>“For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.<sup>30</sup>And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

### The Son of Man Will Judge the Nations

<sup>31</sup>“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy<sup>a</sup> angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.<sup>32</sup>All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the

<sup>25:31</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *holy*.

**25:31–46** The separation of the sheep and goats illustrates a truth. God knows who belongs to Him (see Matt. 13:24). God's children can be detected in how they treat “the least of these My brethren” (Matt. 25:40). Reaching out to Jesus' brethren

does not enable a person to attain salvation; that comes only through confession of Jesus (Matt. 10:32). Reaching out is a result of salvation because it is a matter of responding to His love by obeying His commands.



goats.<sup>33</sup> And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.<sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:<sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;<sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

<sup>37</sup>“Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?<sup>38</sup> When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?’<sup>39</sup> Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’<sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’

<sup>41</sup>“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:<sup>42</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;<sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’

<sup>44</sup>“Then they also will answer Him,<sup>a</sup> saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’<sup>45</sup> Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.’

<sup>46</sup>And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

### *The Plot to Kill Jesus*

**26** Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, *that* He said to His disciples,<sup>2</sup> “You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

<sup>3</sup>Then the chief priests, the scribes,<sup>a</sup> and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,<sup>4</sup> and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill *Him*.<sup>5</sup> But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”

### *The Anointing at Bethany*

<sup>6</sup>And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper,<sup>7</sup> a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured *it* on His head as He sat *at the table*.<sup>8</sup> But when His disciples saw *it*, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste?<sup>9</sup> For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to *the poor*.”

<sup>10</sup>But when Jesus was aware of *it*, He said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me.<sup>11</sup> For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always.<sup>12</sup> For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did *it* for My burial.<sup>13</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”

### *Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus*

<sup>14</sup>Then one of the twelve, called Judas

25:44 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *Him*. 26:3 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *the scribes*.

**26:1, 2** The Passover was an annual celebration of the ceremony Moses instituted the night before the people left Egypt (Ex. 12).

**26:1–46** The Lord’s Passion is described in this section. Jesus prepared His disciples for the trial, sentencing, and Crucifixion; His enemies prepared their plans for taking Him; a woman prepared His body for burial; Judas prepared to betray Him; and Jesus prepared Himself in prayer. These events probably took place late Tuesday evening (actually Wednesday, as days ended at sunset) before His death (see chart, The Last Week in the Life of Jesus).

**26:3** The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people were the ones who tried to challenge Jesus. He had met their challenges and repeatedly defeated and unmasked them.

**26:6–13** Two anointings took place — this one in Bethany

and an earlier one in Galilee (Luke 7:36). To honor a revered rabbi in this manner was not an uncommon event. The oil was costly (about 300 denarii), worth about a year’s wages (see chart, Money and Measurements in the Bible). Mary of Bethany is identified as the woman (John 12:1–8). Though the text does not actually say Mary fully understood that Jesus was going to die, her actions may indicate she had a better grasp of what was taking place than did the disciples. Jesus understood her act as one of devout preparation and distinguished it as something set apart from mere good works.

**26:14** Judas’ motivation for betrayal is not indicated. Perhaps he was offended by Jesus’ earlier rebuke or by the finality of Jesus’ words, which indicated that He would not seek an earthly kingdom; even the money itself could have entered into consideration. In any case, Judas’ decision to betray Jesus stands in sharp contrast to Mary’s devotion.

Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup>and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup>So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

### *Jesus Celebrates Passover with His Disciples*

<sup>17</sup>Now on the first *day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread* the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, “Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?”

<sup>18</sup>And He said, “Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, “My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.”’”

<sup>19</sup>So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

<sup>20</sup>When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. <sup>21</sup>Now as they were eating, He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.”

<sup>22</sup>And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, “Lord, is it I?”

<sup>23</sup>He answered and said, “He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. <sup>24</sup>The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”

<sup>25</sup>Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, “Rabbi, is it I?”

He said to him, “You have said it.”

### *Jesus Institutes the Lord’s Supper*

<sup>26</sup>And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed<sup>a</sup> and broke it, and gave it to

the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”

<sup>27</sup>Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. <sup>28</sup>For this is My blood of the new<sup>a</sup> covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. <sup>29</sup>But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”

<sup>30</sup>And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

### *Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial*

<sup>31</sup>Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written:

*‘I will strike the Shepherd,  
And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’<sup>a</sup>*

<sup>32</sup>But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.”

<sup>33</sup>Peter answered and said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.”

<sup>34</sup>Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”

<sup>35</sup>Peter said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!”

And so said all the disciples.

### *The Prayer in the Garden*

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.”

26:26 <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *gave thanks for*. 26:28 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *new*. 26:31 <sup>a</sup> Zechariah 13:7

**26:15** Thirty pieces of silver was the value of a male or female slave gored to death accidentally by an ox (Ex. 21:32).

**26:17** The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was the beginning of the Passover celebration. Jews were to rid the house of all leaven and use only unleavened bread during the celebration (Lev. 23:6).

**26:24** Though the betrayal by one of the disciples was foretold, Judas was still personally responsible for his actions.

**26:26–29** Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper by using two symbols — bread and the fruit of the vine. The unleavened bread was a reminder of the hasty departure of God’s people from Egypt (Ex. 12). Jesus gave the bread new meaning by associating it with His body, which would be broken (Matt. 26:26). This object lesson pointed to His death on the Cross. The original Passover ceremony used several “cups” (Ex. 6:6, 7). Jesus

gave new meaning to the cup as well (Matt. 26:28, 29). It would stand for His blood, which would be shed on the Cross. After His Resurrection, this celebration would look back to Jesus’ death on the Cross and forward to His return. The hymn would probably be from one of the Hallel psalms (see Ps. 114–118; see chart, The Types of Psalms). Jesus reminded them there would be a kingdom, and He would be with them again.

**26:31** Jesus also referred to Himself as the Shepherd who would give His life for His sheep (John 10:1–15; see also Zech. 13:7).

**26:36–44** Gethsemane (lit. “oil press”), the garden located across the Kidron on the Mount of Olives, was likely so named because of the abundance of olive trees. There, in prayer, Jesus fought His greatest battle. The intense sorrow was not primarily over the physical torture or dying, for He had been telling

## Servant Girl

Just as a master craftsman knows how to put a small amount of pressure in the right place at the right time in order to reveal weaknesses, God often uses small things to reveal the weaknesses of an individual.

Peter was sure that he, of all the disciples, would never desert Jesus (Matt. 26:35). He may not have had the sensitivity of John, the literary gifts of Matthew, or the servant's heart of Andrew, but the one thing he did have was courage. He proved his courage when he swung his sword at the priest's servant in the Garden of Gethsemane. However, only a few hours later he met the servant girl and denied he ever knew Jesus. What the powerful temple rulers could not make Peter do one moment, a seemingly insignificant servant girl accomplished the next.

The girl's name or from where she came is unknown. She belonged to the household of the high priest (Mark 14:66), and one of her duties was to meet people at the door (John 18:17). God used her in one brief encounter to put the right amount of pressure at the right time on one of His children in order to bring his weakness to the forefront. Just as with David's small stone (see 1 Sam. 17:49), God often combines little things with His strength to overpower the weaknesses in the lives of His children.

See also Mark 14:66–68; Luke 22:56, 57; John 18:17; notes on *Girlhood* (Prov. 1); *Testing* (Ps. 12); *Vows* (Num. 30)

<sup>37</sup>And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. <sup>38</sup>Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”

<sup>39</sup>He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”

<sup>40</sup>Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? <sup>41</sup>Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

<sup>42</sup>Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless<sup>a</sup> I drink it, Your will be done.” <sup>43</sup>And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.

<sup>44</sup>So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

<sup>45</sup>Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>46</sup>Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

### *Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane*

<sup>47</sup>And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people.

<sup>48</sup>Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him.” <sup>49</sup>Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed Him.

<sup>50</sup>But Jesus said to him, “Friend, why have you come?”

Then they came and laid hands on Jesus

<sup>26:42</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *if this may not pass away unless*.

them for months He was willing to die (vv. 21–23). Rather, it was over needing to experience God's “cup of wrath.” In the OT God's cup of wrath was poured out on sinners, resulting in desolation, waste, and becoming a curse (Jer. 25:13–18; 49:12, 13). He, the pure, sinless Son of God, would become sin, which would result in separation between Himself and the Father (2 Cor. 5:21). It was this separation that He dreaded (Matt. 27:46). Because He was obedient, He experienced something

no Christian would ever experience—separation from God (Rom. 8:38, 39).

**26:47–56** A series of predictions were fulfilled: Judas betrayed Him, the priests and elders seized Him, and the disciples fled. The central character, of course, was Jesus. His amazing calmness and willingness to endure what faced Him reflected the results of His prayer battle in the garden.

## *Women and Jesus in His Last Days*

THE WOMAN	THE EVENT	HER MINISTRY TO JESUS	REFERENCE
Unnamed woman (See John 11, Mary of Bethany)	The anointing of Jesus at Bethany	She used expensive and fragrant oil to anoint Jesus' head.	Matt. 26:6–13
Unnamed servant girl	The testing of Peter	She asked Peter about his association with Jesus.	Matt. 26:69, 70
Another girl	The testing of Peter	She asked Peter about his association with Jesus.	Matt. 26:71, 72
Pilate's wife	The trial of Jesus	She pleaded with her husband to release Jesus.	Matt. 27:17–19
Unnamed women	The journey to the Crucifixion site	They mourned for Jesus.	Luke 23:26–29
Mary (Jesus' mother); Mary (the wife of Clopas and the aunt of Jesus); Mary Magdalene	The Crucifixion	They stood by the Cross, suffering with Jesus.	John 19:25–27
Women from Galilee: Mary Magdalene; Mary (the mother of James and Joses); Salome (the wife of Zebedee)	The Crucifixion and burial	They ministered to Jesus in His last days, including preparing His body for burial.	Matt. 27:55, 56
Mary Magdalene; Mary (the mother of James); Joanna	The Resurrection	They were the first to announce His Resurrection.	Matt. 28:1–10; Luke 24:1–12

and took Him. <sup>51</sup>And suddenly, one of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out *his* hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

<sup>52</sup>But Jesus said to him, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish<sup>a</sup> by the sword. <sup>53</sup>Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup>How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?”

<sup>55</sup>In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. <sup>56</sup>But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”

Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

### *Jesus Faces the Sanhedrin*

<sup>57</sup>And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. <sup>58</sup>But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.

<sup>59</sup>Now the chief priests, the elders,<sup>a</sup> and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, <sup>60</sup>but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none.<sup>a</sup> But at last two false

26:52 <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *die*. 26:59 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *the elders*.  
26:60 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text puts a comma after *but found none*, does not capitalize *Even*, and omits *they found none*.

**26:59, 60** The chief priests, the elders, and all the council would constitute the Jews' highest court, known as the Sanhedrin. Scholars have discussed at length what parts of Jesus' trials were illegal. For example, the proceedings took place at

the high priest's home rather than the courts; no one spoke for His defense; and the trial was at night. Whether or not these were illegal, the calling of false witnesses certainly was a travesty in legal proceedings.



witnesses<sup>b</sup> came forward <sup>61</sup>and said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’”

<sup>62</sup>And the high priest arose and said to Him, “Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?” <sup>63</sup>But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, “I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!”

<sup>64</sup>Jesus said to him, “*It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.*”

<sup>65</sup>Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, “He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! <sup>66</sup>What do you think?”

They answered and said, “He is deserving of death.”

<sup>67</sup>Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck *Him* with the palms of their hands, <sup>68</sup>saying, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?”

### *Peter Denies Jesus, and Weeps Bitterly*

<sup>69</sup>Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee.”

<sup>70</sup>But he denied it before *them* all, saying, “I do not know what you are saying.”

<sup>71</sup>And when he had gone out to the gateway, another *girl* saw him and said to those *who were there*, “This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

<sup>72</sup>But again he denied with an oath, “I do not know the Man!”

<sup>73</sup>And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, “Surely you also are *one* of them, for your speech betrays you.”

<sup>74</sup>Then he began to curse and swear, *saying*, “I do not know the Man!”

Immediately a rooster crowed. <sup>75</sup>And Pe-

ter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, “*Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.*” So he went out and wept bitterly.

### *Jesus Handed Over to Pontius Pilate*

**27** When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. <sup>2</sup>And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius<sup>a</sup> Pilate the governor.

### *Judas Hangs Himself*

<sup>3</sup>Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, <sup>4</sup>saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”

And they said, “What *is that* to us? You see to it!”

<sup>5</sup>Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

<sup>6</sup>But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.” <sup>7</sup>And they consulted together and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. <sup>8</sup>Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

<sup>9</sup>Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, “*And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, <sup>10</sup>and gave them for the potter’s field, as the LORD directed me.*”<sup>a</sup>

### *Jesus Faces Pilate*

<sup>11</sup>Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

Jesus said to him, “*It is as you say.*” <sup>12</sup>And

26:60 <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *false witnesses.* 27:2 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Pontius.* 27:10 <sup>a</sup> Jeremiah 32:6–9

**27:1, 2** The Sanhedrin had found Jesus guilty of blasphemy, a capital offense for the Jews, though not for the Romans. The Jews, however, were restricted in carrying out a death penalty. The Romans would have to do executions. The Roman trial eventually centered on Jesus’ kingship — something Rome did take seriously.

**27:6, 7** Blood money could not be used in the treasury (Deut.

23:18); so they bought a field to be used for the burial of foreigners.

**27:11** In the first step of a Roman trial, the magistrate listened to the charges and gave the accused opportunity for rebuttal. Pilate asked the first question, “Are You the King of the Jews?” Jesus’ answer was the reason for the inscription later put on the Cross.



## Pilate's Wife

Only one verse in the Bible refers to Pilate's wife (Matt. 27:19), yet it tells much. She appeared at Jesus' trials when all Jerusalem was divided over His fate, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" (v. 22). Some were hiding, most were condemning, and a few — almost all women — were following at a distance (vv. 55, 56).

Her husband was on precarious ground. He was not popular with the Jewish people he governed and had few, if any, diplomatic skills (brute force was his style). The danger of rebellion continually bubbled beneath the surface, and Pilate had learned to avoid offending the Jewish leaders unless personally threatened. Releasing Jesus would mean no political gain; in fact, the opposite was true. Yet he tried. Obviously, he was impressed by this man (v. 14) and considered Him innocent (v. 18). Then his wife had a dream.

Whether her dream was divinely inspired or a result of her own feelings is unknown. She was disturbed enough to send a note in the middle of the trial procedures. She described Jesus as a "just Man," giving a clue to her dream. Convinced of His innocence, she encouraged her husband to an action that was politically unsound.

Did she actually respond to Christ? No evidence is presented. But she had, at least one time in her life, faced the universal decision, "What then shall I do with Jesus?" and responded with conviction and courage.

See also notes on *Decision Making* (1 Cor. 8); *Influence* (Esth. 4)

while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.

<sup>13</sup>Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" <sup>14</sup>But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

### Taking the Place of Barabbas

<sup>15</sup>Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. <sup>16</sup>And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.<sup>a</sup> <sup>17</sup>Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" <sup>18</sup>For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

<sup>19</sup>While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

<sup>20</sup>But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for

Barabbas and destroy Jesus. <sup>21</sup>The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

They said, "Barabbas!"

<sup>22</sup>Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

<sup>23</sup>Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

<sup>24</sup>When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person.<sup>a</sup> You see to it."

<sup>25</sup>And all the people answered and said, "His blood *be* on us and on our children."

<sup>26</sup>Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified.

<sup>27:16</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Jesus Barabbas*. <sup>27:24</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *just*.

**27:15–20** Pilate obviously thought Jesus was innocent, and he offered His accusers a way out, while not backing down

himself. His offer for "Passover amnesty" was rejected. He underestimated their hatred.

## Mary: THE MOTHER OF JAMES

Jesus had many “behind the scene” followers. All four gospels describe a group of women who were devoted to special ministries to the Savior. These women served, supported, and even traveled in order to prepare the way for Jesus and the Twelve. Mary, the mother of James the Less and Joses, was one of these women. In fact, she was one of the few followers (mostly women) who did not desert Jesus at the Cross. She remained for the entire tragic ordeal. Imagine the wrenching of her heart as she helplessly watched the hideous torture, humiliation, and Crucifixion of the One she had found so understanding and gentle.

Staying behind when the crowds left the death scene, she and a few of this loyal group followed Joseph of Arimathea as he took Jesus’ body to the tomb. Though they saw Him die, they could not let Him go — not yet. They needed to know where His body would rest.

After the Sabbath, these women spent hours gathering the spices used for burial — they still served Him. With heavy hearts they got up early in the morning, packed the spices, and trudged toward the tomb. When they arrived, there was an eerie silence, not the silence of death but rather of wonder — the tomb was open and empty.

God had honored these faithful women in a special way. At the lowest point of Christianity, Mary and her companions were the first to receive the news that revolutionized the world. Composers, writers, and artists through the centuries have celebrated the message they, alone, heard that morning — “He is risen.”

Mary is a prime example of the reward of faithfulness. Every act of service done for the Master counts.

See also Mark 15:40, 47; 16:1; Luke 24:10; notes on Influence (Esth. 4); Motherhood (1 Sam. 1)

### *The Soldiers Mock Jesus*

<sup>27</sup>Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. <sup>28</sup>And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. <sup>29</sup>When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” <sup>30</sup>Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. <sup>31</sup>And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

### *The King on a Cross*

<sup>32</sup>Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they com-

elled to bear His cross. <sup>33</sup>And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, <sup>34</sup>they gave Him sour<sup>a</sup> wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.

<sup>35</sup>Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots,<sup>a</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet:

*“They divided My garments among them,  
And for My clothing they cast lots.”<sup>b</sup>*

<sup>36</sup>Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. <sup>37</sup>And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him:

**THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

<sup>27:34</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits sour. <sup>27:35</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit the rest of this verse. <sup>b</sup> Psalm 22:18

**27:32–38** The Crucifixion of Jesus by Pilate is well documented not only in the gospels, but also by non-Christian writers (Tacitus, Josephus, Mara bar Serapion, and Thallus). Crucifixion was a cruel form of death since it did not damage any vital organs or cause excessive bleeding but caused a long, slow death, mostly from asphyxiation or shock. This cruel and humiliating execution was reserved for foreigners, not Roman

citizens. It was always a public affair, becoming an especially useful deterrent to those who might be entertaining thoughts of insurrection. The Jews detested this inhumane act of execution, not only for its cruelty, but because the OT clearly stated that anyone who hangs on a tree is “accursed of God” (Deut. 21:22, 23). And Jesus, of course, was accused by God for our sins (chart, Prophecies Fulfilled at the Cross).

<sup>38</sup>Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

<sup>39</sup>And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads <sup>40</sup>and saying, “You who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

<sup>41</sup>Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders,<sup>a</sup> said, <sup>42</sup>“He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel,<sup>a</sup> let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.<sup>b</sup> <sup>43</sup>He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

<sup>44</sup>Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

### *Jesus Dies on the Cross*

<sup>45</sup>Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.

<sup>46</sup>And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>47</sup>Some of those who stood there, when they heard *that*, said, “This Man is calling for Elijah!” <sup>48</sup>Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled *it* with sour wine and put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.

<sup>49</sup>The rest said, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.”

<sup>50</sup>And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

<sup>51</sup>Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, <sup>52</sup>and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; <sup>53</sup>and coming out of the graves after His res-

urrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

<sup>54</sup>So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

<sup>55</sup>And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, <sup>56</sup>among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses,<sup>a</sup> and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

### *Jesus Buried in Joseph’s Tomb*

<sup>57</sup>Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup>This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. <sup>59</sup>When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, <sup>60</sup>and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. <sup>61</sup>And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.

### *Pilate Sets a Guard*

<sup>62</sup>On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, <sup>63</sup>saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘**After three days I will rise.**’” <sup>64</sup>Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His dis-

<sup>27:41</sup> <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *with the scribes, the Pharisees, and the elders.* <sup>27:42</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *He is the King of Israel!*

<sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *we will believe in Him.*

<sup>27:46</sup> <sup>a</sup> Psalm 22:1 <sup>27:56</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Joseph.*

**27:40–43** Jesus stayed on the Cross because He was the Son of God obeying His Father. Had Jesus saved Himself, He would not have been able to save others. The Resurrection demonstrated God’s powerful work in His Son.

**27:45** From the sixth hour to the ninth would be from noon until 3:00 in the afternoon. The darkness was a sign of judgment and a reminder that mankind does not know fully what transpired on the Cross. Matthew only stated the reason for His suffering and death.

**27:51** The veil of the temple was the heavily woven curtain that hung between the holy place and the Most Holy Place (see Luke 23:45, note; Heb. 9:3). Its presence was a continual reminder of the separation between mankind and God. The au-

thor of Hebrews stated that the veil represented Jesus’ body (Heb. 10:19, 20). The tearing signified the removal of the barrier between God and anyone who would accept Jesus’ sacrifice (Heb. 4:16; 6:19).

**27:55, 56** The women faithfully stayed through the Crucifixion and followed His body to the tomb (see chart, Women and Jesus in His Last Days).

**27:57** Only a rich man could have owned ground so close to the city. Many think Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin who had believed in Christ. He had to be a man of influence in order to approach Pilate.

**27:61** Mourning for a victim of a Roman execution was not allowed. The women would have had to grieve silently.

ciples come by night<sup>a</sup> and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first."

<sup>65</sup>Pilate said to them, "You have a guard;

go your way, make *it* as secure as you know how." <sup>66</sup>So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

27:64 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *by night*.

## New Testament Political Rulers

NAME	POSITION	BIBLICAL EVENT	REFERENCE	KEY WOMEN
Augustus Caesar (31 B.C.–A.D. 14)	Roman Emperor	Census that took Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem; Birth of Jesus	Luke 2:1–7	Mary (Luke 2:5–7)
Claudius (A.D. 41–54)	Roman Emperor	Expelling of residents from Rome (including Priscilla and Aquila)	Acts 11:28; 17:7; 18:2	Priscilla (Acts 18:2)
Felix (A.D. 52–60)	Procurator of Judea	Trial of Paul	Acts 23:25— 24:27	Drusilla (Acts 24:24)
Festus (A.D. 60–62)	Procurator of Judea	Trial of Paul when he appealed to Caesar	Acts 24:27; 25:1–27	Bernice (Acts 25:13)
Herod Agrippa I (A.D. 37–44)	King of Judea	Persecution of the early church; Murder of James, the brother of John; Imprisonment of Peter	Acts 12:1–24	Mary, the mother of John Mark Rhoda (Acts 12:12, 13)
Herod Agrippa II (A.D. 48–70)	Tetrarch of Chalcis and northern territory	Ministry of Paul; Interrogation of Paul in Caesarea	Acts 25:13— 26:32	Bernice (Acts 25:13)
Herod Antipas (4 B.C.–A.D. 39)	Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea	Murder of John the Baptist; Trial and torture of Jesus	Matt. 14:1–11; Mark 6:14–29; Luke 3:1, 19; 13:31–35; 23:7–12	Herodias (Matt. 14:3) Salome (Matt. 14:6–11)
Herod Archelaus (4 B.C.–A.D. 6)	Ethnarch of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea	Flight into Egypt of Mary and Joseph with Jesus	Matt. 2:13–15, 22	Mary (Matt. 2:14)
Herod the Great (37–4 B.C.)	King over all Palestine (Judea)	Birth of Jesus; Visit from the Magi; Massacre of innocents	Matt. 2:1–21; Luke 1:5	Mary (Matt. 2:11)
Herod Philip II (4 B.C.–A.D. 34)	Tetrarch of Iturea, Trachonitus, Gaulanitis, Auranitis, and Batahea	Ministry of John the Baptist	Luke 3:1–20	Herodias (Luke 3:19)
Nero (A.D. 54–68)	Roman Emperor	Persecution of Christians in Rome; Martyrdom of Peter and Paul	Acts 25:1–12; 28:19; Phil. 4:22	
Pontius Pilate (A.D. 26–36)	Roman Procurator	Public ministry of Jesus; Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus	Matt. 27:11–26; Luke 3:1; 23:1–25	Pilate's wife (Matt. 27:19)
Tiberius Caesar (A.D. 14–37)	Roman Emperor	Public ministry of Jesus; Crucifixion of Jesus	Luke 3:1	



## EVANGELISM

## WOMEN AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

When Christ gave the Great Commission, He did not consider gender, just as gender is not a consideration when the Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts. God has chosen every believing woman to carry His message to her sphere of influence as she is filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit and anointed and equipped with His power (Acts 1:8). The mission of every believer in Jesus Christ is to communicate to the world who Jesus is and to extend to all His offer of salvation and spiritual refuge. Jesus has commissioned all believers to go to the most distant and remote points of the earth—as well as to their neighbors next door—to reach the lost with the gospel message of redemption and reconciliation. We are to make the Savior known:

- through the spoken word (Rom. 10:14, 15),
- through good works (James 2:14–17),
- through the example of a new character (Matt. 5:16, 20).

The single woman, the wife, the mother, the grandmother, the widow are called to “go into all the world.”

“Going” does not necessarily mean leaving home and family, but it does mean making yourself totally available to serve wherever, whenever, and however He directs. The foremost manifestation of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life is that she will be a witness of the Lord’s life and commandments (Acts 1:8). She is to be ready at all times to speak His name, tell of His marvelous works, give a defense of the reason for our hope, and tell others about His sacrifice and the abundant life He provides now and for all eternity (1 Pet. 3:15).

The New Testament gives certain requirements for soul-winning. The first, of course, is a genuine experience of grace through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (1 John 1:1–3). A love for Christ and for people is also essential (Ps. 126:6), as is a willingness to be used by the Holy Spirit in sharing the gospel (Acts 8:29). An effective soul-winner will determine to live a separated life (2 Cor. 6:17) since lifestyle testimony is also a key ingredient. Creativity in using every opportunity for saying a word about Christ is also helpful (1 Pet. 3:15), as is a diligence in the study of God’s Word, which enables the believer to explain more effectively the way of salvation (Ps. 51:13; 1 Pet. 2:2). All must be undergirded with specific and unceasing prayer (1 Thess. 5:17). Any woman willing to commit herself to this high and holy responsibility will indeed be rewarded (Dan. 12:3).

When unbelievers see those in the church generously giving their time, resources, and love to carry out the Great Commission, they are compelled to glorify the Father (Matt. 5:16).

*See also 1 Pet. 3:15; notes on Evangelism (John 6; Col. 4; 1 Pet. 3); Salvation (Eph. 2); Spiritual Gifts (Rom. 12); Women’s Ministries (John 4; Acts 2; 1 Cor. 11; Eph. 2; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 2); portrait of The Samaritan Woman (John 4)*

*He Is Risen*

**28** Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup>And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled

back the stone from the door,<sup>a</sup> and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. <sup>4</sup>And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

<sup>5</sup>But the angel answered and said to the

28:2 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *from the door*.

**28:5–10** The women, not the guards, were addressed by the angel. His first words were to quiet their fears. When Jesus walked on the water and the disciples expressed fear, He told them not to fear (Matt. 14:27). Here the angel again used the

Person of Jesus as the reason for dismissing fear. The second thing the angel wanted to make clear was that Resurrection had taken place. No other explanation was possible. The grave was opened not to let Jesus out but to let His followers see that



women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. <sup>7</sup>And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.”

<sup>8</sup>So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

### *The Women Worship the Risen Lord*

<sup>9</sup>And as they went to tell His disciples,<sup>a</sup> behold, Jesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!” So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.”

### *The Soldiers Are Bribed*

<sup>11</sup>Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. <sup>12</sup>When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, <sup>13</sup>saying, “Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.’” <sup>14</sup>And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will appease him and make you secure.” <sup>15</sup>So

they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

### *The Great Commission*

<sup>16</sup>Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. <sup>17</sup>When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

<sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore<sup>a</sup> and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.<sup>a</sup>

28:9 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the first clause of this verse.

28:19 <sup>a</sup> M-Text omits *therefore*. 28:20 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Amen*.

I LIKE TO DEFINE FORGIVENESS

AS “GIVING UP THE RIGHT TO PUNISH  
THE ONE WHO HAS HURT YOU.” THAT’S  
WHAT JESUS DID ON THE CROSS.

*Jan Silvious*

the tomb was empty. The angel declared Jesus would actually be seen in Galilee, just as He promised (Matt. 26:32). The women who remained at the Cross and followed to see where He was buried were the ones privileged to first share this earth-shattering news and the first to see and worship Him. The Lord Himself gave the message of the Resurrection to the women to take to the disciples.

**28:11–15** The guards who reported to the chief priests must have been temple police (v. 11).

**28:18** The first man, Adam, was given rule over the earth in the garden of Eden but abdicated that responsibility through his sin. In the wilderness, Satan offered Jesus that rulership, but Jesus refused (Matt. 4:1–11). Jesus not only regained that

rule by obedience to the Father but also was given the rule over all the heavens (see Phil. 2:8–11).

**28:19** Jesus called His disciples to Himself first, where they would learn about Him, and He then would send them out. “Baptizing” and “teaching” are specified as part of the process of discipleship.

**28:20** The Master closed His time on earth with the disciples with the one promise required to make all His teaching effective—His presence. He had made this promise before when He invited His followers to join in His yoke (Matt. 11:28–30). “Always” has the sense here of “the whole of every day.” Jesus’ commission did not end here at the end of the gospel; it was just beginning.