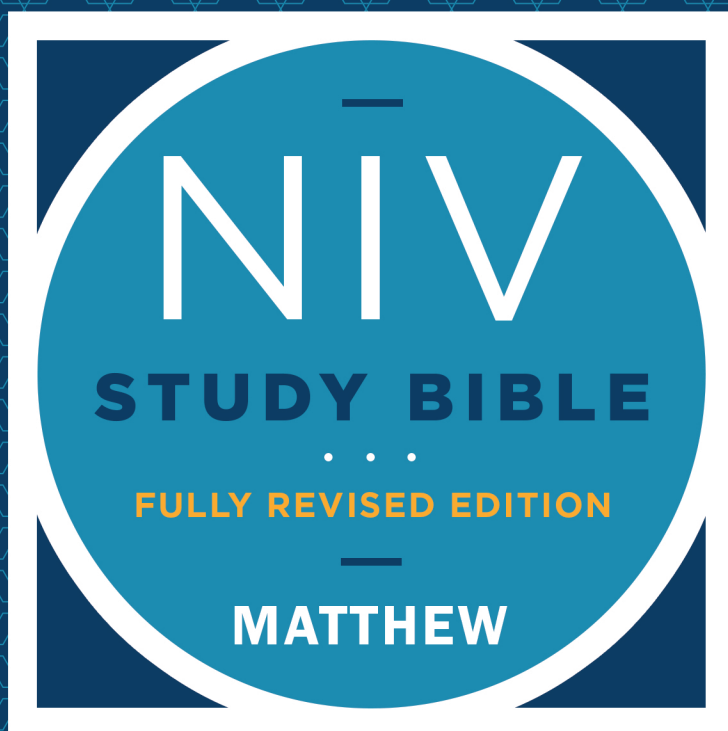


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# QUICK START GUIDE

Congratulations on your purchase of the *NIV Study Bible*. You have in your hands a comprehensive, multiuse tool that has been designed specifically to enhance your understanding of and appreciation for God's Word.

## About the *NIV Study Bible*

Most of the team of evangelical scholars who wrote and edited notes for the *NIV Study Bible* also served on the translation team for the New International Version translation itself. Since the release of the *NIV Study Bible* in 1985, its editors have diligently worked to revise the notes to provide readers with the most up-to-date, relevant study notes available today. Find out more about the New International Version itself by reading the Preface, beginning on page xv.

## What Is a Study Bible?

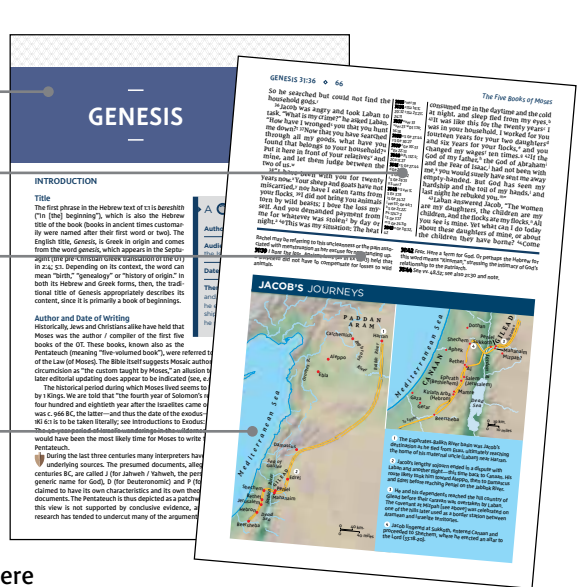
A study Bible contains the full text of the Bible, along with a library of study features to help the reader more completely grasp, understand, and apply what the text is saying. These notes introduce and explain a wide variety of background information to the biblical text, providing deeper insights for individuals who are ready to devote themselves to serious study of the text.

## What Help Do These Study Features Offer Me?

For a full discussion of each of these features — and others — see the Introduction on page xviii.

- ▶ Book introductions answer the Who? What? Where? Why? and When? questions readers have about the Bible's 66 books.
- ▶ Center-column cross references aid in deeper study of themes or concepts by leading readers to related passages on the same or similar themes.
- ▶ Over 21,000 study notes have been placed close to the text that they amplify and explain. These have been designed to provide background and context to the Scripture text and will also answer questions that may arise as one reads through the Bible.
- ▶ Full-color in-text maps, charts and models, along with well-crafted articles, summarize and explain important information and ideas from Scripture.
- ▶ The Index to Notes directs readers' attention to study notes, book introductions, articles and charts where information about various subjects can be found.
- ▶ The NIV Concordance is a tool designed to help readers who remember a key word or phrase in a passage to locate the verses they are looking for. Words and names are listed alphabetically, along with their more significant verse references.
- ▶ Fourteen full-color maps at the end of this study Bible help readers to visualize the geographic context of what they are studying. The maps are supplemented by a complete map index.

Why not go ahead and spend a few minutes trying out each of these features? If you're like most readers, certain helps will catch your interest and eventually become trusted resources as you spend time with your Bible. May God bless you as you study and come to understand the timeless truths of the Bible as priceless treasures for today.



# TRIBUTE TO DR. KENNETH L. BARKER

Few individuals have the opportunity to see their God-given vocation so clearly as Dr. Ken Barker, General Editor of the *NIV Study Bible*. For forty years Dr. Barker has passionately pursued his calling as General Editor of this remarkable study tool.

A self-described “poor Kentucky boy” who committed his life to Jesus during a youth rally at age 16, Dr. Barker went on to earn a BA from Northwestern College, ThM from Dallas Theological Seminary (1960), and PhD from the Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning (1969). He joined the faculty at Dallas Seminary in 1968 as professor of Old Testament, where he remained until 1981. He was a translator for the New American Standard Bible in the 1960s and 1970s, and in 1974 was invited to join the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT) working on the NIV translation. He served as CBT secretary as well as executive director of the International Bible Society’s NIV Translation Center. During CBT translation work sessions, Dr. Barker was called upon to manage the discussions and record the committee’s decisions—a job that he pursued for decades with fairness, a gentle spirit, and meticulous accuracy.

In late 1978, as the newly completed New International Version Bible was being printed and distributed, Barker and a few of his colleagues on the CBT were called on by Zondervan and by NIV translator Dr. Edwin Palmer to launch a project that was incredibly ambitious and massive in scale: to produce a study Bible that would be specifically tied to the NIV translation. To complete the study notes and other tools in this new study Bible, Dr. Palmer and his team drew from the expertise of a wide variety of evangelical scholars from multiple denominations and from around the world.

Shortly after development work began on the *NIV Study Bible*, Dr. Palmer was taken home to glory. At that point, Dr. Barker was unanimously elected by the editorial team and the administration at Zondervan to serve as the General Editor of the *NIV Study Bible*. As he now reflects on this invitation, Dr. Barker speaks of the clear path that God laid out for him: “How could I say ‘no’ to God?” He and his team navigated the acquisition and editing of thousands of pages of new content, setting industry standards for editorial excellence that remain unparalleled to this day.

Even though Dr. Barker officially retired in 1996, he used this opportunity to redouble his work on the *NIV Study Bible*. Working with Zondervan and his own team of Associate Editors, Dr. Barker revised the work in 1995, 2002, 2008, 2011, and again in 2020. He has presided over dozens of week-long work sessions, leading his Associate Editors in updating their already world-class study notes and other helps. And he has spent countless hours in his home study reviewing the notes and making suggestions for changes for each revision.

Through it all, he has remained an eager champion of the NIV and of this project; a cheerful, godly presence throughout the long work sessions; an incredible publishing partner; and above all a humble servant of his family, his ministry partners, and especially of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We dedicate this edition of the *NIV Study Bible* to Dr. Kenneth L. Barker, with deep gratitude to God and to his family for supporting his faithful work over these past four decades. We thank God for choosing this humble scholar to further the work of God’s kingdom through the multiple revisions of this standard-setting, world-class *NIV Study Bible*.

The NIV Study Bible Associate Editorial Team  
The Zondervan Publishing Team  
HarperCollins Christian Publishing



# TRIBUTES

As General Editor of the *NIV Study Bible* for the past thirty-five years, I want to pay tribute to the work of several leading scholars who served with me to develop and revise this massive work. These men sacrificed much time and energy, bringing all of their expertise and vast experience to this project before they were called home to glory.

**Edwin H. Palmer**, who had served so capably as Executive Secretary of the NIV Committee on Bible Translation and as coordinator of all translation work on the NIV, was appointed General Editor of the *NIV Study Bible* by Zondervan in 1979. On September 16, 1980, he departed this life to “be with Christ, which is better by far” (Php 1:23). Before his death, however, he had laid most of the plans for the *NIV Study Bible*, had recruited the majority of the contributors, and had done some editorial work on the first manuscripts submitted. I gratefully acknowledge his significant contribution to the earliest stages of the 1985 edition of this project.

**Donald W. Burdick** was one of the original Associate Editors of the original 1985 edition of the *NIV Study Bible*, with special responsibility for the New Testament. He departed this life on January 4, 1996, to be “at home with the Lord” (2Co 5:8) before work commenced in 1997 on the 2002 revision. I gratefully acknowledge his outstanding work on the original *NIV Study Bible*.

**Walter W. Wessel** was also one of the Associate Editors of the original *NIV Study Bible* (1985), as well as of the 2002 revision, with special responsibility for the New Testament. Although he was physically unable to be present at our final work session in March 2002, his handwritten proposals were available to us. Then he went home to be with his Lord on April 21, 2002. We thankfully acknowledge his substantial contributions to the original and revised *NIV Study Bible*. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord . . . they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them” (Rev 14:13).

**John H. Stek** was also one of the Associate Editors of the original *NIV Study Bible* (1985), as well as of the 2002 revision and the 2008 update, with special responsibility for the Old Testament (though, because of his comprehensive grasp of the whole range of biblical exegesis and biblical theology, he also made significant contributions to the New Testament). Then the Lord took him to glory on June 6, 2009. “You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory” (Ps 73:24). John leaves a huge void, and he is sorely missed.

**Ronald F. Youngblood**, who passed from earth to heaven on July 5, 2014, was also one of the Associate Editors of the original *NIV Study Bible* (1985), as well as of the 2002 revision, the 2008 update, and the 2011 edition, with special responsibility for the Old Testament. Now his “light and momentary troubles are achieving . . . an eternal glory that far outweighs them all” (2Co 4:17). I will miss him greatly, but I will see him again.

Kenneth L. Barker, General Editor

# PREFACE

The goal of the New International Version (NIV) is to enable English-speaking people from around the world to read and hear God's eternal Word in their own language. Our work as translators is motivated by our conviction that the Bible is God's Word in written form. We believe that the Bible contains the divine answer to the deepest needs of humanity, sheds unique light on our path in a dark world and sets forth the way to our eternal well-being. Out of these deep convictions, we have sought to recreate as far as possible the experience of the original audience — blending transparency to the original text with accessibility for the millions of English speakers around the world. We have prioritized accuracy, clarity and literary quality with the goal of creating a translation suitable for public and private reading, evangelism, teaching, preaching, memorizing and liturgical use. We have also sought to preserve a measure of continuity with the long tradition of translating the Scriptures into English.

The complete NIV Bible was first published in 1978. It was a completely new translation made by over a hundred scholars working directly from the best available Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. The translators came from the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, giving the translation an international scope. They were from many denominations and churches — including Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Brethren, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Evangelical Covenant, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Wesleyan and others. This breadth of denominational and theological perspective helped to safeguard the translation from sectarian bias. For these reasons, and by the grace of God, the NIV has gained a wide readership in all parts of the English-speaking world.

The work of translating the Bible is never finished. As good as they are, English translations must be regularly updated so that they will continue to communicate accurately the meaning of God's Word. Updates are needed in order to reflect the latest developments in our understanding of the biblical world and its languages and to keep pace with changes in English usage. Recognizing, then, that the NIV would retain its ability to communicate God's Word accurately only if it were regularly updated, the original translators established the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT). The Committee

is a self-perpetuating group of biblical scholars charged with keeping abreast of advances in biblical scholarship and changes in English and issuing periodic updates to the NIV. The CBT is an independent, self-governing body and has sole responsibility for the NIV text. The Committee mirrors the original group of translators in its diverse international and denominational makeup and in its unifying commitment to the Bible as God's inspired Word.

In obedience to its mandate, the Committee has issued periodic updates to the NIV. An initial revision was released in 1984. A more thorough revision process was completed in 2005, resulting in the separately published TNIV. The updated NIV you now have in your hands builds on both the original NIV and the TNIV and represents the latest effort of the Committee to articulate God's unchanging Word in the way the original authors might have said it had they been speaking in English to the global English-speaking audience today.

## Translation Philosophy

The Committee's translating work has been governed by three widely accepted principles about the way people use words and about the way we understand them.

First, the meaning of words is determined by the way that users of the language actually use them at any given time. For the biblical languages, therefore, the Committee utilizes the best and most recent scholarship on the way Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words were being used in biblical times. At the same time, the Committee carefully studies the state of modern English. Good translation is like good communication: one must know the target audience so that the appropriate choices can be made about which English words to use to represent the original words of Scripture. From its inception, the NIV has had as its target the general English-speaking population all over the world, the "International" in its title reflecting this concern. The aim of the Committee is to put the Scriptures into natural English that will communicate effectively with the broadest possible audience of English speakers.

Modern technology has enhanced the Committee's ability to choose the right English words to convey the meaning of the original text. The field of computational linguistics harnesses the power of computers to provide broadly applicable

and current data about the state of the language. Translators can now access huge databases of modern English to better understand the current meaning and usage of key words. The Committee utilized this resource in preparing the 2011 edition of the NIV. An area of especially rapid and significant change in English is the way certain nouns and pronouns are used to refer to human beings. The Committee therefore requested experts in computational linguistics at Collins Dictionaries to pose some key questions about this usage to its database of English — the largest in the world, with over 4.4 billion words, gathered from several English-speaking countries and including both spoken and written English. (The Collins Study, called “The Development and Use of Gender Language in Contemporary English,” can be accessed at <http://www.thenivbible.com/about-the-niv/about-the-2011-edition/>.) The study revealed that the most popular words to describe the human race in modern U.S. English were “humanity,” “man” and “mankind.” The Committee then used this data in the updated NIV, choosing from among these three words (and occasionally others also) depending on the context.

A related issue creates a larger problem for modern translations: the move away from using the third-person masculine singular pronouns — “he/him/his” — to refer to men and women equally. This usage does persist in some forms of English, and this revision therefore occasionally uses these pronouns in a generic sense. But the tendency, recognized in day-to-day usage and confirmed by the Collins study, is away from the generic use of “he,” “him” and “his.” In recognition of this shift in language and in an effort to translate into the natural English that people are actually using, this revision of the NIV generally uses other constructions when the biblical text is plainly addressed to men and women equally. The reader will encounter especially frequently a “they,” “their” or “them” to express a generic singular idea. Thus, for instance, Mark 8:36 reads: “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?” This generic use of the “distributive” or “singular” “they/them/their” has been used for many centuries by respected writers of English and has now become established as standard English, spoken and written, all over the world.

A second linguistic principle that feeds into the Committee’s translation work is that meaning is found not in individual words, as vital as they are, but in larger clusters: phrases, clauses, sentences, discourses. Translation is not, as many people think, a matter of word substitution: English word *x* in place of Hebrew word *y*. Translators must first determine the meaning of the words of the biblical languages in the context of the passage and then select English words

that accurately communicate that meaning to modern listeners and readers. This means that accurate translation will not always reflect the exact structure of the original language. To be sure, there is debate over the degree to which translators should try to preserve the “form” of the original text in English. From the beginning, the NIV has taken a mediating position on this issue. The manual produced when the translation that became the NIV was first being planned states: “If the Greek or Hebrew syntax has a good parallel in modern English, it should be used. But if there is no good parallel, the English syntax appropriate to the meaning of the original is to be chosen.” It is fine, in other words, to carry over the form of the biblical languages into English — but not at the expense of natural expression. The principle that meaning resides in larger clusters of words means that the Committee has not insisted on a “word-for-word” approach to translation. We certainly believe that every word of Scripture is inspired by God and therefore to be carefully studied to determine what God is saying to us. It is for this reason that the Committee labors over every single word of the original texts, working hard to determine how each of those words contributes to what the text is saying. Ultimately, however, it is how these individual words function in combination with other words that determines meaning.

A third linguistic principle guiding the Committee in its translation work is the recognition that words have a spectrum of meaning. It is popular to define a word by using another word, or “gloss,” to substitute for it. This substitute word is then sometimes called the “literal” meaning of a word. In fact, however, words have a range of possible meanings. Those meanings will vary depending on the context, and words in one language will usually not occupy the same semantic range as words in another language. The Committee therefore studies each original word of Scripture in its context to identify its meaning in a particular verse and then chooses an appropriate English word (or phrase) to represent it. It is impossible, then, to translate any given Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek word with the same English word all the time. The Committee does try to translate related occurrences of a word in the original languages with the same English word in order to preserve the connection for the English reader. But the Committee generally privileges clear natural meaning over a concern with consistency in rendering particular words.

### Textual Basis

For the Old Testament the standard Hebrew text, the Masoretic Text as published in the latest edition of *Biblia Hebraica*, has been used throughout.

The Masoretic Text tradition contains marginal notations that offer variant readings. These have sometimes been followed instead of the text itself. Because such instances involve variants within the Masoretic tradition, they have not been indicated in the textual notes. In a few cases, words in the basic consonantal text have been divided differently than in the Masoretic Text. Such cases are usually indicated in the textual footnotes. The Dead Sea Scrolls contain biblical texts that represent an earlier stage of the transmission of the Hebrew text. They have been consulted, as have been the Samaritan Pentateuch and the ancient scribal traditions concerning deliberate textual changes. The translators also consulted the more important early versions. Readings from these versions, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the scribal traditions were occasionally followed where the Masoretic Text seemed doubtful and where accepted principles of textual criticism showed that one or more of these textual witnesses appeared to provide the correct reading. In rare cases, the translators have emended the Hebrew text where it appears to have become corrupted at an even earlier stage of its transmission. These departures from the Masoretic Text are also indicated in the textual footnotes. Sometimes the vowel indicators (which are later additions to the basic consonantal text) found in the Masoretic Text did not, in the judgment of the translators, represent the correct vowels for the original text. Accordingly, some words have been read with a different set of vowels. These instances are usually not indicated in the footnotes.

The Greek text used in translating the New Testament has been an eclectic one, based on the latest editions of the Nestle-Aland/United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament. The translators have made their choices among the variant readings in accordance with widely accepted principles of New Testament textual criticism. Footnotes call attention to places where uncertainty remains.

The New Testament authors, writing in Greek, often quote the Old Testament from its ancient Greek version, the Septuagint. This is one reason why some of the Old Testament quotations in the NIV New Testament are not identical to the corresponding passages in the NIV Old Testament. Such quotations in the New Testament are indicated with the footnote "(see Septuagint)."

### Footnotes and Formatting

Footnotes in this version are of several kinds, most of which need no explanation. Those giving alternative translations begin with "Or" and generally introduce the alternative with the last word preceding it in the text, except when it is a single-word alternative. When poetry is quoted in a footnote a slash mark indicates a line division.

It should be noted that references to diseases,

minerals, flora and fauna, architectural details, clothing, jewelry, musical instruments and other articles cannot always be identified with precision. Also, linear measurements and measures of capacity can only be approximated (see the Table of Weights and Measures). Although *Selah*, used mainly in the Psalms, is probably a musical term, its meaning is uncertain. Since it may interrupt reading and distract the reader, this word has not been kept in the English text, but every occurrence has been signaled by a footnote.

As an aid to the reader, sectional headings have been inserted. They are not to be regarded as part of the biblical text and are not intended for oral reading. It is the Committee's hope that these headings may prove more helpful to the reader than the traditional chapter divisions, which were introduced long after the Bible was written.

Sometimes the chapter and/or verse numbering in English translations of the Old Testament differs from that found in published Hebrew texts. This is particularly the case in the Psalms, where the traditional titles are included in the Hebrew verse numbering. Such differences are indicated in the footnotes at the bottom of the page. In the New Testament, verse numbers that marked off portions of the traditional English text not supported by the best Greek manuscripts now appear in brackets, with a footnote indicating the text that has been omitted (see, for example, Matthew 17:[21]).

Mark 16:9 – 20 and John 7:53 — 8:11, although long accorded virtually equal status with the rest of the Gospels in which they stand, have a questionable standing in the textual history of the New Testament, as noted in the bracketed annotations with which they are set off. A different typeface has been chosen for these passages to indicate their uncertain status.

Basic formatting of the text, such as lining the poetry, paragraphing (both prose and poetry), setting up of (administrative-like) lists, indenting letters and lengthy prayers within narratives and the insertion of sectional headings, has been the work of the Committee. However, the choice between single-column and double-column formats has been left to the publishers. Also the issuing of "red-letter" editions is a publisher's choice — one that the Committee does not endorse.

The Committee has again been reminded that every human effort is flawed — including this revision of the NIV. We trust, however, that many will find in it an improved representation of the Word of God, through which they hear his call to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and to service in his kingdom. We offer this version of the Bible to him in whose name and for whose glory it has been made.

The Committee on Bible Translation

# INTRODUCTION TO THE *NIV STUDY BIBLE*

## About The *NIV Study Bible*

The New International Version of the Bible (NIV) is unsurpassed in accuracy, clarity and literary grace. The commitments that led to the completion of this version have guided the General Editor and Associate Editors as they have labored on each new edition of the *NIV Study Bible*. Their purpose has remained unchanged: to communicate the word of God to the hearts of people.

Like the NIV itself, the *NIV Study Bible* is the work of a transdenominational team of biblical scholars. All confess the authority of the Bible as God's infallible word to humanity. They have sought to clarify understanding of, develop appreciation for and provide insight into that word.

But why a study Bible when the NIV text itself is so clearly written? Surely there is no substitute for reading the text itself; nothing people write *about* God's word can be on a level with the word itself. Further, it is the Holy Spirit alone — not fallible human beings — who can open the human mind to the divine message.

However, the Spirit also uses people to explain God's word to others. It was the Spirit who led Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch's chariot, where he asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" (Ac 8:30–31). "How can I," the Ethiopian replied, "unless someone explains it to me?" Philip then showed him how an Old Testament passage in Isaiah related to the good news of Jesus.

This interrelationship of the Scriptures — so essential to understanding the complete biblical message — is a major theme of the notes in the *NIV Study Bible*.

Doctrinally, the *NIV Study Bible* reflects traditional evangelical theology. Where editors were aware of significant differences of opinion on key passages or doctrines, they tried to follow an evenhanded approach by indicating those differences (e.g., see article on Rev 20:2–7 about the "thousand years," p. 2268). In finding solutions to problems mentioned in the book introductions, they went only as far as evidence (biblical and non-biblical) could carry them.

The result is a study Bible that can be used profitably by all Christians who want to be serious Bible students.

## Features of the *NIV Study Bible*

The *NIV Study Bible* features the text of the New International Version, study notes keyed to and listed with Bible verses, introductions and outlines to books of the Bible, text notes, articles, a cross-reference system (100,000 entries), parallel passages, a concordance (over 35,000 references), maps, charts, models, photos and a comprehensive notes index.

The text of the NIV, which is divided into paragraphs as well as verses, is organized into sections with headings.

## Study Notes

The outstanding feature of this study Bible is that it contains over 21,000 study notes, usually located on the same pages as the verses and passages they explain.

The study notes provide new information to supplement that found in the NIV text notes. Among other things, they

- (1) explain important words and concepts (see note on Lev 11:44 about holiness);
- (2) interpret difficult verses (see notes on Mal 1:3 and Lk 14:26 for the correct interpretation of "hate father and mother");
- (3) draw parallels between specific people and events (see note on Ex 32:30 for the parallels between Moses and Christ as mediators);
- (4) describe historical and literary contexts of passages (see note on 1Co 8:1 for the practice of eating meat sacrificed to idols); and
- (5) demonstrate how one passage sheds light on another (see note on Ps 26:8 for how the presence of God's glory marked his presence in the tabernacle, in the temple and, finally, in Jesus Christ himself).



Some elements of style should be noted:

- (1) Study notes on a *passage* precede notes on individual verses within that passage.
- (2) When a book of the Bible is referred to within a note on that book, the book name is not repeated. For example, a reference to 2 Timothy 2:18 within the notes on 2 Timothy is written 2:18, not 2Ti 2:18.
- (3) In lists of references within a note, references from the book under discussion are placed first. The rest usually appear in biblical order.
- (4) Certain kinds of material have been made more accessible through the use of the following symbols:



The trowel points out references containing study notes that provide light from archaeology. Since there is more personal application material in the study notes than archaeological information, we have also indicated where archaeological data can be found in certain book introductions, maps and charts.



The seedling calls attention to Scripture references containing study notes that have practical principles for personal application.



The character symbol occurs in front of Scripture references containing study notes that provide descriptions and/or characterizations of a person or a people group. It also sometimes appears in book introductions and essays.

## Introductions to Books of the Bible

An introduction frequently reports on a book's title, author and date of writing. It details the book's background and purpose, explores themes and theological significance and points out special problems and distinctive literary features. Where appropriate, such as in Paul's letters to the churches, it describes the original recipients of a book and the city in which they lived.

A complete outline of the book's content is provided in each introduction. For Genesis, two outlines — a literary and a thematic — are given. Pairs of books that were originally one literary work, such as 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles, are outlined together.

## Text Notes

NIV text notes are indicated by raised italic letters following the words or phrases they explain. They examine such things as alternative translations, meanings of Hebrew and Greek terms, Old Testament quotations and variant readings in ancient biblical manuscripts. The so-called missing verses are also explained in the text notes. See, e.g., the NIV text notes on Mt 17:21 and 18:11. There are also some explanatory notes. Text notes appear at the bottom of the Bible text, above the line separating Scripture from study notes, and are preceded by their raised italic letters and verse numbers.

## Parallel Passages

When two or more passages of Scripture are nearly identical or deal with the same event, this "parallel" is noted at the sectional headings for those passages. Such passages are especially common in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as well as in Samuel, Kings and Chronicles.

Identical or nearly identical passages are noted with "pp." Similar passages — those not dealing with the same event — are noted with "Ref."

To conserve space and avoid repetition, when a parallel passage is noted at a sectional heading, no further parallels are listed in the cross-reference system.

## Concordance

The concordance is the largest ever bound with an English Bible. It was compiled and edited by John R. Kohlenberger III. By looking up key words, you can find verses for which you remember a word or two but not their location. For example, to find the verse that states that the word of God is "sharper than any double-edged sword," you could look in the concordance under either "sharper," "double-edged," or "sword."

## Cross-Reference System

The cross-reference system can be used to explore concepts, as well as specific words. For example, one can either study angels as protectors (see Mt 18:10) or focus on the word “angel” (see Jn 20:12).

The NIV cross-reference system resembles a series of interlocking chains with many links. The head, or organizing, link in each concept chain is indicated by the letter “S” (short for “See”). The appearance of a head link in a list of references usually signals another list of references that will cover a slightly different aspect of the concept or word being studied. The various chains in the cross-reference system — which is virtually inexhaustible — continually intersect and diverge.

Cross references are indicated by raised letters. When a single word is addressed by both text notes and cross references, the NIV text note letter comes first. The cross references normally appear in the center column and, when necessary, continue at the bottom of the Scripture portion of the page, after the NIV text notes (indicated by raised italic letters).

The lists of references are in biblical order with one exception: If reference is made to a verse within the same chapter, that verse (indicated by “ver”) is listed first. If an Old Testament verse is quoted in the New Testament, the New Testament reference is marked with an asterisk (\*).

Genesis 1:1 provides a good example of the resources of the cross-reference system.

The four lists of references all relate to creation, but each takes a different perspective. Note *a* takes up the time of creation: “in the beginning.” Note *b* lists three other occurrences of the word “created” in Genesis 1 — 2. Note *c* focuses on “the heavens” as God’s creation. Because note *d* is attached to the end of the verse as well as to the word “earth,” it deals with the word “earth,” with the phrase “the heavens and the earth” and with creation itself (the whole verse).

## Maps

The *NIV Study Bible* includes 90 full-color maps. The 14 maps at the end of this study Bible cover about 2,000 years of history. See Contents: Maps (pp. x – xii) and the map index on p. 2462 for a complete list of the topics covered.

The cities of Jerusalem, Damascus, Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi and Thessalonica have been reconstructed as they might have been in ancient times. These re-creations allow Bible students to visualize David’s city and the places through which Paul traveled on his missionary journeys.

## Charts

Complementing the study notes are nearly 70 charts and models designed specifically for the *NIV Study Bible*. Two full-color time lines, located before each Testament, pinpoint significant dates in the Old and New Testaments. The charts and models carefully placed within the text give detailed information about such things as ancient, non-biblical texts; about Old Testament covenants, sacrifices and festival days; about Jewish sects; and about major archaeological finds relating to the Old and New Testaments—and much more.

## Articles

Over 130 articles are included throughout this study Bible. These are intended to highlight important information that needed more explanation than a typical study note could afford. Five brief articles provide additional information on specific sections of the Bible: Wisdom Literature, the Minor Prophets, the Synoptic Gospels, the Pastoral Letters and the General Letters.

## The Beginning

**1** In the beginning<sup>a</sup> God created<sup>b</sup> the heavens<sup>c</sup> and the earth.<sup>d</sup> <sup>2</sup>Now the earth was formless<sup>e</sup> and empty,<sup>f</sup> darkness was over the surface of the deep,<sup>g</sup> and the Spirit of God<sup>h</sup> was hovering<sup>i</sup> over the waters.

<sup>3</sup>And God said,<sup>j</sup> “Let there be light,” and there was light.<sup>k</sup> <sup>4</sup>God saw that the light was good,<sup>l</sup> and he separated the light from the darkness.<sup>m</sup> <sup>5</sup>God called<sup>n</sup> the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.”<sup>o</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning<sup>p</sup> — the first day.

<sup>6</sup>And God said,<sup>q</sup> “Let there be a vault<sup>r</sup> between the waters<sup>s</sup> to separate water from water.” <sup>7</sup>So God made the vault

<sup>1a</sup> Ps 102:25; Pr 8:23; Isa 40:21; 41:4,26; Jn 1:1-2  
<sup>b</sup> ver 21,27; Ge 2:3  
<sup>c</sup> ver 6; Ne 9:6; Job 9:8; 37:18; Ps 96:5; 104:2; 115:15; 121:2; 136:5; Isa 40:22; 42:5; 51:13; Jer 10:12; 51:15  
<sup>d</sup> Ge 14:19; 2Ki 19:15; Ne 9:6; Job 38:4; Ps 90:2; 136:6; 146:6; Isa 37:16; 40:28; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12,18; Jer 27:5; 32:17; Ac 14:15; 17:24; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16; Heb 3:4; 11:3; Rev 4:11; 10:6  
<sup>1b</sup> Isa 23:1; 24:10; 27:10; 32:14; 34:11  
<sup>c</sup> Isa 45:18; Jer 4:23  
<sup>d</sup> Ge 8:2; Job 7:12; 26:8; 38:9; De 32:6-8; 1-7-7

### Notes and Maps Indexes

The notes index pinpoints references to persons, places, events and topics mentioned in the *NIV Study Bible* notes. The maps index helps in locating place-names on the color maps located at the end of this study Bible.

### A Harmony of the Gospels

As an additional study tool for the Gospels and the life of Christ, a harmony of the Gospel accounts, showing where parallel stories and teachings appear in each Gospel, is included in this study Bible.

### The Divine Name *Yahweh*

The editors have sometimes elected to use the divine name *Yahweh* (rendered “the LORD” in the NIV) in the book introductions, study notes and essays instead of “the Lord.” For the significance of this name, see Ge 2:4; Ex 3:14 – 15; 6:6; Dt 28:58 and notes; see also article, p. 11.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The *NIV Study Bible* has been revised and updated multiple times throughout its long history. Each of these updates has been completed with the goal of having the study notes and tools reflect the most up-to-date biblical scholarship, so that the *NIV Study Bible* remains the most comprehensive and complete edition of a study Bible associated with the NIV translation.

My greatest debt of gratitude is owed to God for giving me the privilege of serving as General Editor of the *NIV Study Bible*. I want to especially note that I am humbly grateful to God for the manner in which he has used this study Bible to bring edification and spiritual enrichment to literally millions of readers and users. My Associate Editors and I pray that many more millions of readers and users will be edified and spiritually enriched through its use.

In 1985, when the first edition of the *NIV Study Bible* was released, the four Associate Editors were Donald W. Burdick, John H. Stek, Walter W. Wessel and Ronald F. Youngblood. Without their help, it would have been impossible to complete this project in approximately seven years. Please see the Contributors page as well; I gratefully acknowledge their work on the first edition. Of course, these individuals profited immensely from the labors of others, so that we are deeply indebted to all the commentaries and other sources we used in this work.

The following individuals rendered help in various ways: Caroline Blauwkamp, David R. Douglass, Stanley N. Gundry, N. David Hill, Betty Hockenberry, Charles E. Hummel, Alan F. Johnson, Janet Johnston, Donald H. Madvig, Frances Steenwyk and Edward Viening.

In 2002, the *NIV Study Bible* was extensively revised for the first time since its release. John Stek, Ronald Youngblood, and Walter Wessel continued their work on this project, adding hundreds of new study notes, improving the book introductions and enhancing other helps. Special thanks for the 2002 edition go to Andrew J. Bandstra for providing additional study notes on the book of Revelation.

In 2008 we welcomed Mark L. Strauss as a new Associate Editor. The update of this project added new study notes and charts and brought greater continuity to certain kinds of material.

The 2011 edition of the *NIV Study Bible* included an adaptation to the 2011 revised NIV text; it was also the first full-color edition.

In 2020, in addition to myself and Mark L. Strauss, the editorial team consisted of Craig L. Blomberg, Jeannine K. Brown and Michael J. Williams. These last three joined Mark as Associate Editors. We conducted a thorough review and revision of all the notes and study tools in the *NIV Study Bible*. Special appreciation goes to them for the numerous improvements they made. Zondervan Senior Editor Michael A. Vander Klipp joined us for all of our work sessions. He contributed so much that it was almost like having a fifth Associate Editor on the team. Thanks, Mike, for all your help!

Finally, I would be remiss in my Christian duty if I failed to express my profound gratitude to my primary publisher, Zondervan. Ever since I signed my first contract with them at least five decades ago, they have graciously and generously acceded to all my reasonable requests. Thank you, HarperCollins Christian Publishing/Zondervan!

Nehemiah 8:7–8, 12 reads: “The Levites . . . instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read . . . Then all the people went away . . . to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.”

My associates and I will feel amply rewarded if those who use this study Bible have an experience similar to that of God’s people in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. *Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

Kenneth L. Barker, General Editor

# CONTRIBUTORS

## 2020 Edition (Fully Revised)

**General Editor:** Kenneth L. Barker  
**Associate Editors:** Craig L. Blomberg  
 Jeannine K. Brown  
 Mark L. Strauss  
 Michael J. Williams

## 2011 Edition

**General Editor:** Kenneth L. Barker  
**Associate Editors:** Mark L. Strauss  
 Ronald F. Youngblood

## 2008 Edition

**General Editor:** Kenneth L. Barker  
**Associate Editors:** John H. Stek  
 Mark L. Strauss  
 Ronald F. Youngblood

## 2002 Edition (Revised)

**General Editor:** Kenneth L. Barker  
**Associate Editors:** John H. Stek  
 Walter W. Wessel  
 Ronald F. Youngblood

## 1985 Edition

**General Editor:** Kenneth L. Barker  
**Associate Editors:** Donald W. Burdick  
 John H. Stek  
 Walter W. Wessel  
 Ronald F. Youngblood

The individuals named below contributed or reviewed material for the original *NIV Study Bible*. However, since the General Editor and the Associate Editors extensively edited the notes on most books, they alone are responsible for their final form and content.

The chief contributors of original material to the *NIV Study Bible* are listed first. Where the Associate Editors and General Editor contributed an unusually large number of notes on certain books, their names are also listed.

|                       |  |                     |   |  |   |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------|---|--|---|
| <i>Genesis</i>        | Ronald F. Youngblood                         | <i>Isaiah</i>       | Herbert Wolf<br>John H. Stek                  | <i>Luke</i>                                      | Lewis Foster                              |
| <i>Exodus</i>         | Ronald F. Youngblood<br>Walter C. Kaiser Jr. | <i>Jeremiah</i>     | Ronald F. Youngblood                          | <i>John</i>                                      | Leon Morris                               |
| <i>Leviticus</i>      | R. Laird Harris<br>Ronald F. Youngblood      | <i>Lamentations</i> | Ronald F. Youngblood<br>John H. Stek          | <i>Acts</i>                                      | Lewis Foster                              |
| <i>Numbers</i>        | Ronald B. Allen<br>Kenneth L. Barker         | <i>Ezekiel</i>      | Mark Hillmer<br>John H. Stek                  | <i>Romans</i>                                    | Walter W. Wessel                          |
| <i>Deuteronomy</i>    | Earl S. Kalland<br>Kenneth L. Barker         | <i>Daniel</i>       | Gleason L. Archer Jr.<br>Ronald F. Youngblood | <i>1 Corinthians</i>                             | W. Harold Mare                            |
| <i>Joshua</i>         | Arthur Lewis                                 | <i>Hosea</i>        | Jack P. Lewis                                 | <i>2 Corinthians</i>                             | Philip E. Hughes                          |
| <i>Judges</i>         | John J. Davis<br>Herbert Wolf                | <i>Joel</i>         | Jack P. Lewis                                 | <i>Galatians</i>                                 | Robert Mounce                             |
| <i>Ruth</i>           | Marvin R. Wilson<br>John H. Stek             | <i>Amos</i>         | Alan R. Millard<br>John H. Stek               | <i>Ephesians</i>                                 | Walter L. Liefeld                         |
| <i>1,2 Samuel</i>     | J. Robert Vannoy                             | <i>Obadiah</i>      | John M. Zinkand                               | <i>Philippians</i>                               | Richard B. Gaffin Jr.                     |
| <i>1,2 Kings</i>      | J. Robert Vannoy                             | <i>Jonah</i>        | Marvin R. Wilson<br>John H. Stek              | <i>Colossians</i>                                | Gerald F. Hawthorne<br>Wilber B. Wallis   |
| <i>1,2 Chronicles</i> | Raymond Dillard                              | <i>Micah</i>        | Kenneth L. Barker<br>Thomas E. McComiskey     | <i>1,2 Thessalonians</i>                         | Leon Morris                               |
| <i>Ezra</i>           | Edwin Yamauchi<br>Ronald F. Youngblood       | <i>Nahum</i>        | G. Herbert Livingston<br>Kenneth L. Barker    | <i>1,2 Timothy</i>                               | Walter W. Wessel<br>George W. Knight, III |
| <i>Nehemiah</i>       | Edwin Yamauchi<br>Ronald F. Youngblood       | <i>Habakkuk</i>     | Roland K. Harrison<br>William C. Williams     | <i>Titus</i>                                     | D. Edmond Hiebert                         |
| <i>Esther</i>         | Raymond Dillard<br>Edwin Yamauchi            | <i>Zephaniah</i>    | Roland K. Harrison                            | <i>Philemon</i>                                  | John Werner                               |
| <i>Job</i>            | Elmer B. Smick<br>Ronald F. Youngblood       | <i>Haggai</i>       | Herbert Wolf                                  | <i>Hebrews</i>                                   | Philip E. Hughes<br>Donald W. Burdick     |
| <i>Psalms</i>         | John H. Stek                                 | <i>Zechariah</i>    | Kenneth L. Barker<br>Larry L. Walker          | <i>James</i>                                     | Donald W. Burdick                         |
| <i>Proverbs</i>       | Herbert Wolf                                 | <i>Malachi</i>      | Herbert Wolf<br>John H. Stek                  | <i>1,2 Peter</i>                                 | Donald W. Burdick<br>John H. Skilton      |
| <i>Ecclesiastes</i>   | Derek Kidner<br>John H. Stek                 | <i>Matthew</i>      | Walter W. Wessel<br>Ralph Earle               | <i>1,2,3 John</i>                                | Donald W. Burdick                         |
| <i>Song of Songs</i>  | John H. Stek                                 | <i>Mark</i>         | Walter W. Wessel<br>William L. Lane           | <i>Jude</i>                                      | Donald W. Burdick<br>John H. Skilton      |
|                       |  |                     |   | <i>Revelation</i>                                | Robert Mounce<br>Andrew J. Bandstra       |
|                       |  |                     |   | <i>The Time Between the Testaments (article)</i> | David O'Brien                             |



# ABBREVIATIONS AND TRANSLITERATIONS

## ABBREVIATIONS

### General

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| c         | <i>century</i>   |
| c.        | <i>about, approximately</i>                                      |
| cf.       | <i>compare, confer</i>   |
| ch., chs. | <i>chapter, chapters</i>   |
| e.g.      | <i>for example</i>   |
| etc.      | <i>and so on</i>   |
| i.e.      | <i>that is</i>   |
| KJV       | <i>King James<br/>(Authorized) Version</i>                       |
| lit.      | <i>literally, literal</i>  |
| NT        | <i>New Testament</i>   |
| OT        | <i>Old Testament</i>   |
| p., pp.   | <i>page, pages</i>   |
| v., vv.   | <i>verse, verses (in<br/>the chapter being<br/>commented on)</i> |

Standard abbreviations of month names are also sometimes used, as well as a few other common abbreviations.

### The Old Testament

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| Genesis     | Ge  |
| Exodus      | Ex  |
| Leviticus   | Lev |
| Numbers     | Nu  |
| Deuteronomy | Dt  |
| Joshua      | Jos |
| Judges      | Jdg |
| Ruth        | Ru  |

|               |      |
|---------------|------|
| 1 Samuel      | 1Sa  |
| 2 Samuel      | 2Sa  |
| 1 Kings       | 1Ki  |
| 2 Kings       | 2Ki  |
| 1 Chronicles  | 1Ch  |
| 2 Chronicles  | 2Ch  |
| Ezra          | Ezr  |
| Nehemiah      | Ne   |
| Esther        | Est  |
| Job           | Job  |
| Psalms        | Ps   |
| Proverbs      | Pr   |
| Ecclesiastes  | Ecc  |
| Song of Songs | SS   |
| Isaiah        | Isa  |
| Jeremiah      | Jer  |
| Lamentations  | La   |
| Ezekiel       | Eze  |
| Daniel        | Da   |
| Hosea         | Hos  |
| Joel          | Joel |
| Amos          | Am   |
| Obadiah       | Ob   |
| Jonah         | Jnh  |
| Micah         | Mic  |
| Nahum         | Na   |
| Habakkuk      | Hab  |
| Zephaniah     | Zep  |
| Haggai        | Hag  |
| Zechariah     | Zec  |
| Malachi       | Mal  |

### The New Testament

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Matthew         | Mt    |
| Mark            | Mk    |
| Luke            | Lk    |
| John            | Jn    |
| Acts            | Ac    |
| Romans          | Ro    |
| 1 Corinthians   | 1Co   |
| 2 Corinthians   | 2Co   |
| Galatians       | Gal   |
| Ephesians       | Eph   |
| Philippians     | Php   |
| Colossians      | Col   |
| 1 Thessalonians | 1Th   |
| 2 Thessalonians | 2Th   |
| 1 Timothy       | 1Ti   |
| 2 Timothy       | 2Ti   |
| Titus           | Titus |
| Philemon        | Phm   |
| Hebrews         | Heb   |
| James           | Jas   |
| 1 Peter         | 1Pe   |
| 2 Peter         | 2Pe   |
| 1 John          | 1Jn   |
| 2 John          | 2Jn   |
| 3 John          | 3Jn   |
| Jude            | Jude  |
| Revelation      | Rev   |

## TRANSLITERATIONS

A simplified system has been used for transliterating words from ancient Biblical languages into English. The only transliterations calling for comment are these:


| Transliteration | Pronunciation                                      | Transliteration | Pronunciation                 |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| '               | Glottal stop                                       | '               | Similar to the glottal stop   |
| ḥ               | Similar to the "ch" in the German word <i>Buch</i> | š               | Similar to the "ts" in "hits" |
| ṭ               | Similar to the "t" in the verb "tear"              | ś               | Similar to the "s" in "sing"  |

# MATTHEW



## INTRODUCTION

### Author

 Although the first Gospel is anonymous, the early church fathers were unanimous in holding that Matthew, one of the 12 apostles, was its author. However, the results of modern critical studies—in particular those that stress Matthew's alleged dependence on Mark for a substantial part of his Gospel—have caused some biblical scholars to abandon Matthean authorship. Why, they ask, would Matthew, an eyewitness to the events of our Lord's life, depend so heavily on Mark's account? The best answer seems to be that Mark's Gospel represents the testimony of Peter (see Introduction to Mark: Author), and Matthew would certainly be willing to follow Peter's apostolic authority. It is also the case that the Synoptic material was circulated orally prior to even the writing of Mark, so that each Gospel writer would be drawing on known and trusted oral traditions of the life and teachings of Jesus. Matthew, whose name means "gift of the Lord," was a tax collector who left his work to follow Jesus (9:9–13). In Mark and Luke he is called by his other name, Levi; in Mk 2:14 he is further identified as "son of Alphaeus."

### Date and Place of Writing

Some have argued on the basis of its Jewish characteristics that Matthew's Gospel was written in the early church period, possibly the early AD 50s, when the church was largely Jewish and the gospel was preached to Jews only (Ac 11:19). However, those who have concluded that both Matthew and Luke drew extensively from Mark's Gospel date it later—after the Gospel of Mark had been in circulation for a period of time. See article and chart, pp. 1630–1631. Accordingly, some feel that Matthew would have been written in the late 50s or in the 60s. Others, who assume that Mark was written between 65 and 70, place Matthew in the 70s or even later. However, there is insufficient evidence to be dogmatic about either view.

The Jewish nature of Matthew's Gospel may suggest that it was written in Israel, though many think it may have originated in Syrian Antioch. The church in Antioch had a large Greek-speaking Jewish population and was at the forefront of the mission to the Gentiles, a theme Matthew emphasizes (e.g., 28:18–20).

## A QUICK LOOK

**Author:** Matthew, also called Levi

**Audience:** Greek-speaking Jewish Christians

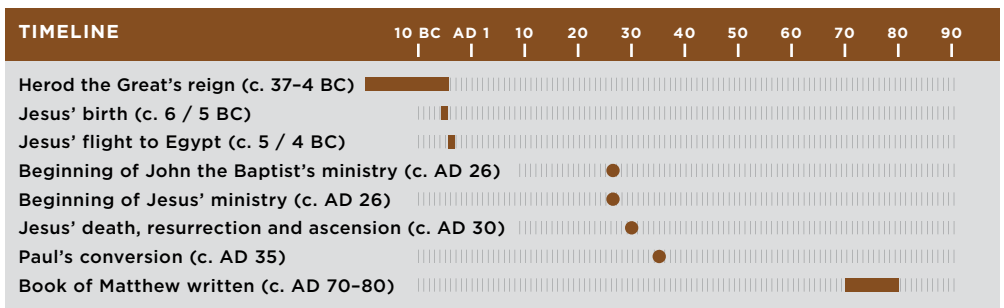
**Date:** Between AD 50 and 70

**Theme:** Matthew presents Jesus as the Jewish Messiah sent by God to bring salvation to Israel and the nations in fulfillment of OT Scriptures.

Many elements in Matthew's Gospel point to a Jewish-Christian readership: Matthew's concern with fulfillment of the OT (he has more quotations from and allusions to the OT than any other NT author); his tracing of Jesus' descent from Abraham (1:1–17); his lack of explanation of Jewish customs (especially in contrast to Mark); his use of Jewish terminology (e.g., "kingdom of heaven," where "heaven" may reveal the Jewish reverential reluctance to use the name of God; see note on 3:2); and his emphasis on Jesus' role as "Son of David" (1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30–31; 21:9,15; 22:41–45). This does not mean, however, that Matthew restricts his Gospel to Jews. He records the coming of the Magi (non-Jews) to worship the infant Jesus (2:1–12), as well as Jesus' statement that the "field is the world" (13:38). He also gives a full statement of the Great Commission (28:18–20). These and other passages show that, although Matthew's Gospel is Jewish, it has a universal outlook.



Bill Schlegel/BiblePlaces.com



Matthew includes many citations and allusions to the OT to drive home his basic theme: Jesus is God’s Messiah who brings salvation to Israel and the nations in fulfillment of the OT Scriptures.



Aerial view of the Sea of Galilee, looking north.

Bill Schlegel/BiblePlaces.com

Purpose

Matthew’s main purpose is to confirm for his Jewish-Christian readers that Jesus is their Messiah and to narrate the kind of Messiah he is. He does this primarily by showing how Jesus in his life and ministry fulfilled the OT Scriptures. Although all the Gospel writers quote the OT, Matthew includes many citations and allusions to the OT unique to his Gospel (e.g., 1:22–23; 2:15; 2:17–18; 2:23; 4:14–16; 8:17; 12:17–21; 13:35; 27:9–10) to drive home his basic theme: Jesus is God’s Messiah who brings salvation to Israel and the nations in fulfillment of the OT Scriptures. Matthew even finds the history of God’s people in the OT recapitulated in some aspects of Jesus’ life (see, e.g., his quotation of Hos 11:1 in 2:15). To accomplish his purpose Matthew also emphasizes Jesus’ Davidic lineage (see Recipients; see also note on 1:1).

Structure

The way the material is arranged reveals an artistic touch. First, the whole Gospel is woven around five great discourses: (1) chs. 5–7; (2) ch. 10; (3) ch. 13; (4) ch. 18; (5) chs. 24–25 (see chart above). That this is deliberate is clear from the refrain that concludes each discourse: “When Jesus had finished saying these things,” or similar words (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). The fivefold division may suggest that Matthew has modeled his book on the structure of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the OT). He may also be presenting the gospel as a new Torah and Jesus as a new and greater Moses. Second, the story line of the Gospel is framed by a twofold refrain: “From that time on Jesus began to [preach / explain]” (4:17; 16:21), which transitions from Jesus’ preparation for ministry (1:1–4:16) to his Galilean ministry (4:17–16:20) and finally to the revelation that he will go to Jerusalem and die for his people (16:21–28:20).

THE FIVE MAJOR DISCOURSES OF MATTHEW’S GOSPEL

|    |                                      |
|----|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Sermon on the Mount (chs. 5–7)       |
| 2. | Commissioning of the Twelve (ch. 10) |
| 3. | Parables of the Kingdom (ch. 13)     |
| 4. | Church Life and Discipline (ch. 18)  |
| 5. | Olivet Discourse (chs. 24–25)        |

Adapted from *Four Portraits, One Jesus* by Mark L. Strauss, p. 219. Copyright © 2007 by Mark L. Strauss. Used by permission of Zondervan.

## Outline

- I. Introduction to Jesus' Ministry
  - A. The Birth and Early Years of Jesus (chs. 1–2)
    1. His genealogy (1:1–17)
    2. His birth (1:18–25)
    3. God's protection from Herod's threat (2:1–23)
  - B. Preparation for Jesus' Ministry (3:1–4:16)
    1. His forerunner (3:1–12)
    2. His baptism (3:13–17)
    3. His temptation (4:1–11)
    4. His relocation to Capernaum (4:12–16)
- II. Jesus' Ministry in Galilee (4:17–16:20)
  - A. Overview: Preaching, Teaching, and Healing (4:17–25)
  - B. Discourse One: The Sermon on the Mount (chs. 5–7)
    1. Kingdom values (5:1–16)
    2. Jesus' interpretation of the law (5:17–48)
    3. Giving to the poor, prayer and fasting (6:1–18)
    4. Seeking God's kingdom as first priority (6:19–34)
    5. Discernment and prayer (7:1–12)
    6. Choosing the right path (7:13–27)
  - C. Healings and Other Miracles (chs. 8–9)
  - D. Discourse Two: The Commissioning of the 12 Apostles (ch. 10)
  - E. Ministry Throughout Galilee and Increasing Rejection (chs. 11–12)
  - F. Discourse Three: The Parables of the Kingdom (ch. 13)
  - G. Ongoing Ministry in Spite of the Hostility of Jewish Leadership (14:1–16:20)
- III. Jesus Travels to Jerusalem Where He Will Give His Life "as a Ransom for Many" (16:21–28:20)
  - A. Predictions of Jesus' Death and Redefining of Discipleship (16:21–17:27)
  - B. Discourse Four: Discourse on Life in the Kingdom Community (ch. 18)
  - C. Discipleship Illustrations as Jesus Nears Jerusalem (chs. 19–20)
  - D. Jesus in Jerusalem (chs. 21–23)
    1. Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as king (21:1–11)
    2. Clearing of the temple (21:12–17)
    3. Controversies with the Jewish leaders (21:18–23:39)
  - E. Discourse Five: Discourse About the Temple's Destruction and Jesus' Return (chs. 24–25)
    1. Jesus' predictions about the destruction of Jerusalem and Jesus' return (ch. 24)
    2. Parables about the end of the age (ch. 25)
  - F. Jesus' Passion (chs. 26–27)
    1. The anointing of Jesus for his death (26:1–13)
    2. Jesus celebrates Passover with his disciples (26:14–35)
    3. Jesus in Gethsemane and his arrest (26:36–56)
    4. The trials of Jesus (26:57–27:26)
    5. Jesus' crucifixion and death (27:27–66)
  - G. Jesus' Resurrection (28:1–15)
  - H. Commission to Make Disciples of All Nations (28:16–20)



## The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah

1:1-17pp — Lk 3:23-38

1:3-6pp — Ru 4:18-22

1:7-11pp — 1Ch 3:10-17

**1** This is the genealogy<sup>a</sup> of Jesus the Messiah<sup>b</sup> the son of David,<sup>a</sup> the son of Abraham:<sup>b</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Abraham was the father of Isaac,<sup>c</sup>  
Isaac the father of Jacob,<sup>d</sup>  
Jacob the father of Judah and his  
brothers,<sup>e</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar,<sup>f</sup>  
Perez the father of Hezron,  
Hezron the father of Ram,

<sup>4</sup> Ram the father of Amminadab,  
Amminadab the father of Nahshon,  
Nahshon the father of Salmon,

<sup>5</sup> Salmon the father of Boaz, whose  
mother was Rahab,<sup>g</sup>

Boaz the father of Obed, whose  
mother was Ruth,  
Obed the father of Jesse,

<sup>6</sup> and Jesse the father of King David.<sup>h</sup>

David was the father of Solomon,  
whose mother had been Uriah's  
wife,<sup>i</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Solomon the father of Rehoboam,  
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,  
Abijah the father of Asa,

<sup>8</sup> Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,  
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,

<sup>11</sup> <sup>a</sup> 2Sa 7:12-16; Isa 9:6, 7; 11:1; Jer 23:5, 6; S Mt 9:27; Lk 1:32, 69; Rev 22:16  
<sup>b</sup> Ge 22:18; S Gal 3:16  
<sup>12</sup> <sup>c</sup> Ge 21:3, 12 <sup>d</sup> Ge 25:26  
<sup>e</sup> Ge 29:35; 49:10  
<sup>13</sup> <sup>f</sup> Ge 38:27-30  
<sup>15</sup> <sup>g</sup> S Heb 11:31  
<sup>16</sup> <sup>h</sup> 1Sa 16:1; 17:12 <sup>i</sup> 2Sa 12:24

<sup>1:10</sup> <sup>i</sup> 2Ki 20:21  
<sup>1:11</sup> <sup>k</sup> 2Ki 24:14-16; Jer 27:20; 40:1; Da 1:1, 2  
<sup>1:12</sup> <sup>l</sup> 1Ch 3:17  
<sup>m</sup> 1Ch 3:19; Ezr 3:2  
<sup>1:16</sup> <sup>n</sup> Lk 1:27  
<sup>o</sup> Mt 27:17

Jehoram the father of Uzziah,  
<sup>9</sup> Uzziah the father of Jotham,  
Jotham the father of Ahaz,  
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,  
<sup>10</sup> Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,<sup>j</sup>  
Manasseh the father of Amon,  
Amon the father of Josiah,  
<sup>11</sup> and Josiah the father of Jeconiah<sup>k</sup>  
and his brothers at the time of  
the exile to Babylon.<sup>k</sup>

<sup>12</sup> After the exile to Babylon:  
Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,<sup>l</sup>  
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,<sup>m</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,  
Abihud the father of Eliakim,  
Eliakim the father of Azor,

<sup>14</sup> Azor the father of Zadok,  
Zadok the father of Akim,  
Akim the father of Elihud,

<sup>15</sup> Elihud the father of Eleazar,  
Eleazar the father of Matthan,  
Matthan the father of Jacob,

<sup>16</sup> and Jacob the father of Joseph,  
the husband of Mary,<sup>n</sup> and Mary  
was the mother of Jesus who is  
called the Messiah.<sup>o</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Thus there were fourteen generations  
in all from Abraham to David, fourteen  
from David to the exile to Babylon, and  
fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Or is an account of the origin <sup>b</sup> 1 Or Jesus Christ.  
Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek) both mean  
Anointed One; also in verse 18. <sup>c</sup> 11 That is,  
Jehoiachin; also in verse 12

**1:1-16** For a comparison of Matthew's genealogy with Luke's, see note on Lk 3:23-38. The types of people (including Gentiles) mentioned in this genealogy reveal the broad scope of those who make up the people of God as well as the genealogy of Jesus.

**1:1** *son of David.* A Messianic title (see Introduction: Recipients; Purpose; see also note on 9:27) found several times in this Gospel (in 1:20 it is not a Messianic title). Jesus fulfills the Davidic covenant (see 2Sa 7:5-16 and note on 7:11). *son of Abraham.* Because Matthew was writing primarily to Jews, it was important to identify Jesus in this way. Jesus fulfills the Abrahamic covenant (see Ge 12:2-3; 15:9-21; 17; 22:15-18; Zec 9:10 and note).

**1:3** *Tamar.* In Matthew's genealogy five women are named: Tamar (here), Rahab (v. 5), Ruth (v. 5), Bathsheba (not by name but by description—"Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife," v. 6) and, of course, Mary (v. 16). All these women were in some sense on the margins of society. At least three of them were Gentiles (Tamar, Rahab and Ruth). Bathsheba was probably an Israelite (1Ch 3:5) but was closely associated with the Hittites because of Uriah, her Hittite husband. By including them (contrary to custom) in his genealogy, Matthew indicates at the very outset of his Gospel that God's grace is not limited to the people of Israel. Also because all five of these women were associated, rightly or wrongly, with suspicions of sexual impropriety, Matthew is showing that the Messiah's genealogy is not limited to the upright.

**1:4** *Amminadab.* Father-in-law of Aaron (Ex 6:23).

**1:5** *Rahab.* See notes on v. 3; Heb 11:31; Jas 2:25; see also

Jos 2. Since quite a long time had elapsed between Rahab and David and because of Matthew's desire for systematic organization (see note on v. 17), many of the generations between these two ancestors were assumed, but not listed, by Matthew. *Ruth.* See note on v. 3.

**1:6** *Solomon, whose mother.* His mother was Bathsheba (see note on v. 3).

**1:8** *Jehoram the father.* Matthew calls Jehoram the father of Uzziah, but from 2Ch 21:4-26:23 it is clear that, again, several generations were assumed (Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah) and that "father" is used in the sense of "forefather" or "ancestor" (see NIV text notes on 1Ch 1:5, 10).

**1:11** *Josiah the father.* Similarly (see note on v. 8), Josiah is called the father of Jeconiah (i.e., Jehoiachin; see NIV text note), whereas he was actually the father of Jehoiakim and the grandfather of Jehoiachin (2Ch 36:1-9). *the exile to Babylon.* In chs. 1-2 Matthew emphasizes the theme of Israel's exile and return. In Jesus' ministry, God's people experience the restoration that was associated with the return from exile (see 2:18 and note).

**1:12** *Shealtiel the father.* See note on 1Ch 3:19.

**1:16** *husband of Mary.* Matthew does not say that Joseph was the father of Jesus but only that he was the husband of Mary and that Jesus was born of her. In the genealogy and in the birth account (1:18-25), Matthew shows that, although Jesus is not the physical son of Joseph, he is the legal son and therefore a descendant of David (see Lk 2:33; Jn 1:45 and notes). *Mary ... mother of Jesus.* See note on v. 3.

**1:17** *fourteen generations ... fourteen ... fourteen.* These divi-

## Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son

<sup>18</sup>This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about<sup>a</sup>: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.<sup>b</sup> <sup>19</sup>Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet<sup>b</sup> did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce<sup>c</sup> her quietly.

<sup>20</sup>But after he had considered this, an angel<sup>d</sup> of the Lord appeared to him in a dream<sup>e</sup> and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,<sup>f</sup> because he will save his people from their sins.”<sup>g</sup>

<sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill<sup>h</sup> what the Lord had said through the prophet:

<sup>1:18</sup> P Lk 1:35  
<sup>1:19</sup> 9 Dt 24:1  
<sup>1:20</sup> 1 S Ac 5:19  
<sup>5</sup> S Mt 27:19  
<sup>1:21</sup> 5 Lk 1:31  
<sup>4</sup> Ps 130:8;  
 S Lk 2:11;  
 S Jn 3:17; Ac 5:31;  
 S Ro 11:14; Ti-  
 tus 2:14  
<sup>1:22</sup> 5 Mt 2:15,  
 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17;  
 12:17; 21:4; 26:54;  
 56; 27:9; Lk 4:21;  
 21:22; 24:44;  
 Jn 13:18; 19:24,  
 28, 36

<sup>1:23</sup> 3 Isa 7:14;  
 8:8, 10  
<sup>1:24</sup> 3 S Ac 5:19  
<sup>1:25</sup> 3 Yver 21;  
 S Lk 1:31  
<sup>2:1</sup> 2 Lk 2:4–7  
<sup>4</sup> Lk 1:5  
<sup>2:2</sup> 3 Jer 23:5;  
 Mt 27:11; Mk 15:2;  
 Lk 23:38;  
 Jn 1:49; 18:33–37  
<sup>c</sup> Nu 24:17

<sup>23</sup>“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”<sup>dw</sup> (which means “God with us”).

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel<sup>x</sup> of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. <sup>25</sup>But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.<sup>y</sup>

## The Magi Visit the Messiah

**2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea,<sup>z</sup> during the time of King Herod,<sup>a</sup> Magi<sup>e</sup> from the east came to Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?<sup>b</sup> We saw his star<sup>c</sup> when it rose and have come to worship him.”

<sup>a</sup> 18 Or *The origin of Jesus the Messiah was like this*  
<sup>b</sup> 19 Or *was a righteous man and* <sup>c</sup> 21 Jesus is the Greek form of *Joshua*, which means *the LORD saves*.  
<sup>d</sup> 23 Isaiah 7:14 <sup>e</sup> 1 Traditionally *wise men*

sions reflect two characteristics of Matthew’s Gospel: (1) an apparent fondness for numbers and (2) concern for systematic arrangement. The number 14 may have been chosen because it is twice seven (the number of completeness) and/or because it is the numerical value of the name David (see notes on Pr 10:1; Rev 13:17). For the practice of telescoping genealogies to achieve the desired number of names, see Introduction to 1 Chronicles: Genealogies.

**1:18–2:23** Matthew frames what he communicates about Jesus’ infancy with five specific OT texts.

**1:18** *pledged to be married*. There were no sexual relations during a Jewish betrothal period, but it was a much more binding relationship than a modern engagement and could be broken only by divorce (v. 19). In Dt 22:24 a betrothed woman is called a “wife,” though the preceding verse speaks of her as being “pledged to be married.” Matthew uses the terms “husband” (v. 19) and “wife” (v. 24) of Joseph and Mary before their marriage was consummated (see note on Joel 1:8). *the Holy Spirit*. The common NT way of referring to the divine Spirit, who in the OT was almost always called “the Spirit of God” or “the Spirit of the LORD.” See Ps 51:11 and note. Christian reflection on the biblical testimony about the Spirit (see 3:16–17; 28:19; 2Co 13:14 and notes) led to the understanding that he is one of the three persons of the Trinity.

**1:19** *divorce her quietly*. He would sign the necessary legal papers but not have her judged publicly and stoned (Dt 22:23–24).

**1:20** *in a dream*. The phrase occurs five times in the first two chapters of Matthew (here; 2:12, 13, 19, 22) and indicates the means the Lord used for speaking to Joseph. *Joseph son of David*. See notes on 1:16; perhaps a hint that the message of the angel related to the expected Messiah. *take Mary home as your wife*. They were legally bound to each other but not yet living together as husband and wife. *what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit*. This agrees perfectly with the announcement to Mary (Lk 1:35), except that the latter is more specific (see note on Lk 1:26–35).


**1:21** *the name Jesus*. See NIV text note; the meaning is more specifically explained in the rest of the verse. *save*. See Lk 2:11 and note.


**1:22** *fulfill*. Twelve times (here; 2:15, 23; 3:15; 4:14; 5:17; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14, 35; 21:4; 27:9) Matthew uses a fulfillment formula (e.g., “this took place to fulfill . . .”) when speaking of the OT being fulfilled in the events of Jesus’ life. Some of these are uniquely fulfilled by Jesus, while others are typological, where Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of an OT type (see note on 2:15).

**1:23** See note on Isa 7:14. This is the first of about 50 quotations, many of them Messianic in some sense, that Matthew takes from the OT (see NIV text notes throughout Matthew).

**1:24** *angel of the Lord*. See Lk 2:9 and note.

**1:25** *he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth*. Both Matthew and Luke (1:26–35) make it clear that Jesus was born of a virgin. Although this doctrine is often questioned, Jesus’ virgin birth is an essential truth of the Christian faith. *he gave him the name Jesus*. Since it was the father’s prerogative to name children (e.g., Lk 1:60), the emphasis on Joseph naming Jesus at the climactic moment of the birth account highlights the act of adoption by Joseph that makes Jesus his legal son.

 **2:1** *Bethlehem in Judea*. A village about five miles south of Jerusalem (see photo, p. 1549). Matthew says nothing of the events in Nazareth (cf. Lk 1:26–56). Possibly wanting to emphasize Jesus’ Davidic background, he begins with the events that happened in David’s hometown. It is called “Bethlehem in Judea,” not only to distinguish it from the town of the same name about seven miles northwest of Nazareth, but also to emphasize that Jesus came from the tribe (Judah) and territory that produced the line of Davidic kings. That Jews expected the Messiah to be born in Bethlehem and to be from David’s family is clear from Jn 7:42. *King Herod*. Herod the Great (37–4 BC), to be distinguished from the other Herods in the Bible (see chart, pp. 1638–1639). Herod was a non-Jew, an Idumean, who was appointed king of Judea by the Roman Senate in 40 BC and gained control in 37. He was a ruthless ruler, murdering his wife, three of his sons, his mother-in-law, his brother-in-law, his uncle and many others he suspected of treachery—not to mention the male babies in Bethlehem (v. 16). His reign was also noted for splendor, as seen in the many theaters, amphitheaters, monuments, pagan altars, fortresses and other buildings he erected or refurbished—including the greatest work of all, the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, begun in 19 or 20 BC and finished 68 years after his death (see note on Jn 2:20). *Magi*. Probably astrologers, perhaps from Persia or southern Arabia or Mesopotamia (“Between the Rivers”), all of which are east of the Holy Land. *Jerusalem*. Since they were looking for the “king of the Jews” (v. 2), they naturally came to the Jewish capital city (see maps, pp. 1716, 2475).

 **2:2** *king of the Jews*. Indicates the Magi were Gentiles. Matthew wants to show that people of all nations acknowledged Jesus as “king of the Jews” and came

HOUSE OF HEROD

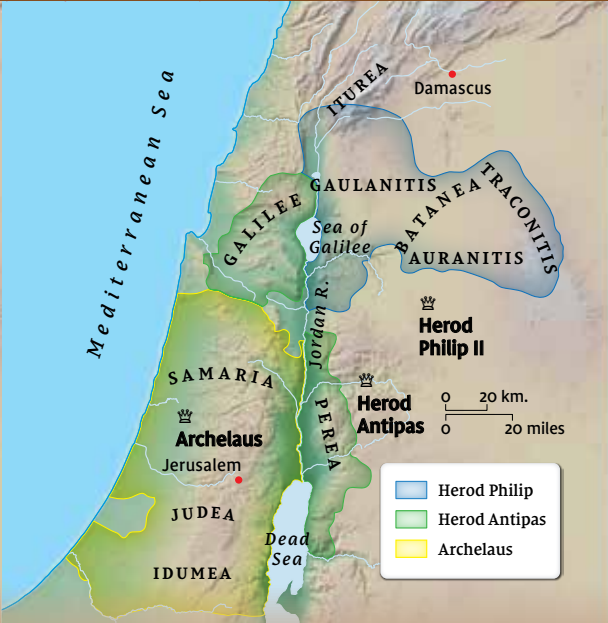


1ST GENERATION

**Herod the Great** King of Judea, Galilee, Iturea, Tracoonitis (37–4 bc)  
Birth of Jesus (Mt 2:1–19; Lk 1:5)

**KEY:**  
King  
Ethnarch/Tetrarch

**BERNICE** italic capitals denote females  
**Antipater** bold type: bloodline of Herod the Great  
Felix light type: non-bloodline



2ND GENERATION

**Herod Philip II** (MOTHER: CLEOPATRA) Tetrarch of Iturea and Tracoonitis (4 BC–AD 34) (Lk 3:1)  
**Archelaus** (MOTHER: MALTHACE) Ethnarch of Judea, Idumea and Samaria (4 BC–AD 6); when Mary and Joseph left Egypt, they avoided Judea and settled in Nazareth (Mt 2:19–23)  
**Aristobulus** (MOTHER: MARIAMNE) (died 10 BC)  
**Herod Antipas** (MOTHER: MALTHACE) Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (4 BC–AD 39) (Lk 3:1); second husband of Herodias; he put John the Baptist to death (Mt 14:1–12; Mk 6:14–29); Pilate sent Jesus to him (Lk 23:7–12)  
**Herod Philip I** (MOTHER: MARIAMNE) He did not rule; first husband of Herodias (Mt 14:3; Mk 6:17) (died c. AD 34)  
**Antipater** (MOTHER: DORIS)

<sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.  
<sup>4</sup>When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.  
<sup>5</sup>"In Bethlehem<sup>d</sup> in Judea," they

replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:  
<sup>6</sup>"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

to worship him as Lord (cf. 28:19). *star*. Probably not an ordinary star, planet or comet, though some interpreters have identified it with the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn or with other astronomical phenomena (cf. Nu 24:17 and note).  
**2:4** chief priests. See note on Mk 8:31. These were the rul-

ing priests in charge of worship at the temple in Jerusalem. *teachers of the law*. Traditionally translated "scribes," these were Jewish scholars of the day, professionally trained in the teaching and application of OT law (see notes on Mk 2:16; Lk 5:17).  
**2:6** See Mic 5:2 and note.



### 3RD GENERATION

#### Herod of Chalcis

☞ **Herod Agrippa I** King of Judea (AD 37–44); killed James; put Peter into prison; struck down by an angel (Ac 12:1–24)

**HERODIAS** Married her uncle Herod Philip I, and then a second uncle, Herod Antipas (Mt 14:3; Mk 6:17)

..... Denotes Herodias's marriage to Herod Antipas

— Denotes Herodias's marriage to Herod Philip I and daughter of that marriage



### 4TH GENERATION

Felix (Governor of Judea)

**DRUSILLA**  
Married Felix, governor of Judea (AD 52–59); Felix tried Paul (Ac 24:24)

☞ **Herod Agrippa II**  
King of Judea; Paul makes a legal defense before him (Ac 25:13–26:32)

**BERNICE**  
With her brother at the time of Paul's defense (Ac 25:13)

**SALOME**  
Daughter of Herodias and Herod Philip I; danced in exchange for the head of John the Baptist (Mt 14:1–12; Mk 6:14–29)

for out of you will come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people  
Israel.<sup>a,e</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

<sup>9</sup>After they had heard the king, they <sup>2:11</sup> <sup>f</sup>Isa 60:3

<sup>2:6</sup> <sup>e</sup>2Sa 5:2;  
Mic 5:2

went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup>On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.<sup>f</sup> Then they opened their treasures

<sup>a</sup> 6 Micah 5:2,4

**2:11** house. Contrary to tradition, the Magi did not visit Jesus at the manger on the night of his birth. They came

some months later and visited him as a “child” in his “house.” the child with his mother Mary. Every time the



and presented him with gifts<sup>9</sup> of gold, frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned<sup>h</sup> in a dream<sup>i</sup> not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

### The Escape to Egypt

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

<sup>14</sup>So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, <sup>15</sup>where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled<sup>m</sup> what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”<sup>an</sup>

<sup>16</sup>When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the

**2:11** <sup>9</sup>Ps 72:10  
**2:12** <sup>h</sup>Heb 11:7  
<sup>i</sup>ver 13, 19, 22;  
S Mt 27:19  
**2:13** <sup>j</sup>S Ac 5:19  
<sup>k</sup>ver 12, 19,  
22; S Mt 27:19  
<sup>l</sup>Rev 12:4  
**2:15** <sup>m</sup>ver 17,  
23; S Mt 1:22  
<sup>n</sup>Ex 4:22, 23;  
Hos 11:1

boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. <sup>17</sup>Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:<sup>o</sup>

<sup>18</sup>“A voice is heard in Ramah,  
weeping and great mourning,  
Rachel<sup>p</sup> weeping for her children  
and refusing to be comforted,  
because they are no more.”<sup>bq</sup>

### The Return to Nazareth

<sup>19</sup>After Herod died, an angel<sup>r</sup> of the Lord appeared in a dream<sup>s</sup> to Joseph in Egypt <sup>20</sup>and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”<sup>t</sup>

<sup>21</sup>So he got up, took the child and his

**2:17** <sup>o</sup>ver 15, 23;  
S Mt 1:22  
**2:18** <sup>p</sup>Ge 35:19  
<sup>q</sup>Jer 31:15  
**2:19** <sup>r</sup>S Ac 5:19  
<sup>s</sup>ver 12, 13, 22;  
S Mt 27:19  
**2:20** <sup>t</sup>Ex 4:19

<sup>a</sup> 15 Hosea 11:1 <sup>b</sup> 18 Jer. 31:15

child Jesus and his mother are mentioned together, he is mentioned first (vv. 11,13–14,20–21). *gold... frankincense... myrrh*. Three gifts perhaps gave rise to the legend that there were three Magi. But the Bible nowhere indicates the number of the Magi, and they were almost certainly not kings (see note on v. 1). *myrrh*. See note on Ge 37:25.

**2:13** *angel of the Lord*. See note on Lk 2:9.

**2:15** *the death of Herod*. In 4 BC. *Out of Egypt I called my son*. This quotation from Hos 11:1 refers in that context to God’s calling the nation of Israel out of Egypt in the time of Moses. But Matthew, under the inspiration of the Spirit, applies it also to Jesus thus identifying Jesus as the new Israel coming out of Egypt. Matthew sees the history of Israel (God’s “son”) recapitulated in the life of Jesus (God’s unique Son). Just as Israel as an

infant nation went down into Egypt, so the child Jesus went there. And as Israel was led by God out of Egypt, so also was Jesus. See article below.

**2:16** *kill all the boys... two years old and under*. The number killed has often been exaggerated as being in the thousands. In so small a village as Bethlehem, however (even with the surrounding area included), the number was probably not large—though the act, of course, was no less brutal.

**2:18** Originally referencing mothers in Judah lamenting their sons being exiled to Babylonia (see note on Jer 31:15). The OT contexts of all three citations in Mt 2 so far (2:6,15,18) focus on the promise of return from exile. Matthew seems to be using these quotations to highlight Jesus as fulfillment of Scripture and to signal that Jesus brings about the end of his people’s exile.

## Typology and Jesus

Mt 2:15



New Testament writers understand Jesus to be the fulfillment of the Jewish story told in the Jewish Scriptures. One way they emphasize Jesus as this fulfillment is by highlighting an OT figure, object, or event, and then connecting it to Jesus.

In this correspondence, the OT “type” is shown to be brought to completion in Jesus (who is sometimes called the “antitype”). For example, Matthew connects Jesus with Israel by citing Hos 11:1, which speaks of God’s son, Israel, coming out of Egypt. Matthew shows that Jesus, like Israel of old, will be delivered from Egypt by God (see Mt 2:15 and note; 2:20–21). Therefore Israel is “a type” of Jesus (with Jesus as the “antitype”).

For another example, consider the temple in John’s Gospel. Jesus fulfills the purposes of the temple (God’s presence with his people; cf. Jn 1:14–18). And according to Jn 2:13–22, Jesus could speak of his body (his self) as the temple (Jn 2:20–21). John also goes on to show how various Jewish festivals are types of Jesus’ person and work. For instance, John understands the Feast of Tabernacles as typological of Jesus’ identity as light and the living water, key elements of this festival (Jn 8:12; 7:37–38; cf. 4:10,14).



mother and went to the land of Israel.<sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream,<sup>u</sup> he withdrew to the district of Galilee,<sup>v</sup> <sup>23</sup> and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth.<sup>w</sup> So was fulfilled<sup>x</sup> what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.<sup>y</sup>

**2:22** <sup>u</sup> ver 12, 13, 19; S Mt 27:19  
<sup>v</sup> Lk 2:39  
**2:23** <sup>w</sup> Mk 1:9;  
 6:1; S 1:24;  
 Lk 1:26; 2:39, 51;  
 4:16, 23; Jn 1:45,  
 46 <sup>x</sup> ver 15,  
 17; S Mt 1:22  
<sup>y</sup> S Mk 1:24

**3:1** <sup>z</sup> ver 13, 14;  
 Mt 9:14; 11:2-14;

## John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3:1-12pp — Mk 1:3-8; Lk 3:2-17

**3** In those days John the Baptist<sup>2</sup> came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea<sup>2</sup> and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven<sup>a</sup> has come near.” <sup>3</sup>This is he

14:1-12; Lk 1:13, 57-66; 3:2-19; Ac 19:3, 4 **3:2** <sup>a</sup> Da 7:14; Mt 4:17; 6:10; 7:21; S 25:34; Lk 11:20; 17:20, 21; 19:11; 21:31; Jn 3:3, 5; Ac 1:3, 6

**2:22** *Archelaus*. This son of Herod the Great ruled over Judea and Samaria for only ten years (4 BC–AD 6). He was unusually cruel and tyrannical and so was deposed. Judea then became a Roman province, administered by governors appointed by the emperor (see chart, p. 1638). *Galilee*. The northern part of Israel in Jesus’ day (see maps, pp. 1641, 2477).

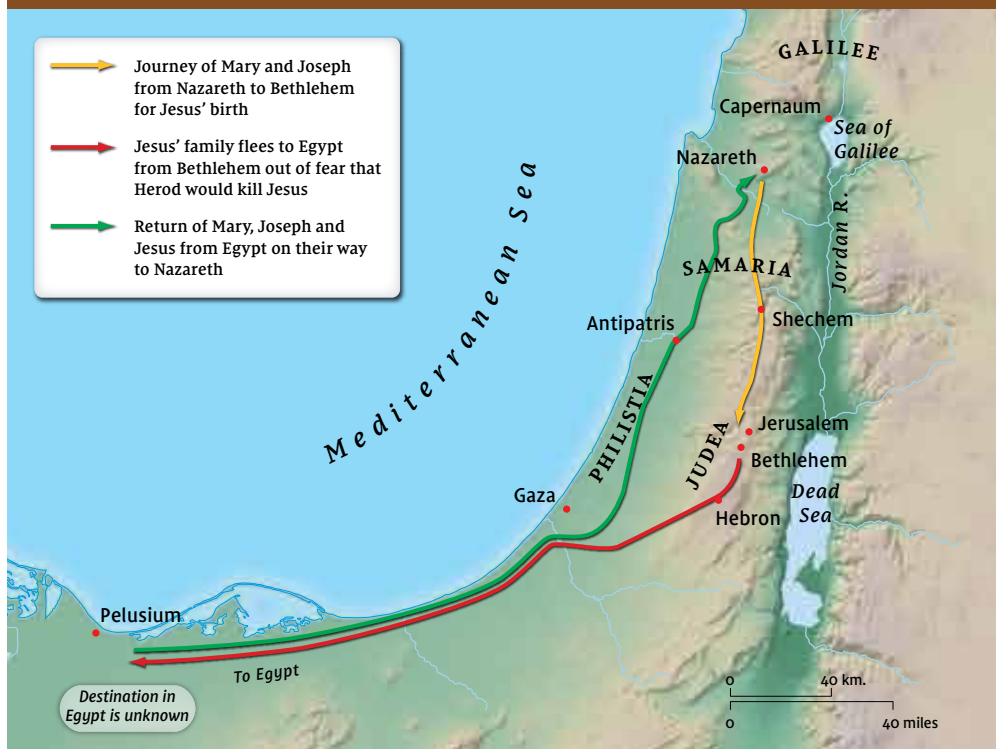
**2:23** *Nazareth*. A rather obscure town, nowhere mentioned in the OT. It was Jesus’ hometown (21:11; 26:71; see Lk 2:39; 4:16–24; Jn 1:45–46). According to Luke (2:4–5), Joseph and Mary had left Nazareth to go to Bethlehem to register for the Roman census. *be called a Nazarene*. These exact words are not found in the OT and may refer to several OT prefigurations and/or predictions (note the plural “prophets”) that the Messiah would be despised (e.g., Ps 22:6; Isa 53:3), for in Jesus’ day Nazareth was viewed as an unsophisticated, backwater town (Jn 1:45–46). In speaking of Jesus as a “Nazarene,” Matthew, through a wordplay, may be alluding to the “Branch” (Hebrew *nešer*) of Isa 11:1, since the word also appears in the Targums (see note on Ne 8:8), rabbinic literature, and the Dead Sea Scrolls (see article, pp. 1620–1621) as a Messianic title. In this interpreta-

tion, Jesus is the Messianic branch who, ironically, comes from Nazareth.

**3:1** *John the Baptist*. The forerunner of Jesus, born c. 7 BC to Zechariah, a priest, and his wife Elizabeth (Lk 1:5–80). *wilderness of Judea*. An area that stretched some 20 miles from the Jerusalem-Bethlehem plateau down to the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, perhaps the same region where John lived (cf. Lk 1:80). The people of Qumran (often associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls) lived in this area too (see article, pp. 1620–1621).

**3:2** *Repent*. Repentance is not merely a change of mind but a radical change in one’s life as a whole that especially involves forsaking sin and turning or returning to God. *kingdom of heaven*. A phrase found only in Matthew, where it occurs 33 times. See Introduction: Recipients. Mark and Luke refer to “the kingdom of God,” a term Matthew uses only four times (see note on Mk 11:30). The “kingdom of heaven/God” in the preaching of Jesus as recounted in the Gospels is the reign of God that he brings about through Jesus Christ—i.e., the establishment of God’s rule in the hearts and lives of his people, the overcoming of all the forces of evil, the removal from the world of all the consequences of sin—including death and all that diminishes

## JESUS’ EARLY LIFE



who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

*"A voice of one calling in the wilderness,  
'Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him.'"*<sup>ab</sup>

<sup>4</sup>John's<sup>c</sup> clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist.<sup>d</sup> His food was locusts<sup>e</sup> and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. <sup>6</sup>Confessing their sins, they were baptized<sup>f</sup> by him in the Jordan River.

<sup>7</sup>But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers!<sup>g</sup> Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?<sup>h</sup> <sup>8</sup>Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. <sup>9</sup>And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>10</sup>The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does

<sup>3:3</sup> <sup>b</sup> Isa 40:3;  
Mal 3:1; Lk 1:76;  
Jn 1:23  
<sup>3:4</sup> <sup>c</sup> S Mt 3:1  
<sup>d</sup> 2Ki 1:8  
<sup>e</sup> Lev 11:22  
<sup>3:6</sup> <sup>f</sup> ver 11;  
S Mk 1:4  
<sup>3:7</sup> <sup>g</sup> Mt 12:34;  
23:33 <sup>h</sup> S Ro 1:18  
<sup>3:8</sup> <sup>i</sup> Ac 26:20  
<sup>3:9</sup> <sup>j</sup> S Lk 3:8

<sup>3:10</sup> <sup>k</sup> Mt 7:19;  
Lk 3:9; 13:6-9;  
Jn 15:2, 6  
<sup>3:11</sup> <sup>l</sup> ver 6;  
S Mk 1:4  
<sup>m</sup> S Mk 1:8  
<sup>n</sup> Isa 4:4; Ac 2:3, 4  
<sup>3:12</sup> <sup>o</sup> Mt 13:30;  
S 25:41  
<sup>3:13</sup> <sup>p</sup> S Mt 3:1;  
S Mk 1:4

not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.<sup>k</sup>

<sup>11</sup>"I baptize you with<sup>b</sup> water for repentance.<sup>l</sup> But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with<sup>b</sup> the Holy Spirit<sup>m</sup> and fire.<sup>n</sup> <sup>12</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."<sup>o</sup>

## The Baptism of Jesus

3:13-17pp — Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21,22; Jn 1:31-34

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

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

<sup>16</sup>As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment

<sup>a</sup> 3 Isaiah 40:3 <sup>b</sup> 11 Or in

life—and the creation of a new order of righteousness and peace. The idea of God's kingdom is central to Jesus' teaching and is mentioned 50 times in Matthew alone. *has come near.* The presence and the power of God's reign has already begun to be experienced (4:17; Mk 1:15).

**3:3** All four Gospels quote Isa 40:3 (Luke quotes two additional verses) and apply it to John the Baptist. *make straight paths for him.* Equivalent to "Prepare the way for the Lord" (see note on Lk 3:4). The preparation was thoroughgoing—impacting all areas of life.

**3:4** *camel's hair ... leather belt.* Worn by Elijah and other prophets (see 2Ki 1:8; Zec 13:4–6 and notes). *locusts and wild honey.* People living in the wilderness often ate insects, and locusts were among the clean foods (Lev 11:21–22). John's simple food, clothing and lifestyle were a visual protest against self-indulgence and injustice (Lk 3:10–14).

**3:6** *Confessing their sins.* See Pr 28:13; 1Jn 1:9 and notes. *they were baptized by him.* Although writings contemporary with the Gospels provide no exact parallel to Jewish baptism, it is possible that John's baptizing activity was meant to imitate baptism of new converts to Judaism. If so, then John was inviting his fellow Jews to return to the covenant and to their God. *Jordan River.* See note on Mk 1:5 and map, p. 1641.

**3:7** *Pharisees and Sadducees.* See article, p. 1620, and chart, p. 1685. The Pharisees (see notes on Mk 2:16; Lk 5:17) were a separatistic group focused on the law and its interpretation, who kept both the law of Moses and the unwritten "tradition of the elders" (15:2; later codified in the Mishnah and Talmud). The Sadducees (see notes on Mk 12:18; Lk 20:27; Ac 4:1) were more politically minded and had theological differences with the Pharisees, including denial of the resurrection, angels and spirits (Ac 23:8). *baptizing.* See note on Mk 1:4. *the coming wrath.* The arrival of the Messiah will bring repentance (v. 8) or judgment.

**3:9** *We have Abraham as our father.* See Jn 8:39. Salvation does not come as a birthright (even for the Jews) but through faith in Christ (Ro 2:28–29; Gal 3:7,9,29). *children for Abraham.* The true people of God are not limited to the physical descendants of Abraham, as Matthew highlights elsewhere (1:3,5,6; 8:5–13; 15:21–28; 28:19–20; cf. Ro 9:6–8 and notes).

**3:10** *The ax is already at the root of the trees.* John preaches

that judgment is near. *every tree that does not produce good fruit.* Cf. Jn 15:2 and note.

**3:11** *with water for repentance.* John's baptism presupposed repentance; he condemned the Pharisees and Sadducees because they failed to give any evidence of repentance (vv. 7–8). *whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.* See note on Jn 1:27. *carry.* Mark (1:7) and Luke (3:16) have "untie" (a different Greek verb), but the Greek here for "carry" can also mean "remove." *baptize you with the Holy Spirit.* See Jn 1:33 and note. *with the Holy Spirit and fire.* Demonstrated in a dramatic way at Pentecost (Ac 1:5,8; 2:1–13; 11:16), though here "fire" may refer to judgment to come (v. 12). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all God's people was promised in Joel 2:28–29 and was at least partially fulfilled in Ac 2:16–21.

**3:12** *His winnowing fork.* For the process of winnowing, see note on Ru 1:22. Here it is figurative for the separation of the righteous ("wheat") from the wicked ("chaff"). *unquenchable fire.* Eschatological judgment (see 25:41 and note; cf. La 1:13 and note). The OT prophets and NT writers sometimes compress the first and second comings of Christ so that they seem to be one event (see, e.g., Isa 61:2 and note).

**3:13** *Jesus ... baptized by John.* See map and accompanying text, p. 1646.

**3:15** Jesus' baptism marked the beginning of his Messianic ministry. There were several reasons for his baptism: (1) The first, mentioned here, was "to fulfill all righteousness." His baptism indicated that he was consecrated to God and officially approved by him, as especially shown in the descent of the Holy Spirit (v. 16) and the words of the Father (v. 17; cf. Ps 27; Isa 42:1). All God's righteous requirements for the Messiah were fully met in Jesus. (2) At Jesus' baptism John publicly announced the arrival of the Messiah and the inception of his ministry (Jn 1:31–34). (3) By his baptism Jesus completely identified himself with humanity's sin and failure (though he himself needed no repentance or cleansing from sin), becoming our substitute (2Co 5:21). (4) His baptism was an example to his followers.

**3:16–17** All three persons of the Trinity are clearly seen here (see 28:19 and note).

**3:16** *Spirit of God.* The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus to equip him (see note on Jdg 3:10) for his work as the

## Could Jesus Have Sinned?

Mt 4:1–11



**T**he Gospels relate that Jesus was tempted as he prepared for his public ministry, yet he did not fall into sin (Mt 4:1–11; Mk 1:12–13; Lk 4:1–13). In these accounts, both Matthew and Luke foster a comparison between Jesus and Israel by highlighting Jesus' forty days (cf. Israel's forty years) in the wilderness and with three citations from Dt 6–8 (Israel's wilderness experience). In this way, they show that Jesus succeeds where Israel failed: Jesus was also tempted to turn away from his God-given mission numerous times, yet he willingly went to the cross (cf. Lk 4:13; Mt 16:22–23; 26:36–46, 53–54; 27:41–43).

But while Christians traditionally agree that Jesus was sinless, they debate whether he could have actually sinned. Some believe that while Jesus experienced temptation, given his divine nature he couldn't have sinned—just as God is unable to sin (cf. Ja 1:13). This view references Jesus' choice to align with the divine will rather than following his own will (e.g., Mt 26:39,42) as Jesus acting out of his divine nature and so unable to sin.

Others believe that the analogy between Israel and Jesus shows Jesus as representative humanity and so seems to raise the possibility that he, as fully human, could have sinned (cf. Heb 2:17–18). So Jesus is able to empathize with our weakness because “he has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin” (4:15). If somehow Jesus had not been able to sin (if there were no real possibility), it seems he could not have been described in this way.

Whether Jesus could not have sinned, or could have sinned but did not, the same result is achieved. His perfect obedience means he is able to help us when we are tempted (Heb 2:18) and we are able to approach God with confidence (4:16).

heaven was opened,<sup>a</sup> and he saw the Spirit of God<sup>b</sup> descending like a dove and alighting on him.<sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven<sup>c</sup> said, “This is my Son,<sup>d</sup> whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”<sup>u</sup>

### Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

4:1–11pp — Mk 1:12,13; Lk 4:1–13

**4** Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted<sup>av</sup> by the devil.<sup>w</sup> <sup>2</sup>After fasting forty days and forty

<sup>3:16</sup> <sup>a</sup>Eze 1:1; Jn 1:51; Ac 7:56; 10:11; Rev 4:1; 19:11 <sup>b</sup>Isa 11:2; 42:1

<sup>3:17</sup> <sup>c</sup>Dt 4:12; Mt 17:5; Jn 12:28 <sup>d</sup>Ps 2:7; Ac 13:33; Heb 1:1–5; 5:5; 2Pe 1:17; 18 <sup>e</sup>Isa 42:1; Mt 12:18; 17:5; Mk 1:11; 9:7; Lk 3:22; 9:35; 2Pe 1:17

<sup>4:1</sup> <sup>f</sup>Heb 4:15 <sup>w</sup>Ge 3:1–7

nights,<sup>x</sup> he was hungry. <sup>3</sup>The tempter<sup>y</sup> came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God,<sup>z</sup> tell these stones to become bread.”

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’<sup>b”a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 1 The Greek for *tempted* can also mean *tested*.

<sup>b</sup> 4 Deut. 8:3

<sup>4:2</sup> <sup>x</sup>Ex 34:28; 1Ki 19:8 <sup>3</sup> <sup>y</sup>1Th 3:5 <sup>z</sup>5 Mt 3:17; 14:33; 16:16; 27:54; Mk 3:11; Lk 1:35; 22:70; Jn 1:34, 49; 5:25; 11:27; 20:31; Ac 9:20; Ro 1:4; 1Jn 5:10–13, 20; Rev 2:18 <sup>4:4</sup> <sup>a</sup>Dt 8:3; Jn 4:34

divine-human Messiah. *like a dove*. Either in the form of a dove or in a descent like a dove. See also note on Mk 1:10.

**3:17** *voice from heaven*. The voice (1) authenticated Jesus' Messianic sonship, echoing Ps 2:7 (“This is my Son”), (2) identified Jesus with the suffering servant of Isa 42:1 (“with him I am well pleased”; cf. Mt 12:18), and perhaps (3) identified Jesus with Abraham's willingness to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, echoing Ge 22:2 (“whom I love”). This word from the Father must have greatly encouraged Jesus at the very outset of his earthly ministry. *my Son*. See notes on 14:33; Jn 3:16.

**4:1–11** The significance of Jesus' temptations, especially because they occurred at the outset of his public ministry, seems best understood in terms of the kind of Messiah he was to be. He would not accomplish his mission by using his supernatural power for his own needs (first temptation), by using his power to win a large following by miracles or magic (second temptation) or by compromising with Satan in idolatrous worship (third temptation). Jesus' temptation was real, not merely symbolic. He was “tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin” (Heb 4:15; see note there; see also 2Co 5:21; Heb 7:26; 1Pe 2:22 and note; 1Jn 3:5). Although Jesus was the Son of God, he defeated

Satan by using a weapon that everyone has at their disposal: “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph 6:17). He met all three temptations with Scriptural truth (vv. 4,7,10) from Deuteronomy. See article above and on p. 1644.

**4:1** *Jesus . . . tempted by the devil*. See article above; see also map and accompanying text, p. 1646. *by the devil*. God surely tests his people, but it is the devil who tempts to evil (see notes on Ge 22:1; Jas 1:13; see also 1Jn 3:8; Rev 2:9–10 and notes; Rev 12:9–10). Like the Hebrew for “Satan,” the Greek for “devil” means “accuser” or “slanderer” or “adversary.” The devil is a personal being, not a mere force or influence. He is the great archenemy of God and the leader of the hosts of darkness.

**4:2** *forty days and forty nights*. The number recalls the experiences of Moses (Ex 24:18; 34:28) and Elijah (1Ki 19:8), as well as the 40 years of Israel's temptation (testing) in the wilderness (see note on v. 1).

**4:3** *If you are the Son of God*. The devil is tempting him to use his supernatural powers as the Son of God for his own ends. *Son of God*. See notes on Ps 2:7; 45:6; Jn 3:16. *tell these stones to become bread*. See note on Lk 4:3.

**4:4** Just as God gave the Israelites manna in a supernatural way (see Dt 8:3 and note), so also people today must rely on

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city<sup>b</sup> and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. <sup>6</sup>“If you are the Son of God,”<sup>c</sup> he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:

“‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”<sup>a,d</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”<sup>b,e</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splen-

<sup>4:5</sup> <sup>b</sup> Ne 11:1; Da 9:24; Mt 27:53  
<sup>4:6</sup> <sup>c</sup> S ver 3  
<sup>d</sup> Ps 91:11, 12  
<sup>4:7</sup> <sup>e</sup> Dt 6:16

<sup>4:10</sup> <sup>f</sup> Ch 21:1; Job 1:6–9; Mt 16:23; Mk 4:15; Lk 10:18; 13:16; 22:3, 31; Ro 16:20; 2Co 2:11; 11:14; 2Th 2:9; Rev 12:9  
<sup>9</sup> Dt 6:13  
<sup>4:11</sup> <sup>h</sup> Jas 4:7  
<sup>i</sup> Mt 26:53; Lk 22:43;  
<sup>4:12</sup> <sup>j</sup> Mt 14:3  
<sup>k</sup> Mk 1:14  
<sup>4:13</sup> <sup>l</sup> Mk 1:21; 9:33; Lk 4:23, 31; Jn 2:12; 4:46, 47  
<sup>4:14</sup> <sup>m</sup> S Mt 1:22

dor. <sup>9</sup>“All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

<sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan!<sup>f</sup> For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”<sup>c,g</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him,<sup>h</sup> and angels came and attended him.<sup>i</sup>

### Jesus Begins to Preach

<sup>12</sup>When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison,<sup>j</sup> he withdrew to Galilee.<sup>k</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum,<sup>l</sup> which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali — <sup>14</sup>to fulfill<sup>m</sup> what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

<sup>a</sup> 6 Psalm 91:11,12    <sup>b</sup> 7 Deut. 6:16    <sup>c</sup> 10 Deut. 6:13

God for spiritual nourishment. Jesus relied on his Father, not his own power, for provision of food (cf. Jn 4:34 and note; 6:27).

**4:5** See note on Lk 4:2. *highest point of the temple.* See note on Lk 4:9. *temple.* The temple, including the entire temple area, had been rebuilt by Herod the Great (see notes on 2:1; Jn 2:20; see also model, p. 1645).

**4:6** *throw yourself down.* See note on Lk 4:9. *it is written.* See note on Lk 4:10.

**4:9** *worship me.* See note on Lk 4:7.

**4:10** *Satan.* See note on v. 1.

**4:11** *the devil left him.* See note on Lk 4:13. *angels came and attended him.* While Jesus rebuffs the devil’s temptation to call for angelic protection (v. 6), in a powerful turn Jesus is cared for by angels after proving faithful in his testing.

**4:12** See map, p. 2476. *John had been put in prison.* See Mk 1:14 and note on Lk 3:20. The reason for John’s imprisonment is given in 14:3–4.

**4:13** *Capernaum.* Although not mentioned in the OT, it was a town of about 2000 people in Jesus’ day (see

## The Temptation of Jesus

Mt 4:1



**T**his testing or temptation of Jesus has as its primary background Israel’s wilderness experiences in Dt 6–8, from which Jesus quotes in his three responses to the devil’s temptations (see vv. 4,7,10 and NIV text notes). In Deuteronomy, Moses recalls how the Lord led the Israelites in the wilderness for 40 years “to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands” (Dt 8:2). Here at the beginning of his ministry Jesus is subjected to a similar test and shows himself to be the true Israelite who lives “on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Dt 8:3; Mt 4:4).

The other two citations from Deuteronomy also highlight a contrast between Israel and Jesus. Whereas Israel failed their wilderness testing by putting God “to the test as [they] did at Mas-sah” (Dt 6:16), Jesus refuses to put God’s promises for protection to the test when tempted to throw himself from the temple heights (Mt 4:5–7). And while Israel’s history demonstrates their propensity to worship and serve other gods besides the Lord, Jesus quotes Dt 6:13 to affirm his commitment to be utterly faithful to the one true God when tempted by the devil to bow down to him (Mt 4:10).

We can learn much from this account of Jesus being tempted. First, although this is the first account of Jesus’ temptation, it is not the last. In Matthew, Jesus is also tempted to relinquish his God-given mission at a number of other points but remains true to God’s calling (16:22–23; 26:36–46; 27:43). Second, because the emphasis in the narrative is on Jesus’ faithfulness in testing in contrast to Israel’s unfaithfulness, Jesus’ identity as representative Israel and so representative humanity is the focus. This means that when Jesus overcomes temptations by clinging to God and God’s word, he provides a powerful example for all believers in their own times of testing. And because Jesus is tempted as Israel was and as believers continue to be, he is able to be our “merciful and faithful high priest” (Heb 2:17; see note there) and thus “able to help those who are being tempted” (Heb 2:18; see also Heb 4:15–16).



## HEROD'S TEMPLE

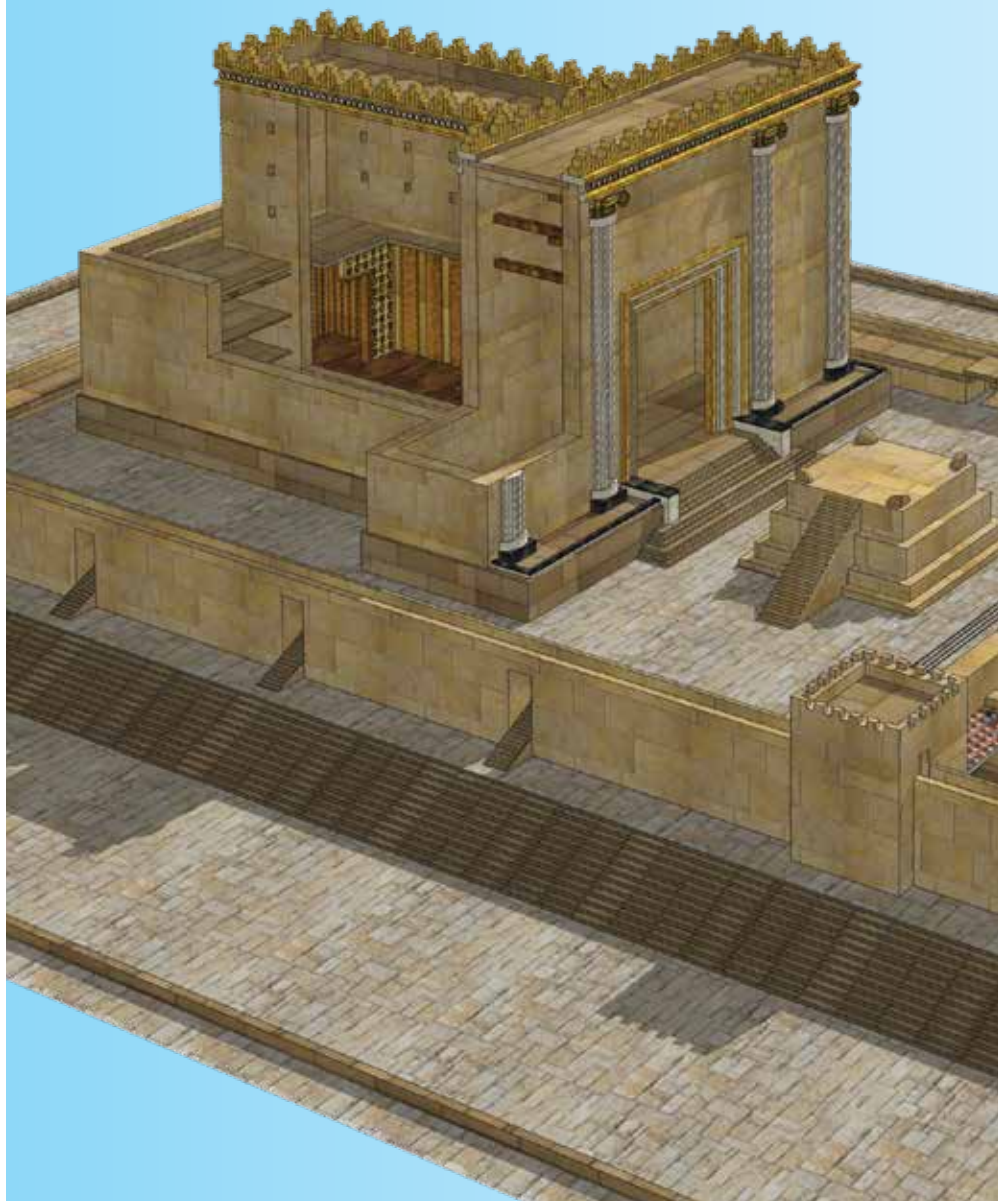
### 20 BC–AD 70

Begun in 19 or 20 BC, Herod's new structure towered 15 stories high, following the floor dimensions of the former temples in the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The high sanctuary shown here was built on the site of the former temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel.

The outer courts surrounding the temple mount were not completed until AD 64. The entire structure was demolished by the Romans in AD 70.

Dimensions of rooms, steps, doorways, cornices and exterior measurements are mentioned in ancient sources (Josephus and the Mishnah) but are subject to interpretation.

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<sup>15</sup>“Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,  
the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles —  
<sup>16</sup>the people living in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of the shadow of death  
a light has dawned.”<sup>an</sup>

**4:16** <sup>n</sup> Isa 9:1, 2;  
Lk 2:32; Jn 1:4,  
5, 9

**4:17** <sup>o</sup> S Mt 3:2  
**4:18** <sup>p</sup> Mt 15:29;  
Mk 7:31; Jn 6:1

<sup>17</sup>From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven<sup>o</sup> has come near.”

### Jesus Calls His First Disciples

4:18-22pp — Mk 1:16-20; Lk 5:2-11; Jn 1:35-42

<sup>18</sup>As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee,<sup>p</sup> he saw two brothers, Simon

<sup>a</sup> 16 Isaiah 9:1,2

photo, p. 1633). Peter’s house there became Jesus’ base of operations during his extended ministry in Galilee (Mk 2:1; 9:33). The ruins of a fifth-century basilica now stand over the possible site of Peter’s house, and a fourth-century synagogue is located a short distance from it (see model, p. 1771).

**4:15–16** Another Messianic prophecy from Isaiah (9:1–2). Jesus spent most of his public ministry in Galilee, “in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali” (v. 13), which is north and west of the Sea of Galilee (see photos, pp. 1634, 2231).

**4:15** *Galilee of the Gentiles*. A region that, from the Jewish perspective in Jesus’ day, was “in darkness” and “the land of the shadow of death” (v. 16), probably because it was far removed from the religious influences of Jerusalem and because significant numbers of Gentiles lived there. Matthew

may have chosen this text (Isa 9:1–2) because of his interest in the universal appeal of the gospel (see 2:1–12; 13:38; 28:19; see also Introduction: Recipients).

**4:17** *From that time on Jesus began to*. These words indicate an important turning point in Matthew’s narrative and occur twice (see also 16:21). These words seem to mark three main sections of the book (see Introduction: Structure). *Repent*. See note on Mk 1:4. Jesus began his public ministry with the same message as that of John the Baptist (see 3:2 and note). The people must repent because God’s reign was drawing near in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2. *has come near*. See note on Mk 1:15.

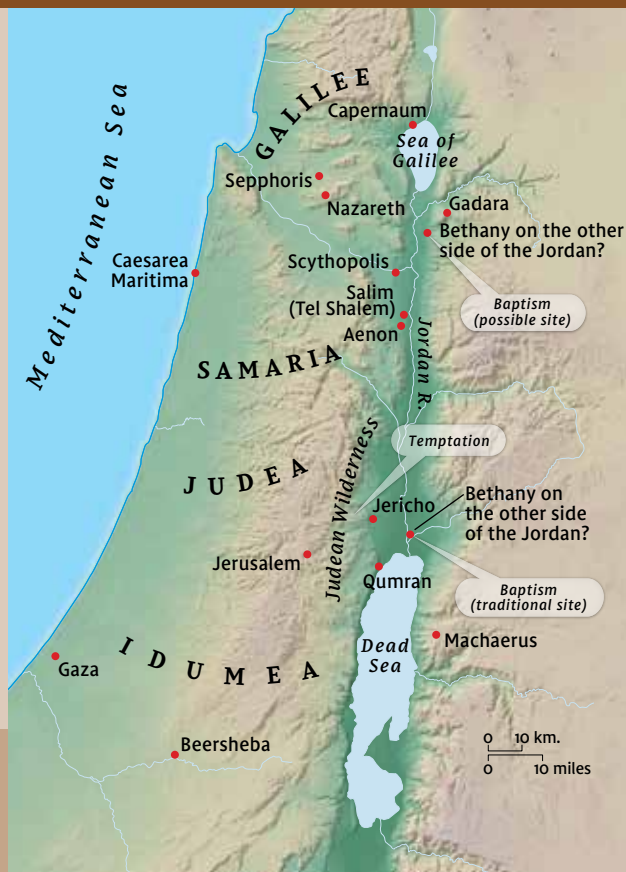
**4:18** *Sea of Galilee*. See notes on 3:2; Mk 1:16. *net*. A circular casting net used either from a boat or while standing in shallow water.

## JESUS’ BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION

Events surrounding Jesus’ baptism reveal the intense religious excitement and social ferment of the early days of John the Baptist’s ministry. Herod had been cruel and power-hungry; Roman military occupation was harsh. Some agitation centered around the change of governors from Gratus to Pilate in AD 26. Most of the people hoped for a religious solution to their intolerable political situation, and when they heard of a new prophet, they flocked out into the desert to hear him. The religious sect (Essenes) from Qumran professed similar doctrines of repentance and baptism. Jesus was baptized at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan (see Jn 1:28; see also photo, p. 1822). John also baptized at “Aenon near Salim” (Jn 3:23).

For Jesus’ temptation, see notes on Mt 4:1–11; Lk 4:1–13; see also article, p. 1644.

Many interpreters place John’s baptismal ministry at a point on the middle stretch of the Jordan River, where trade routes converge at a natural ford not far from the modern site of Tel Shalem.





called Peter<sup>a</sup> and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. **19“Come, follow me,”<sup>r</sup> Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”** <sup>20</sup>At once they left their nets and followed him.<sup>s</sup>

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

### Jesus Heals the Sick

<sup>23</sup>Jesus went throughout Galilee,<sup>v</sup> teaching in their synagogues,<sup>w</sup> proclaiming the good news<sup>x</sup> of the kingdom,<sup>y</sup> and healing every disease and sickness among the people.<sup>z</sup> <sup>24</sup>News about him spread all over Syria,<sup>a</sup> and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed,<sup>b</sup> those having seizures,<sup>c</sup> and the paralyzed;<sup>d</sup> and he healed them. <sup>25</sup>Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis,<sup>e</sup> Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.<sup>e</sup>

**4:18** <sup>a</sup>Mt 16:17, 18  
**4:19** <sup>r</sup>ver 20, 22;  
Mt 8:22; Mk 10:21,  
28, 52; Lk 5:28;  
Jn 1:43; 21:19, 22  
**4:20** <sup>s</sup>ver 19  
**4:21** <sup>t</sup>Mt 17:1;  
20:20; 26:37;  
Mk 3:17; 13:3;  
Lk 8:51; Jn 21:2  
**4:22** <sup>u</sup>ver 19  
**4:23** <sup>v</sup>Mk 1:39;  
Lk 4:15, 44  
<sup>w</sup>Mt 9:35;  
13:54; Mk 1:21;  
Lk 4:15; Jn 6:59;  
18:20 <sup>x</sup>Mk 1:14  
<sup>y</sup>S Mt 3:2;  
Ac 20:25; 28:23,  
31 <sup>z</sup>Mt 8:16; 14:14;  
15:30; Mk 3:10;  
Lk 7:22; Ac 10:38  
**4:24** <sup>a</sup>S Lk 2:2  
<sup>b</sup>Mt 8:16, 28;  
9:32; 12:22; 15:22;  
Mk 1:32; 5:15;  
16, 18 <sup>c</sup>Mt 17:15  
<sup>d</sup>Mt 8:6; 9:2;  
Mk 2:3  
**4:25** <sup>e</sup>Mk 3:7, 8;  
Lk 6:17

**5:3** <sup>f</sup>ver 10, 19;  
S Mt 25:34  
**5:4** <sup>g</sup>Isa 61:2, 3;  
Rev 7:17  
**5:5** <sup>h</sup>Ps 37:11;  
Ro 4:13  
**5:6** <sup>i</sup>Isa 5:5-1, 2  
**5:7** <sup>j</sup>S Jas 2:13  
**5:8** <sup>k</sup>Ps 24:3,  
4; 73:1 <sup>l</sup>Ps 17:15;  
42:2; Heb 12:14;  
Rev 22:4

### Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

**5** Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, <sup>2</sup>and he began to teach them.

### The Beatitudes


5:3-12pp — Lk 6:20-23

He said:


- 3** “Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.<sup>f</sup>
- 4** Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.<sup>g</sup>
- 5** Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.<sup>h</sup>
- 6** Blessed are those who hunger and  
thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.<sup>i</sup>
- 7** Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.<sup>j</sup>
- 8** Blessed are the pure in heart,<sup>k</sup>  
for they will see God.<sup>l</sup>
- 9** Blessed are the peacemakers,<sup>m</sup>  
for they will be called children of God.<sup>n</sup>


<sup>a</sup> 25 That is, the Ten Cities

**5:9** <sup>m</sup>Jas 3:18; S Ro 14:19 <sup>n</sup>ver 44, 45; S Ro 8:14

 **4:19** *send you out to fish for people.* Evangelism (“proclaiming the good news of the kingdom,” 4:23) was at the heart of Jesus’ call to his disciples.

**4:20** See note on Mk 1:17.

 **4:21** *boat.* In 1986 the remains of a 2,000-year-old typical fisherman’s boat were found off the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. Popularly known as the Jesus Boat, it is now on display in a museum near Magdala (see map, p. 2476). The boat is about 27 feet (8.2m) long, 7.5 feet (2.3m) wide and 4.3 feet (1.3m) high. *preparing their nets.* Washing, mending and hanging the nets up to dry in preparation for the next day’s work.


 **4:23** *teaching ... proclaiming ... healing.* Jesus’ three-fold ministry. The synagogues (see note on Mk 1:21) provided a place for him to teach on the Sabbath. During the week he preached to larger crowds in the open air. *good news.* See note on Mk 1:1.

**4:24** *Syria.* The area north of Galilee and between Damascus and the Mediterranean Sea. *those having seizures.* The Greek word for this expression originally meant “moon-struck” and reflects the ancient superstition that seizures were caused by changes of the moon.

**4:25** *Large crowds.* Jesus’ influence spread quickly over a large geographic area. *the Decapolis.* A league of free cities (see NIV text note and map, p. 1719) characterized by high Greek culture. All but one, Scythopolis (Beth Shan), were east of the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River. The league stretched from a point northeast of the Sea of Galilee southward to Philadelphia (modern Amman). *followed him.* Not all who followed were true disciples; many were curious onlookers, as subsequent events revealed only too clearly.


**5:1** *mountainside.* Perhaps the gently sloping hillside at the northwest corner of the Sea of Galilee, not far from Capernaum (see note on Lk 6:20–49; see also photo, p. 1755). Jesus’ teachings on the kingdom, like the giving of the law (Ex 19:3), were given from a mountain. *sat down.*

It was the custom for Jewish rabbis to be seated while teaching (see Mk 4:1 and note; 9:35; Lk 4:20 and note; 5:3; Jn 8:2). *disciples.* Learners or followers (of a rabbi). Since at the end of the Sermon the “crowds” expressed amazement at Jesus’ teaching (7:28), “disciples” may here be used in a broader sense than the Twelve. More likely, the Sermon is addressed to the Twelve with the crowds also listening. See article, p. 1649.

 **5:3** *Blessed.* The word means more than “happy,” because happiness is an emotion often dependent on outward circumstances. “Blessed” here refers to the ultimate well-being and distinctive joy of those who share in the salvation of the kingdom of God and the reversals of circumstance that it brings, though not necessarily fully realized in this life (see article, p. 1648). See notes on Ps 1:1; Rev 1:3. *poor in spirit.* In contrast to the proud and self-sufficient. *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* The kingdom is not something earned. It is more a gift than a reward.

**5:4** *those who mourn.* The arrival of the kingdom will reverse current circumstances so that mourning will turn into rejoicing (Isa 61:2–3).

**5:5** *meek.* This beatitude is taken from Ps 37:11 (see note there) and refers in Matthew to an internal disposition of humility before God, an external reality of low status, or both. *the earth.* The new promised land (see Rev 21:1; cf. note on Ps 37:9).

 **5:6** *hunger and thirst for righteousness.* Have a deep longing for both personal righteousness and justice for the oppressed.

**5:8** *heart.* The center of one’s being, including mind, will and emotions (see note on Ps 4:7).

**5:9** *peacemakers.* Those who promote peace, as far as it depends on them (Ro 12:18). In so doing, they reflect the character of their heavenly Father and so are called “children of God” (Jas 3:17–18).

## The Beatitudes

Mt 5:3–12



**T**he beatitudes are blessings Jesus pronounced on people as the kingdom of God was arriving in his ministry. Kingdom beatitudes occur in Mt 5:3–12 and Lk 6:20–22, though Jesus speaks general blessings on other occasions (e.g., Mt 11:6; Lk 11:28; Jn 20:29). The beatitudes include a sense of reversal of expectation and of circumstance. In all four blessings in Luke and the first four in Matthew, the most unlikely of people are pronounced blessed; e.g., the poor, the hungry, the meek. Yet because they have lived to see the day of God's benevolent rule being established in this world, Jesus pronounces them blessed. As God comes to reign, he will right all wrongs, and everyone who lives to see and welcome his rule—even and especially the downtrodden—will be blessed.

The second four beatitudes in Mt 5 focus on those who join in God's great restoration and reversal work of mercy and justice. So Jesus pronounces blessings on those who enact mercy, integrity, peace, and righteousness or justice (Mt 5:7–10). In Matthew, the audience of the Beatitudes centers on Jesus' disciples (5:1–2,11), though it may not be exclusively so given the use of third person ("they will be . . ."). In Luke, it is clear that the audience is Jesus' disciples (6:20a,22).

The content of the blessings themselves focuses on the kingdom. The first and eighth beatitudes in Matthew envelop the others with the promise of the kingdom itself (Mt 5:3b,10b), indicating that the kingdom is the focus of all the beatitudes. The first beatitude in Luke also promises the kingdom (Lk 6:20b). The rest of the pronouncements or promises have to do with reversals of expectation: Those who are hungry will be satisfied, those who mourn will be comforted (and laugh), and those who are meek will inherit the whole earth. As God's reign is established in this world, its effects will be life-changing for those who most need mercy and justice and for all those who share in Jesus' ministry of the same.

**10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,<sup>o</sup> for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.<sup>p</sup>**

**11 "Blessed are you when people insult you,<sup>q</sup> persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.<sup>r</sup>**

**12 Rejoice and be glad,<sup>s</sup> because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.<sup>t</sup>**

### Salt and Light

**13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for**

**5:10** <sup>o</sup> S 1Pe 3:14; Pver 3, 19; S Mt 25:34; **5:11** <sup>q</sup> Isa 51:7; <sup>r</sup> S Jn 15:21; **5:12** <sup>s</sup> Ps 9:2; <sup>t</sup> Ac 5:41;

S 2Co 6:10; 12:10; Col 1:24; Jas 1:2; 1Pe 1:6; 4:13, 16; 2Ch 36:16; Mt 23:31, 37; Ac 7:52; 1Th 2:15; Heb 11:32–38

**5:13** <sup>u</sup> Mk 9:50; Lk 14:34, 35

**5:14** <sup>v</sup> Jn 8:12

**5:15** <sup>w</sup> Mk 4:21; Lk 8:16; 11:33

**5:16** <sup>x</sup> 1Co 10:31; Php 1:11

<sup>y</sup> S Titus 2:14

<sup>z</sup> S Mt 9:8

**anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.<sup>u</sup>**

**14 "You are the light of the world.<sup>v</sup> A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.<sup>w</sup> <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others,<sup>x</sup> that they may see your good deeds<sup>y</sup> and glorify<sup>z</sup> your Father in heaven.**

### The Fulfillment of the Law

**17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.<sup>a</sup>**

**5:17** <sup>a</sup> Jn 10:34, 35; Ro 3:31

**5:10** *Blessed . . . persecuted.* Because persecution provides an opportunity for believers to show they belong to the kingdom (see Heb 12:4–11 and notes). *persecuted.* Living with a commitment to righteousness and justice is often offensive to others (cf. v. 11). *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* For the blessings of God's kingdom, see 3:2 and note.

**5:13** *salt.* Used for flavoring and preserving (cf. Mk 9:50 and note). *loses its saltiness.* Most of the salt used in Israel came from the Dead Sea and was full of impurities. This caused it to lose some of its flavor.

**5:14** *light of the world.* Although Jesus himself fulfilled the mission of the Lord's servant to be "a light for the Gentiles" (Isa 42:6; see also Lk 2:32 and notes on Isa

49:6; Lk 2:31), he expected his followers to carry on the work (see vv. 15–16; cf. Jn 8:12; Php 2:15 and notes).

**5:15** *lamp.* In Jesus' day people used small clay lamps that burned olive oil drawn up by a wick (see note on Ex 25:37; see also photo, p. 1031).

**5:16** *glorify your Father.* Good deeds are not to be done in a public way for one's own honor ("in front of others, to be seen by them," 6:1) but for the glory of God (see 1Co 10:31; Php 1:11; 1Pe 2:12 and notes). *Father in heaven.* A favorite expression used in Matthew, who uses the phrase "Father in heaven" or "heavenly Father" 18 times, Mark and Luke only once each, and John not at all.

**5:17** *the Law.* The first five books of the OT. *the Prophets.* Not only the Latter Prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which

<sup>18</sup>For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.<sup>b</sup> <sup>19</sup>Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands<sup>c</sup> and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup>For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.<sup>d</sup>

**5:18** <sup>b</sup>Ps 119:89; Isa 40:8; 55:11; Mt 24:35; Mk 13:31; Lk 16:17; 21:33  
**5:19** <sup>c</sup>Jas 2:10  
**5:20** <sup>d</sup>Isa 26:2; Mt 18:3; Jn 3:5

**5:21** <sup>e</sup>Ex 20:13; 21:12; Dt 5:17  
**5:22** <sup>f</sup>Ecc 7:9; 1Co 13:5; Eph 4:26; Jas 1:19, 20; 9:1Jn 3:15  
<sup>h</sup>Mt 26:59; Jn 11:47; Ac 5:21, 27, 34, 41; 6:12

## Murder

5:25, 26pp — Lk 12:58, 59

<sup>21</sup>“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder,’<sup>ae</sup> and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’<sup>22</sup> But I tell you that anyone who is angry<sup>f</sup> with a brother or sister<sup>b,c</sup> will be subject to judgment.<sup>g</sup> Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’<sup>d</sup> is answerable to the court.<sup>h</sup> And anyone

<sup>a</sup> 21 Exodus 20:13 <sup>b</sup> 22 The Greek word for *brother* or *sister* (*adelphos*) refers here to a fellow disciple, whether man or woman; also in verse 23. <sup>c</sup> 22 Some manuscripts *brother or sister without cause*

<sup>d</sup> 22 An Aramaic term of contempt

are called Major Prophets, and the 12 Minor Prophets (lumped together by the Jews as “the Book of the Twelve”)—but also the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings). Taken together, “the Law” and “the Prophets” designated the entire OT, including the Writings, the third section of the Hebrew Bible. See 13:35, where Matthew introduces a quotation from the Writings (Ps 78:2) with “what was spoken through the prophet.” *fulfill*. Jesus fulfilled the Law in the sense that he gave it its full meaning. He emphasized the importance of living obediently to it, with attitudes matching actions (5:21–48).

**5:18–20** Jesus affirms the importance of keeping the requirements of the law, holding his followers to a righteousness that is greater than that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law (v. 20). According to Matthew, the Pharisees fall short of the authentic obedience that should characterize his own disciples by (1) misprioritizing commands and so neglecting “the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness” (23:23); (2) following the “tradition of the elders” while disobeying OT commands (15:2–3);

and (3) not practicing the very things they preach (23:3). In the rest of the chapter, Jesus gives six examples of the higher righteousness he expects of his own followers (vv. 21–48).

**5:18** *smallest letter*. The Greek text has *iota*, the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet. It is the nearest equivalent to and cognate of Hebrew *yodh*, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet (Ps 119:73 title). *least stroke of a pen*. The Greek word for this phrase means “horn” and was used to designate the slight extension of certain letters of the Hebrew alphabet (somewhat like the bottom of a j).

**5:20** *Pharisees*. See note on 3:7. *teachers of the law*. See note on 2:4. *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2.

**5:21–22** *it was said . . . But I tell you*. See vv. 27–28, 31–32, 33–34, 38–39, 43–44. Jesus calls for moving beyond merely external obedience to the letter of the Law to keeping the true spirit of the Law, so that attitude and action are united. *murder*. Several Hebrew and Greek verbs mean “kill.” The ones used here and in Ex 20:13 mean specifically “murder.”

**5:22** *Raca*. May be related to the Aramaic word for “empty”

## The Sermon on the Mount

Mt 5:1–7:29



**T**he Sermon on the Mount is in effect King Jesus’ inaugural address, explaining the countercultural values of God’s kingdom and what Jesus expects of its members. It is the first of five great discourses in Matthew (chs. 5–7; 10; 13; 18; 24–25; see Introduction: Structure). It contains three types of material: (1) beatitudes, i.e., declarations of blessedness (5:1–12); (2) ethical admonitions (5:13–20; 6:1–7:23); and (3) contrasts between Jesus’ ethical teaching and Jewish interpretive traditions (5:21–48). The Sermon ends with a short parable stressing the importance of practicing what has just been taught (7:24–27) and an expression of amazement by the crowds at the authority with which Jesus spoke (7:28–29).

Opinion differs as to whether the Sermon is a summary of what Jesus taught on one occasion or a compilation of teachings presented on numerous occasions. Matthew possibly took a single sermon and expanded it with other relevant teachings of Jesus. While much of Matthew’s Sermon appears in the parallel sermon in Lk 6:17–49, 34 of the verses occur in other contexts in Luke.

The moral and ethical standard called for in the Sermon on the Mount is so high that some have dismissed the Sermon as being completely unrealistic or have projected its fulfillment to the future kingdom. There is no doubt, however, that Jesus (and Matthew) gave the Sermon as a standard for all Christians, realizing that its demands cannot be met in our own power but by Jesus’ power through a Spirit-filled community (1:23; 18:20; 28:19–20). It is also true that Jesus occasionally used hyperbole to make his point (see, e.g., note on 5:29–30).

who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>23</sup>"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

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

## Adultery

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

## Divorce

<sup>31</sup>"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'<sup>bn</sup> <sup>32</sup>But I tell you that anyone

<sup>5:22</sup> <sup>i</sup> Mt 18:9;  
Mk 9:43, 48;  
Lk 16:24; Jas 3:6  
<sup>5:27</sup> <sup>j</sup> Ex 20:14;  
Dt 5:18  
<sup>5:28</sup> <sup>k</sup> Pr 6:25;  
2Pe 2:14  
<sup>5:29</sup> <sup>l</sup> ver 30;  
Mt 18:6, 8, 9;  
Mk 9:42-47;  
Lk 17:2; Ro 14:21;  
1Co 8:13;  
5:20 <sup>m</sup> S ver 29  
<sup>5:31</sup> <sup>n</sup> Dt 24:1-4

<sup>5:32</sup> <sup>o</sup> S Lk 16:18  
<sup>5:33</sup> <sup>p</sup> Lev 19:12  
<sup>q</sup> Nu 30:2;  
Dt 23:21;  
Mt 23:16-22

<sup>5:34</sup> <sup>r</sup> Jas 5:12  
<sup>s</sup> Isa 66:1;  
Mt 23:22  
<sup>5:35</sup> <sup>t</sup> Ps 48:2  
<sup>5:37</sup> <sup>u</sup> Jas 5:12  
<sup>v</sup> Mt 6:13; 13:19;  
38; Jn 17:15;  
Eph 6:16; 2Th 3:3;  
1Jn 2:13, 14; 3:12;  
5:18, 19

<sup>5:38</sup> <sup>w</sup> Ex 21:24;  
Lev 24:20;  
Dt 19:21  
<sup>5:39</sup> <sup>x</sup> Lk 6:29;  
Ro 12:17, 19;  
1Pe 3:9  
<sup>5:42</sup> <sup>y</sup> Dt 15:8;  
Lk 6:30  
<sup>5:43</sup> <sup>z</sup> Lev 19:18;  
Mt 19:19; 22:39;  
Mk 12:31;  
Lk 10:27; Ro 13:9;  
Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8  
<sup>a</sup> Dt 23:6;  
Ps 139:21, 22

who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.<sup>o</sup>

## Oaths

<sup>33</sup>"Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath,'<sup>p</sup> but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.<sup>q</sup> <sup>34</sup>But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all:<sup>r</sup> either by heaven, for it is God's throne;<sup>s</sup> or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King.<sup>t</sup> <sup>36</sup>And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No';<sup>u</sup> anything beyond this comes from the evil one.<sup>cv</sup>

## Eye for Eye

<sup>38</sup>"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'<sup>d</sup> <sup>39</sup>But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.<sup>x</sup> <sup>40</sup>And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. <sup>41</sup>If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. <sup>42</sup>Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.<sup>y</sup>

## Love for Enemies

<sup>43</sup>"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor'<sup>ez</sup> and hate your enemy.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 27 Exodus 20:14    <sup>b</sup> 31 Deut. 24:1    <sup>c</sup> 37 Or from evil

<sup>d</sup> 38 Exodus 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21    <sup>e</sup> 43 Lev. 19:18

and mean "Empty-head!" court. Possibly the Sanhedrin (see note on Mk 14:55). *hell*. The Greek word is *ge(h)enna*, which derives its name from a deep ravine south of Jerusalem, the "Valley of (the Sons of) Hinnom" (Hebrew *ge' hinnom*). During the reigns of the wicked Ahaz and Manasseh, human sacrifices to the Ammonite god Molek were offered there. Josiah desecrated the valley because of the pagan worship there (2Ki 23:10; see Jer 7:31-32; 19:6). It was perhaps because of this desecration that the term came to be used for the place of final punishment (see notes on Isa 66:24; Jer 7:31).

**5:23-26** Two illustrations of dealing with anger (v. 22) by means of reconciliation, focused on the person who has wronged someone else taking the initiative to reconcile.

**5:25** Cf. Lk 12:57-59.

**5:26** *penny*. The smallest Roman copper coin (see note on Lk 12:59).

**5:28** *looks at a woman lustfully*. Not a passing glance but a willful, calculated stare that arouses sexual desire. According to Jesus this is a form of adultery even if it is only "in his heart" (see Job 31:1; 2Pe 2:14 and notes).

**5:29-30** Jesus is not teaching self-mutilation, for even a blind person can lust. What he is saying is that his followers should deal as drastically as necessary with sin, a point repeated in 18:8-9 cf. Mk 9:43-48.

**5:30** *hell*. See note on v. 22.

**5:32** *except for sexual immorality*. See note on 19:3. Neither Mk 10:11-12 nor Lk 16:18 mentions this exception, but both probably presuppose it.

**5:33-37** The OT recognized the useful role of swearing oaths in certain situations (even God swore oaths: see, e.g., Ge 22:16; Jos 5:6; Ps 89:3-4, 35; Isa 45:22; Jer 22:5; Eze 26:7; see also notes on Ge 9:13; 15:17; Dt 6:13; Jer 22:5; Heb 6:13)—common profanity is not in view. Another Jewish first-century source indicates that excessive and elaborate oath-taking was a problem for some (Philo, *Decalogue*, 92). Jesus urged such honesty and integrity in all human speech that swearing oaths in support of assertions or commitments would not be necessary.

**5:39** *resist*. Here it might mean in a court of law. *slaps*. More an insult (cf. 26:67) than an act of violence. The point is that it is better to be insulted even twice than to retaliate or take the matter to court.

**5:40** *shirt ... coat*. The first was an undergarment, the second a loose outer one. Since the outer garment was used to keep a person warm at night, OT law prohibited anyone from taking it even as collateral overnight (Ex 22:26-27; Dt 24:12-13).

**5:41** *one mile ... two miles*. A reference to a Roman soldier's prerogative to force a member of a subjugated people to carry his supplies.

**5:42** Probably not a general requirement to give to everyone who asks but a reference to the poor (cf. Dt 15:7-11; Ps 112:5, 9).

**5:43** *hate your enemy*. Words not found anywhere in the OT. However, hatred for one's enemies was an accepted part of the Jewish ethic at that time in some circles



<sup>44</sup>But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,<sup>b</sup> <sup>45</sup>that you may be children<sup>c</sup> of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.<sup>d</sup> <sup>46</sup>If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?<sup>e</sup> Are not even the tax collectors doing that? <sup>47</sup>And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? <sup>48</sup>Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.<sup>f</sup>

### Giving to the Needy

**6** “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them.<sup>9</sup> If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

<sup>2</sup>“So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. <sup>3</sup>But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your giving may be

**5:44** <sup>b</sup> Lk 6:27, 28; 23:34; Jn 15:20; Ac 7:60; Ro 8:35; 12:14; 1Co 4:12; 1Pe 2:23  
**5:45** <sup>c</sup> ver 9; Lk 6:35; S Ro 8:14  
<sup>d</sup> Job 25:3  
**5:46** <sup>e</sup> Lk 6:32  
**5:48** <sup>f</sup> Lev 19:2; 1Pe 1:16  
**6:1** <sup>9</sup> Mt 5:16; 23:5

**6:4** <sup>h</sup> ver 6, 18; Col 3:23, 24  
**6:5** <sup>i</sup> Mk 11:25; Lk 18:10-14  
**6:6** <sup>j</sup> 2Ki 4:33  
**6:7** <sup>k</sup> Ecc 5:2  
<sup>l</sup> 1Ki 18:26-29  
**6:8** <sup>m</sup> ver 32  
**6:9** <sup>n</sup> Jer 3:19; Mal 2:10; 1Pe 1:17  
**6:10** <sup>o</sup> S Mt 3:2  
P S Mt 26:39

in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.<sup>h</sup>

### Prayer

6:9-13pp — Lk 11:2-4

<sup>5</sup>“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing<sup>i</sup> in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. <sup>6</sup>But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father,<sup>j</sup> who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. <sup>7</sup>And when you pray, do not keep on babbling<sup>k</sup> like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.<sup>l</sup> <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need<sup>m</sup> before you ask him.

<sup>9</sup>“This, then, is how you should pray:

“‘Our Father<sup>n</sup> in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

<sup>10</sup>your kingdom<sup>o</sup> come,  
your will be done,<sup>p</sup>  
on earth as it is in heaven.

(cf., e.g., the Dead Sea Scrolls work *The Rule of the Community*, 1.4,10). See note on Lev 19:18.

**5:44** *love your enemies*. Though this explicit command is not specifically given in the OT, it is exemplified in commands such as that found in Ex 23:4–5 (see note there; cf. 2Ch 28:15). *pray*. Prayer is one of the practical ways love expresses itself (cf. Job 42:10; Ps 35:13–14 and notes).

**5:45** *be children of your Father in heaven*. That is, be truly like him by loving “your enemies” and praying for “those who persecute you” (v. 44; see v. 48 and note). *the evil and the good*. God shows his love to people without distinction.

**5:46** *tax collectors*. Local men employed by Roman tax contractors to collect taxes for them. Because they worked for Rome and often demanded unreasonable payments, the tax collectors gained a bad reputation and were generally hated and considered traitors (see notes on Mk 2:14–15; Lk 3:12).

**5:48** *Be perfect*. Or “complete” and “whole” (cf. 19:20–21). Jesus sets up the high ideal of perfect or complete love—including both attitude and action (see vv. 43–47). This is God’s high standard for his people, empowered by the presence of Jesus in their midst (1:23; 18:20; 28:20).

**6:1** *practice ... righteousness*. This verse introduces the discussion of three acts of righteousness: (1) giving to the poor (vv. 2–4), (2) praying (vv. 5–15) and (3) fasting (vv. 16–18). These are three pillars of Jewish piety. Jesus’ concern here is with the motives that fuel these important acts. *reward from your Father*. The kingdom itself is the reward in view here (see article, p. 1648).

**6:2** *when you give*. Not “if you give.” Jesus presupposes the disciples’ giving to the poor. *announce it with trumpets*. Perhaps a reference to the noise made by coins as they were thrown into the trumpet-shaped treasury receptacles (see note on Mk 12:41). Or the phrase may be used figuratively to mean “make a big show of it.” *hypocrites*. The Greek word refers to a play-actor. Here it is used metaphorically to point to those who fake being pious. *their reward in full*. The honor they receive from people is all the reward they get.

**6:3** *do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing*. Not to be taken literally, since this would be impossible, but as a way of emphasizing that one should not call attention to one’s giving. Self-glorification is always a present danger.

**6:6** *Jesus’ followers are not to make a show of their praying*, in contrast to “the hypocrites” (v. 5). This does not mean that all prayer should be private, as the plurals “our” and “us” in vv. 9–13 indicate. *room*. The Greek word here probably means “storeroom,” because unlike most of the rooms in the house, it had a door that could be shut.

**6:7** *babbling like pagans*. They used long lists of the names of their gods in their prayers, hoping that by constantly repeating them they would call on the name of the god that could help them. Jesus is not necessarily condemning all long prayers. He is teaching against using meaningless verbiage and repetition in prayer that implies that God is slow to hear.

**6:9–13** Commonly known as “The Lord’s Prayer.” The prayer nestles at the literary center of the Sermon on the Mount, and the surrounding texts in the Sermon echo the prayer’s concerns. It contains six petitions, three relating more directly to God (vv. 9–10) and three to Jesus’ disciples (vv. 11–13). The order of these petitions is significant and intentional. A similar prayer in Lk 11:2–4 occurs in a different setting.

**6:9** *hallowed*. God is already holy (see Lev 11:44 and note; 1Pe 1:15), so the prayer is not that God be made holy but that he be regarded as holy. By his saving and judging acts in history he proves himself holy (see Lev 10:3; Eze 36:23 and notes). This petition is that he so achieve his saving purposes in the world that his holiness is displayed before the eyes of the world’s people and acknowledged by them—which will happen only as his kingdom fully arrives. *name*. See notes on Ps 5:11; Eze 20:9.

**6:10** *your kingdom come*. Not in the sense of to “come” into existence—it has already arrived in Jesus’ life and ministry

<sup>11</sup>Give us today our daily bread.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>12</sup>And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our  
debtors.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation,<sup>as</sup>  
but deliver us from the evil one.<sup>b†</sup>

<sup>14</sup>For if you forgive other people when  
they sin against you, your heavenly Father  
will also forgive you.<sup>u</sup> <sup>15</sup>But if you do  
not forgive others their sins, your Father  
will not forgive your sins.<sup>v</sup>

## Fasting

<sup>16</sup>“When you fast,<sup>w</sup> do not look somber<sup>x</sup>  
as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure  
their faces to show others they are fasting.  
Truly I tell you, they have received their  
reward in full. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil  
on your head and wash your face,<sup>18</sup> so that  
it will not be obvious to others that you  
are fasting, but only to your Father, who is  
unseen; and your Father, who sees what is  
done in secret, will reward you.<sup>y</sup>

## Treasures in Heaven

6:22,23pp — Lk 11:34-36

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures  
on earth,<sup>z</sup> where moths and vermin  
destroy,<sup>a</sup> and where thieves break in and  
steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up for yourselves treasures  
in heaven,<sup>b</sup> where moths and vermin  
do not destroy, and where thieves do  
not break in and steal.<sup>c</sup> <sup>21</sup>For where your  
treasure is, there your heart will be also.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>22</sup>“The eye is the lamp of the body. If  
your eyes are healthy,<sup>e</sup> your whole body

6:11 <sup>a</sup>Pr 30:8  
6:12 <sup>f</sup>Mt 18:21-35  
6:13 <sup>g</sup>Jas 1:13  
<sup>h</sup>S Mt 5:37  
6:14 <sup>i</sup>Mt 18:21-35; Mk 11:25; 26; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13  
6:15 <sup>j</sup>Mt 18:35  
6:16 <sup>k</sup>Lev 16:29; 31; 23:27-32; Nu 29:7  
<sup>l</sup>Isa 58:5; Zec 7:5; 8:19  
6:18 <sup>m</sup>Yer 4, 6  
6:19 <sup>n</sup>Pr 23:4; Lk 12:16-21; Heb 13:5  
<sup>o</sup>S Jas 5:2, 3  
6:20 <sup>p</sup>Mt 19:21; Lk 12:33; 16:9; 18:22; 1Ti 6:19  
<sup>q</sup>Lk 12:33  
6:21 <sup>r</sup>Lk 12:34

6:24 <sup>s</sup>Lk 16:13

6:25 <sup>t</sup>ver 27, 28, 31, 34; Lk 10:41; 12:11, 22

6:26 <sup>u</sup>Job 38:41; Ps 104:21; 136:25; 145:15; 147:9

<sup>v</sup>Mt 10:29-31

6:27 <sup>w</sup>Ps 39:5

6:29 <sup>x</sup>1Ki 10:4-7

6:30 <sup>y</sup>Mt 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Lk 12:28

will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eyes are  
unhealthy,<sup>d</sup> your whole body will be full  
of darkness. If then the light within you  
is darkness, how great is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two masters. Either  
you will hate the one and love the other,  
or you will be devoted to the one and de-  
spise the other. You cannot serve both  
God and money.<sup>e</sup>

## Do Not Worry

6:25-33pp — Lk 12:22-31

<sup>25</sup>“Therefore I tell you, do not worry<sup>f</sup>  
about your life, what you will eat or drink;  
or about your body, what you will wear. Is  
not life more than food, and the body more  
than clothes? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air;  
they do not sow or reap or store away in  
barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds  
them.<sup>g</sup> Are you not much more valuable  
than they?<sup>h</sup> <sup>27</sup>Can any one of you by wor-  
rying add a single hour to your life?<sup>i</sup>

<sup>28</sup>“And why do you worry about clothes?  
See how the flowers of the field grow.  
They do not labor or spin. <sup>29</sup>Yet I tell you  
that not even Solomon in all his splen-  
dor<sup>j</sup> was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>If  
that is how God clothes the grass of the  
field, which is here today and tomorrow  
is thrown into the fire, will he not much  
more clothe you — you of little faith?<sup>k</sup> <sup>31</sup>So

<sup>a</sup> 13 The Greek for *temptation* can also mean *testing*.

<sup>b</sup> 13 Or *from evil*; some late manuscripts *one, / for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

<sup>c</sup> 22 The Greek for *healthy* here implies *generous*.

<sup>d</sup> 23 The Greek for *unhealthy* here implies *stingy*. <sup>e</sup> 27 Or *single cubit to your height*

(see 3:2; Lk 17:21 and notes)—but to “come” more and more completely until its full and final consummation. *your will be done*. Logically follows “your kingdom come.” The NIV line division and punctuation suggest that “on earth as it is in heaven” be read with each of the three preceding petitions. **6:11** That is, meet our needs “each day” (Lk 11:3; see Ex 16:4 and note), although the meaning of the Greek word translated “daily” is uncertain.

**6:12** *debts*. Moral debts, i.e., sins (see note on Lk 11:4).

**6:13** *lead us not into temptation*. That is, do not lead us through trials so deep that they would tempt us to be unfaithful to you. God does not tempt (in the sense of enticing to sin; see Jas 1:13 and note; see also 1Co 10:13 and note). *the evil one*. Satan (see 13:19 and note), or it could be a reference to “evil” more generally; i.e., evil circumstances (see the first part of the second NIV text note). For the second part of the NIV text note, cf. 1Ch 29:10-11.

**6:15** *forgive ... forgive*. See Eph 4:32 and note.

**6:16** *fast*. See notes on Mk 2:18; Lk 18:12. Jesus assumes his disciples will fast (using “When” vs. “If;” see note on v. 2); what he condemns is ostentation in fasting. *hypocrites*. See note on v. 2. *their reward in full*. See note on v. 2.

**6:17** *put oil on your head and wash your face*. That is, maintain your regular appearance. Jews routinely put ashes on their heads when fasting (Isa 58:5).

**6:19-21** The dangers of riches are often mentioned in the NT (e.g., v. 24; 13:22; 19:22; Mk 10:17-30; Lk 12:16-21; 1Ti

6:9-10, 17-19; Heb 13:5; Jas 5:2-3), but nowhere are riches condemned in and of themselves. What Jesus condemns here is greed and the hoarding of material possessions (cf. v. 24).

**6:19** *moths and vermin*. Representative of all agents and processes that destroy worldly possessions. *break in and steal*. Houses in the Holy Land had walls made of mud bricks and could be broken into easily.

**6:20** *treasures in heaven*. Anything done in this life that has eternal value will be rewarded. Cf. “rich toward God” (Lk 12:21).

**6:21** See Lk 12:34. *heart*. See note on 5:8.

**6:22** *The eye is the lamp of the body*. It lets in light to illumine the body. *If your eyes are healthy*. If you recognize the folly of storing up wealth (v. 19)—or are generous with your money (see NIV text note). *whole body*. Entire person.

**6:23** *your eyes are unhealthy*. If you are blind to the deceitfulness of wealth—or are stingy with your money (see NIV text note).

**6:24** See Lk 16:13; Jas 4:4.

**6:25** *do not worry*. See Php 4:6 and note. *worry*. Undue anxiety, not a legitimate concern to provide for one’s daily needs (cf. Lk 10:41-42; 2Th 3:6-12).

**6:27** *add a single hour*. See NIV text note. The phrase could also mean “add a single step (cubit) to life’s journey.”

**6:30** *thrown into the fire*. Grass was commonly used to heat clay ovens at that time. *you of little faith*. Used by Jesus in Matthew to describe disciples (8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20; cf. Lk 12:28).



do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' <sup>32</sup>For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.<sup>1</sup> <sup>33</sup>But seek first his kingdom<sup>m</sup> and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.<sup>n</sup> <sup>34</sup>Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

### Judging Others

7:3-5pp — Lk 6:41,42

**7** "Do not judge, or you too will be judged.<sup>o</sup> <sup>2</sup>For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.<sup>p</sup>

<sup>3</sup>"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup>How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take

**6:32** <sup>1</sup>ver 8  
**6:33** <sup>m</sup> S Mt 3:2  
<sup>n</sup> Ps 37:4;  
Mt 19:29  
**7:1** <sup>o</sup> Lk 6:37;  
Ro 14:4, 10, 13;  
1Co 4:5; 5:12;  
Jas 4:11, 12  
**7:2** <sup>p</sup> Eze 35:11;  
Mk 4:24; Lk 6:38;  
Ro 2:1

**7:7** <sup>q</sup> 1Ki 3:5;  
Mt 18:19; 21:22;  
Jn 14:13, 14; 15:7;  
16:16-23, 24;  
Jas 1:5-8; 4:2;  
3:5; 16; 1Jn 3:22;  
5:14, 15  
**7:8** <sup>r</sup> Pr 8:17;  
Jer 29:12, 13

the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

<sup>6</sup>"Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

### Ask, Seek, Knock

7:7-11pp — Lk 11:9-13

<sup>7</sup>"Ask and it will be given to you;<sup>a</sup> seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup>For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds;<sup>r</sup> and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

<sup>9</sup>"Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup>Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? <sup>11</sup>If you, then, though you are evil, know how

**6:33** The heart of the matter. *kingdom*. See note on 3:2. *his righteousness*. The righteous life that God requires, as the content of the Sermon emphasizes (see, e.g., 5:6,10,20; 6:1). Alternatively, it could refer to God's fulfillment of his promises to bring restoration (and as parallel to "his kingdom").

**6:34** Each day has enough trouble of its own. So live one day at a time.

**7:1** The Christian is not to judge hypocritically or self-righteously, as can be seen from the context (v. 5). The same thought is expressed in 13:24-30, where judging people's eternal destinies is disallowed (cf. Ro 2:1). To obey Christ's commands in this chapter, we must first evaluate our own lives (7:3-5). Then we can soberly discern a person's character—whether one is a "dog" (v. 6) or a false prophet (v. 15), or whether one's life shows fruit (v. 16). Scripture repeatedly exhorts believers to evaluate carefully (Jn 7:24) and choose between good and bad people and things (sexually immoral, 1Co 5:9; those who masquerade as an-

gels of light, 2Co 11:14; dogs, Php 3:2; false prophets, 1Jn 4:1). The Christian is to "test them all" (1Th 5:21). See article below.

**7:3-5** Jesus rebukes hypocritical judging of others without discerning and addressing one's own sins.

**7:3** *speck of sawdust ... plank*. An example of hyperbole in the teachings of Jesus (cf. 19:24). Its purpose is to drive home a point (see Lk 6:41 and note).

**7:5** *hypocrite*. See note on 6:2.

**7:6** Teaching about the kingdom (the "pearls") should be given in accordance with the spiritual receptivity of the learners. *dogs ... pigs*. Those who have shown themselves to be so hostile to the Christian message that approaching them with it proves counterproductive.

**7:7-11** See note on Lk 11:5-13.

**7:7** *Ask ... seek ... knock*. Greek present imperatives are used here, indicating continual or repeated asking, seeking and knocking. Persistent prayer is being emphasized (cf. Jas 4:2-3; cf. also Ge 32:26 and note).

**7:11** *good gifts*. See Lk 11:13 and note.

## Christians and Judging Others

Mt 7:1



It has been suggested that Mt 7:1 has replaced Jn 3:16 as the best-known Bible verse, even by unbelievers, but that few realize its context. The Greek verb behind "judge" here can mean to analyze, discern, render a verdict, condemn or treat overly harshly. Christians regularly have to analyze and discern, determining what is good and evil, right and wrong. Even when that verdict requires the condemnation of some behavior, it should not be rendered too severely.

Jesus' words here do not mean that we are never to sift the true from the false or the helpful from the destructive. Even as we are to recognize and deal with our own sins and shortcomings, so we must deal with others', but with a gentle spirit (Mt 7:3-5). After all, it requires judgment as well to recognize who the dogs and pigs are of v. 6 and avoid casting one's "pearls" (or what is holy) in front of them. But it is not our job to try to eradicate them in this age (Mt 13:24-30); that is God's role on Judgment Day (Ro 12:19). Only he could ever do it completely fairly.

to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts<sup>5</sup> to those who ask him!<sup>12</sup> So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you,<sup>1</sup> for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.<sup>4</sup>

### The Narrow and Wide Gates

<sup>13</sup>“Enter through the narrow gate.” For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup>But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

### True and False Prophets

<sup>15</sup>“Watch out for false prophets.” They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.<sup>16</sup> By their fruit you will recognize them.<sup>17</sup> Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?<sup>17</sup> Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot 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> Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

### True and False Disciples

<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’<sup>c</sup> will enter the kingdom of heaven,<sup>d</sup> but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.<sup>e</sup> <sup>22</sup>Many will say to me on that day,<sup>f</sup> ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’<sup>g</sup> <sup>23</sup>Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’<sup>h</sup>

**7:11** <sup>5</sup> Jas 1:17  
**7:12** <sup>1</sup> Lk 6:31  
<sup>4</sup> Ro 13:8-10;  
Gal 5:14  
**7:13** <sup>13</sup> Lk 13:24;  
Jn 10:7,9  
**7:15** <sup>15</sup> Jer 23:16;  
Mt 24:24;  
Lk 6:26; 2Pe 2:1;  
1Jn 4:1; Rev 16:13  
<sup>16</sup> Eze 22:27;  
Ac 20:29  
**7:16** <sup>16</sup> Mt 12:33;  
Lk 6:44; <sup>2</sup> Jas 3:12  
**7:18** <sup>18</sup> Lk 6:43  
**7:19** <sup>19</sup> Mt 3:10  
**7:21** <sup>21</sup> Hos 8:2;  
Mt 25:11;  
Jn 13:13;  
1Co 12:3  
<sup>d</sup> S Mt 3:2  
<sup>e</sup> Mt 12:50;  
Ro 2:13; Jas 1:22;  
1Jn 3:18  
**7:22** <sup>22</sup> S Mt 10:15  
<sup>9</sup> Lk 10:20;  
Ac 19:13;  
1Co 13:1-3  
**7:23** <sup>23</sup> Ps 6:8;  
Mt 25:12, 41;  
Lk 13:25-27

**7:24** <sup>24</sup> Jer 21;  
Jas 1:22-25  
**7:28** <sup>28</sup> Mt 11:1;  
13:53; 19:1; 26:1  
<sup>k</sup> Mt 13:54; 22:33;  
Mk 1:22; 6:2;  
11:18; Lk 4:32;  
Jn 7:46  
**8:2** <sup>2</sup> Lev 13:45;  
Mt 10:8; 11:5;  
26:6; Lk 5:12;  
17:12 <sup>m</sup> Mt 9:18;  
15:25; 18:26;  
20:20  
**8:4** <sup>4</sup> Mt 9:30;  
12:16; Mk 5:43;  
7:36; 8:30;  
Lk 4:41; 9 Lk 17:14  
<sup>p</sup> Lev 14:2-32

### The Wise and Foolish Builders

7:24-27pp — Lk 6:47-49

<sup>24</sup>“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice<sup>1</sup> is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup>The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup>But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup>The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

<sup>28</sup>When Jesus had finished saying these things,<sup>1</sup> the crowds were amazed at his teaching,<sup>k</sup> <sup>29</sup>because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

### Jesus Heals a Man With Leprosy

8:2-4pp — Mk 1:40-44; Lk 5:12-14

**8** When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. <sup>2</sup>A man with leprosy<sup>a1</sup> came and knelt before him<sup>m</sup> and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.”

<sup>3</sup>Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. <sup>4</sup>Then Jesus said to him, “See that you don’t tell anyone.<sup>n</sup> But go, show yourself to the priest<sup>o</sup> and offer the gift Moses commanded,<sup>p</sup> as a testimony to them.”

<sup>a</sup> 2 The Greek word traditionally translated *leprosy* was used for various diseases affecting the skin.

**7:12** The so-called Golden Rule is found in negative form in rabbinic Judaism and also in Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. It occurred in various forms in Greek and Roman ethical teaching. Jesus stated it in positive form. *in everything*. Probably refers to the teaching of the entire Sermon up to this point. *sums up*. Cf. 22:36–40; Ro 13:8–10 and relevant notes. *the Law and the Prophets*. See note on 5:17.

**7:13–27** These verses present a clear choice for Jesus’ followers by offering the example of two ways (vv. 13–14), two trees and two fruits (vv. 15–23), and two foundations (vv. 24–27).

**7:13** *narrow gate*. The gate that leads into the kingdom of heaven is synonymous with “life” (v. 14). *destruction*. Separation from God in hell.

**7:15** *false prophets*. People who have not been sent by God but who claim that they have (see 24:24; Jer 23:16 and note).

**7:19** See Jn 15:6 and note; cf. Mt 3:10.

**7:20** Cf. Jn 15:7 and note.

**7:21** *Lord*. Here means more than merely “sir” or “master” since Jesus is the one who makes the final decision about a person’s eternal destiny. *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2. *does the will of my Father*. The deciding factor as to who enters the kingdom (see 25:31–46; also Mk 3:35 and note).

**7:22** *that day*. The day of judgment (cf. Mal 3:17–18). *proph-*

*esy*. In the Bible this verb primarily means to give a message from God, not necessarily to predict. *demons*. See note on Mk 1:23.

**7:24–27** This parable ends the Sermon on the Mount and also the parallel sermon in Luke (6:47–49).

**7:24** *rock*. Within the parable, refers to a firm foundation. The Bible often speaks metaphorically of God or Christ as a “rock” (see Ge 49:24; Ps 18:2; 1Co 10:4 and notes).

**7:25** *rain came down*. Israel is known for its torrential rains that often cause disastrous floods.

**7:28** *were amazed*. A common reaction by Jesus’ listeners to his teaching—both its presentation and its authority (see note on Mk 1:22).

**7:29** *authority*. The teachers of the law quoted other rabbis to support their own teaching (see note on 2:4), but Jesus spoke with divine authority (see 28:18; cf. Jn 7:46).

**8:1** *mountainside*. See 5:1 and note.

**8:2** *leprosy*. See NIV text note; see also note on Lev 13:2. *Lord*. See note on 7:21. *make me clean*. Leprosy made a person ceremonially unclean (Lev 13:3,8,11,20) and socially an outcast (Lev 13:45–46).

**8:3** *touched the man*. See note on Mk 1:41.

**8:4** *don’t tell anyone*. Jesus did not wish to stir up the popular, but mistaken, expectations that a wonder-working

## MATTHEW'S FULFILLMENT QUOTATIONS

| TEN FULFILLMENT STATEMENTS |   | OTHER FULFILLMENT CITATIONS |  |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|
| 1:22 – 23                  | Jesus' virgin birth fulfills Isaiah 7:14.                                   | 2:5 – 6                     | Jesus' Bethlehem birth fulfills Micah 5:2.                         |
| 2:15                       | The escape to and return from Egypt fulfills Hosea 11:1.                    | 3:3                         | John the Baptist fulfills Isaiah 40:3.                             |
| 2:17 – 18                  | The murder of the male infants of Bethlehem fulfills Jeremiah 31:15.        | 5:17                        | Jesus fulfills the Law and the Prophets.                           |
| 2:23                       | Jesus' childhood in Nazareth fulfills an unknown prophecy.*                 | 10:34 – 35                  | The division of families fulfills Micah 7:6.                       |
| 4:14 – 16                  | Jesus establishes his ministry in Galilee, fulfilling Isaiah 9:2.           | 11:2 – 6                    | Jesus performs Messianic signs, fulfilling Isaiah 35:5; 61:1, etc. |
| 8:17                       | Jesus heals disease, fulfilling Isaiah 53:4.                                | 11:10                       | John the Baptist fulfills Malachi 3:1.                             |
| 12:17 – 21                 | Jesus fulfills the role of the Servant of Isaiah 42:2.                      | 13:14 – 15                  | Parables conceal the truth from the hard-hearted (Isa 6:9).        |
| 13:35                      | Jesus speaks in parables, fulfilling Psalm 78:2; 2 Chronicles 29:30.        | 15:7 – 9                    | Israel's disobedience fulfills Isaiah 29:13.                       |
| 21:4 – 5                   | Jesus enters Jerusalem as the humble king of Zechariah 9:9.                 | 21:13                       | The temple is a den of robbers (Isa 56:7; Jer 7:11).               |
| 27:9 – 10                  | Jesus is betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, fulfilling Zechariah 11:12 – 13. | 21:16                       | Praise from the lips of children is predicted in Psalm 8:2.        |
|                            |   | 21:42                       | The rejected stone becomes the cornerstone (Ps 118:22).            |
|                            |   | 26:31                       | The shepherd is struck down and the sheep scattered (Zec 13:7).    |

\*“He would be called a Nazarene” may be a reference to the “Branch” (*nešer*) of Isaiah 11:1, or a general statement of the humble origins of the Messiah.

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## The Faith of the Centurion

8:5-13pp — Lk 7:1-10

<sup>5</sup>When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. <sup>6</sup>“Lord,” he said, “my servant lies at home paralyzed,<sup>9</sup> suffering terribly.”

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, “**Shall I come and heal him?**”

<sup>8</sup>The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.” <sup>9</sup>For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers un-

8:6 <sup>9</sup>S Mt 4:24  
8:8 <sup>1</sup>Ps 107:20

8:10 <sup>8</sup>Mt 15:28  
8:11 <sup>1</sup>Ps 107:3;  
Isa 49:12; 59:19;  
Mal 1:11 <sup>4</sup>Lk 13:29  
8:12 <sup>9</sup>Mt 13:38

der me. I tell this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and that one, ‘Come,’ and he comes. I say to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

<sup>10</sup>When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, “**Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.**” <sup>11</sup>**I say to you that many will come from the east and the west,<sup>1</sup> and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.** <sup>12</sup>**But the subjects of the kingdom<sup>v</sup> will be thrown outside, into the darkness,**

Messiah would soon arise as king of the Jews to deliver them from the Roman yoke. For similar instructions, see 9:30; 12:16; 16:20 and note; 17:9. See also Introduction to Mark: Emphases (item 4). *show yourself to the priest*. See note on Lk 5:14. *a testimony to them*. See note on Mk 1:44. *them*. The priests and the people.

**8:5–13** Although the incident in Jn 4:46–54 is similar, it probably is a separate episode in the life of Jesus.

**8:5** *Capernaum*. See note on 4:13. *centurion*. A Roman military officer in charge of about 100 soldiers. In Luke’s account (Lk 7:1–5) Jewish elders and friends of the centurion came to Jesus on his behalf, but Matthew does not mention these intermediaries.

**8:7** *Shall I come and heal him?* The Greek line can be rendered as either a statement or a question. The Greek grammar suggests a question with its unusual emphasis on “I.” If so, Jesus questions departing from his God-given ministry to the “lost

sheep of Israel” (15:24; cf. 10:6), similar to his initial hesitance to heal the daughter of a Canaanite woman (15:21–28).

**8:8** *I do not deserve to have you come under my roof*. In Greek the words “I do not deserve” are the same as those used by John the Baptist in 3:11 (“I am not worthy”). The entire statement reveals how highly the centurion regarded Jesus. He may also be aware that a Jew would be reluctant to enter a Gentile’s home (v. 6).

**8:10** *he was amazed*. See note on Lk 7:9. In his incarnate state Jesus experienced human emotions. *such great faith*. See note on Lk 7:9.

**8:11** The universality of the gospel is one of Matthew’s themes (see Introduction: Recipients). *feast ... in the kingdom of heaven*. The eschatological Messianic banquet that symbolizes the blessings of an intimate relationship with God (see Isa 25:6; Lk 14:15; Rev 19:9 and notes).

**8:12** *subjects of the kingdom*. Jews who thought their

where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”<sup>w</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would.”<sup>x</sup> And his servant was healed at that moment.

### Jesus Heals Many

8:14-16pp — Mk 1:29-34; Lk 4:38-41

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

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

“He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases.”<sup>aa</sup>

### The Cost of Following Jesus

8:19-22pp — Lk 9:57-60

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

<sup>20</sup>Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man<sup>c</sup> has no place to lay his head.”

<sup>21</sup>Another disciple said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

<sup>22</sup>But Jesus told him, “Follow me,<sup>d</sup> and let the dead bury their own dead.”

8:12 <sup>w</sup> Mt 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk 13:28  
8:13 <sup>x</sup> S Mt 9:22  
8:16 <sup>y</sup> S Mt 4:23, 24

8:17 <sup>z</sup> S Mt 1:22  
<sup>a</sup> Isa 53:4

8:18 <sup>b</sup> Mk 4:35  
8:20 <sup>c</sup> Da 7:13; Mt 12:8, 32, 40; 16:13, 27, 28; 17:9; 19:28; Mk 2:10; 8:31

8:22 <sup>d</sup> S Mt 4:19

8:26 <sup>e</sup> S Mt 6:30  
<sup>f</sup> Ps 65:7; 89:9; 107:29

8:28 <sup>g</sup> S Mt 4:24  
8:29 <sup>h</sup> Jdg 11:12; 2Sa 16:10; 1Ki 17:18; Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34; Jn 2:4  
<sup>i</sup> 2Pe 2:4

### Jesus Calms the Storm

8:23-27pp — Mk 4:36-41; Lk 8:22-25

8:23-27Ref — Mt 14:22-33

<sup>23</sup>Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup>Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. <sup>25</sup>The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!”

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

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

### Jesus Restores Two Demon-Possessed Men

8:28-34pp — Mk 5:1-17; Lk 8:26-37

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

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

<sup>32</sup>He said to them, “Go!” So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole

<sup>a</sup> 17 Isaiah 53:4 (see Septuagint) <sup>b</sup> 28 Some manuscripts *Gergesenes*; other manuscripts *Gerasenes*

Judaism was an inherited passport for entrance into the kingdom (see 3:9–10 and note on 3:9). *outside, into the darkness*. Hell. *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. A phrase used only in Matthew’s Gospel (here; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30)—though an almost identical phrase occurs in Lk 13:28—to describe the horrible suffering (the sorrow and anger of regret) experienced in hell.

**8:14** *Peter’s mother-in-law*. See notes on Mk 1:30; Lk 4:38.

**8:15** *wait on him*. On Jesus. Mk 1:31 and Lk 4:39 have “them.” Matthew focuses on serving Jesus specifically, possibly to emphasize service as a discipleship trait (as in 25:44; 27:55; cf. 20:28).

**8:16** *evening*. See Lk 4:40 and note. *demon-possessed*. See notes on Mk 1:23; Lk 4:33.

**8:17** In applying Isa 53:4 to Jesus, Matthew shows Jesus to be the servant of the Lord (see note on 12:18). *bore*. Bore the burden of. The diseases were not transferred to Jesus in the sense of making him ill.

**8:18** *the other side*. The east side.

**8:19** *teacher of the law*. See note on 2:4.

**8:20** *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31.

**8:21** *bury my father*. See note on Lk 9:59.

**8:22** *let the dead bury their own dead*. Let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead. The time of Jesus’ ministry was short and demanded full attention and commitment. This statement stresses the radical demands of Jesus’ discipleship, since Jews placed great importance

on the duty of children to bury their parents.

**8:23–27** This passage emphasizes Jesus’ power over creation, and more specifically over the sea, a symbol of chaos (see note on Mk 4:35–41).

**8:24** *furious storm*. See note on Mk 4:37. *But Jesus was sleeping*. See note on Mk 4:38.

**8:26** *little faith*. See 6:30 and note.

**8:27** *What kind of man is this?* See note on Mk 4:41.

**8:28** *region of the Gadarenes*. The region around the city of Gadara, six miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee (but see NIV text note). Mark and Luke identify the region by the capital city Gerasa, located about 35 miles southeast of the Sea (see note on Lk 8:26). *two*. Mk 5:2 and Lk 8:27 (see note there) mention only one demon-possessed man. *demon-possessed*. See notes on Mk 1:23; Lk 4:33.

**8:29** *Son of God*. The same title applied to Jesus by the devil at 4:3–6. *appointed time*. The time of their judgment (see notes on Mk 5:10; Lk 8:31).

**8:30** *herd of pigs*. Many Gentiles lived in Galilee. Normally Jews did not raise pigs, since they were considered the most ceremonially unclean of all animals (cf. Lev 11:7).

**8:32** Though Jesus seemingly consented to the demons’ request, the pigs carried the demons into the depths of the sea—perhaps symbolic of divine judgment. Luke’s account refers to the “Abyss” (see Lk 8:31 and note; see also Rev 9:1 and note).



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

### Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

9:2-8pp — Mk 2:3-12; Lk 5:18-26

**9** Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town.<sup>k</sup> <sup>2</sup>Some men brought to him a paralyzed man,<sup>l</sup> lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith,<sup>m</sup> he said to the man, “Take heart,<sup>n</sup> son; your sins are forgiven.”<sup>o</sup>

<sup>3</sup>At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, “This fellow is blaspheming!”<sup>p</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Knowing their thoughts,<sup>q</sup> Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? <sup>5</sup>Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk?’ <sup>6</sup>But I want you to know that the Son of Man<sup>r</sup> has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your mat and go home.”

<sup>7</sup>Then the man got up and went home. <sup>8</sup>When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God,<sup>s</sup> who had given such authority to man.

### The Calling of Matthew

9:9-13pp — Mk 2:14-17; Lk 5:27-32

<sup>9</sup>As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,”<sup>t</sup> he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

**8:34** <sup>1</sup>Lk 5:8; Ac 16:39  
**9:1** <sup>2</sup>Mt 4:13  
**9:2** <sup>3</sup>Lk Mt 4:24  
<sup>4</sup>Mt 5:22  
<sup>5</sup>Jn 16:33  
<sup>6</sup>Lk 7:48  
**9:3** <sup>7</sup>Mt 26:65; Jn 10:33  
**9:4** <sup>8</sup>Ps 94:11; Mt 12:25; Lk 6:8; 9:47; 11:17; Jn 2:25  
**9:6** <sup>9</sup>Lk Mt 8:20  
**9:8** <sup>10</sup>Mt 5:16; 15:31; Lk 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 23:47; Jn 15:8; Ac 4:21; 11:18; 21:20  
**9:9** <sup>11</sup>Lk Mt 4:19

**9:11** <sup>12</sup>Mt 11:19; Lk 5:30; 15:2; 19:7; Gal 2:15  
**9:13** <sup>13</sup>Hos 6:6; Mic 6:6-8; Mt 12:7  
<sup>14</sup>Lk 19:10; TTI 1:15  
**9:14** <sup>15</sup>Lk Mt 3:1; Mt 11:18, 19; Lk 18:12  
**9:15** <sup>16</sup>Jn 3:29  
<sup>17</sup>Ac 13:2, 3; 14:23  
**9:18** <sup>18</sup>Lk Mt 8:2  
<sup>19</sup>CS Mk 5:23

<sup>10</sup>While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. <sup>11</sup>When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”<sup>u</sup>

<sup>12</sup>On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. <sup>13</sup>But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’<sup>av</sup> For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”<sup>w</sup>

### Jesus Questioned About Fasting

9:14-17pp — Mk 2:18-22; Lk 5:33-39

<sup>14</sup>Then John’s<sup>x</sup> disciples came and asked him, “How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often,<sup>y</sup> but your disciples do not fast?”

<sup>15</sup>Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them?<sup>z</sup> The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>16</sup>“No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. <sup>17</sup>Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

### Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman

9:18-26pp — Mk 5:22-43; Lk 8:41-56

<sup>18</sup>While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him<sup>b</sup> and said, “My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her,<sup>c</sup> and she

<sup>a</sup> 13 Hosea 6:6

**8:34** *pleaded with him to leave.* They were probably more concerned about their financial loss than about the deliverance of the miserable demon-possessed men (see note on Mk 5:17).

**9:1** *crossed over.* The northern end of the Sea of Galilee. *his own town.* Capernaum (see note on 4:13).

**9:2** *their faith.* The faith of the men who carried him as well as the faith of the paralyzed man. *your sins are forgiven.* Since sin and illness were often connected in the ancient world, Jesus might be addressing (though not affirming; see Jn 9:1-3) what many in his audience assumed was the core issue (sin) for the man’s illness.

**9:3** *blaspheming.* Here the term includes usurping God’s prerogative to forgive sins (see notes on Mk 2:7; Lk 5:21).

**9:5-6** See notes on Mk 2:9-10; 14:64.

**9:6** *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31.

**9:8** *praised God, who had given such authority to man.* By emphasizing Jesus’ humanity in this final verse of the passage (already having emphasized Jesus’ divine prerogative to forgive in 9:2), Matthew shows that Jesus represents restored humanity.

**9:9** *Matthew.* Mark and Luke call this disciple Levi in the parallel accounts (but see also Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15; Ac 1:13). Jews

often had more than one name to distinguish them, especially if one of the names was very common, as Levi was. *tax collector’s booth.* See note on Mk 2:14. *got up and followed him.* See note on Lk 5:28; see also photo and caption, p. 1633. **9:10** *tax collectors.* See notes on 5:46; Mk 2:16. *sinners.* See note on Mk 2:15.

**9:11** *Pharisees.* See note on Mk 2:16.

**9:12** *not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.* A common proverb (see note on Lk 5:31).

**9:13** *I desire mercy, not sacrifice.* Jesus cites Hos 6:6 here and at 12:7 to elevate mercy as a central value of the kingdom (see note on 12:7; see also 23:23 and note). *I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.* See note on Mk 2:17.

**9:14-15** See notes on Mk 2:18-20; Lk 5:33.

**9:17** *new wineskins.* In ancient times goatskins were used to hold wine (see Jos 9:4 and note). As the fresh grape juice fermented, the wine would expand, and the new wineskin would stretch. But a used skin, already stretched, would break (see note on Job 32:19; see also photo, p. 344). Jesus brings a newness that cannot be confined within the old forms.

**9:18** *synagogue leader.* His name was Jairus (see notes on Mk 5:22; Lk 8:41). *has just died.* Mk 5:23 has “is dying,” but

will live.”<sup>19</sup> Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

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

<sup>22</sup>Jesus turned and saw her. **“Take heart,<sup>e</sup> daughter,”** he said, **“your faith has healed you.”<sup>f</sup>** And the woman was healed at that moment.<sup>g</sup>

<sup>23</sup>When Jesus entered the synagogue leader’s house and saw the noisy crowd and people playing pipes,<sup>h</sup> <sup>24</sup>he said, **“Go away. The girl is not dead<sup>i</sup> but asleep.”<sup>j</sup>** But they laughed at him. <sup>25</sup>After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up.<sup>k</sup> <sup>26</sup>News of this spread through all that region.<sup>l</sup>

### Jesus Heals the Blind and the Mute

<sup>27</sup>As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!”<sup>m</sup>

<sup>28</sup>When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, **“Do you believe that I am able to do this?”**

“Yes, Lord,” they replied.<sup>n</sup>

<sup>29</sup>Then he touched their eyes and said, **“According to your faith let it be done to you”;<sup>o</sup>** <sup>30</sup>and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, **“See that no one knows about this.”<sup>p</sup>** <sup>31</sup>But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region.<sup>q</sup>

<sup>32</sup>While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed<sup>r</sup> and could not talk<sup>s</sup> was brought to Jesus. <sup>33</sup>And when the demon was driven out, the man

<sup>9:20</sup> <sup>d</sup> Mt 14:36; Mk 3:10; 6:56; Lk 6:19

<sup>9:22</sup> <sup>e</sup> ver 2; Jn 16:33 <sup>f</sup> ver 29; Mt 8:13; Mk 10:52; Lk 7:50; 17:19; 18:42 <sup>g</sup> Mt 15:28

<sup>9:23</sup> <sup>h</sup> 2 Ch 35:25; Jer 9:17, 18

<sup>9:24</sup> <sup>i</sup> Ac 20:10

<sup>9:25</sup> <sup>j</sup> Da 12:2; Ps 76:5; Jn 11:11-14;

Ac 7:60; 13:36;

1 Co 11:30; 15:6, 18;

20; 1 Th 4:13-16

<sup>9:25</sup> <sup>k</sup> S Lk 7:14

<sup>9:26</sup> <sup>l</sup> ver 31;

Mt 4:24; 14:1;

Mk 1:28, 45;

Lk 4:14, 37; 5:15;

7:17;

<sup>9:27</sup> <sup>m</sup> S Mt 1:1;

12:23; 15:22;

20:30, 31; 21:9, 15;

22:42; Mk 10:47

<sup>9:28</sup> <sup>n</sup> Ac 14:9

<sup>9:29</sup> <sup>o</sup> S ver 22

<sup>9:30</sup> <sup>p</sup> S Mt 8:4

<sup>9:31</sup> <sup>q</sup> S ver 26;

Mk 7:36

<sup>9:32</sup> <sup>r</sup> S Mt 4:24

<sup>9:33</sup> <sup>s</sup> Mt 12:22-24

<sup>9:33</sup> <sup>t</sup> Mk 2:12

<sup>9:34</sup> <sup>u</sup> Mt 12:24

<sup>9:35</sup> <sup>v</sup> S Mt 4:23

<sup>9:36</sup> <sup>w</sup> Mt 14:14;

15:32; Mk 8:2

<sup>x</sup> Nu 27:17;

1 Ki 22:17;

Eze 34:5, 6;

Zec 10:2

<sup>9:37</sup> <sup>y</sup> Jn 4:35

<sup>z</sup> Lk 10:2

<sup>10:1</sup> <sup>a</sup> Mk 3:13-15;

6:7; Lk 4:36; 9:1

<sup>b</sup> S Mt 4:23

<sup>10:4</sup> <sup>c</sup> Mt 26:14-

16, 25, 47; 27:3;

Mk 14:10; Jn 6:71;

12:4; 13:2, 26, 27;

Lk 1:16

who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.”<sup>t</sup>

<sup>34</sup>But the Pharisees said, “It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons.”<sup>u</sup>

### The Workers Are Few

<sup>35</sup>Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.<sup>v</sup>

<sup>36</sup>When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them,<sup>w</sup> because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.<sup>x</sup> <sup>37</sup>Then he said to his disciples, **“The harvest<sup>y</sup> is plentiful but the workers are few.<sup>z</sup>** <sup>38</sup>Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

### Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

10:2-4pp — Mk 3:16-19; Lk 6:14-16; Ac 1:13

10:9-15pp — Mk 6:8-11; Lk 9:3-5; 10:4-12

10:19-22pp — Mk 13:11-13; Lk 21:12-17

10:26-33pp — Lk 12:2-9

10:34, 35pp — Lk 12:51-53

**10** Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits<sup>a</sup> and to heal every disease and sickness.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>2</sup>These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; <sup>3</sup>Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup>Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.<sup>c</sup>

Matthew omits reference to the later messengers (Mk 5:35) and condenses (see notes on 21:12-17; 21:18-22) by presenting at the outset what was actually true before Jesus reached the house.

**9:20** *subject to bleeding for twelve years.* Possibly a menstrual disorder or a hemorrhage that never completely healed (see notes on Mk 5:25; Lk 8:43).

**9:21** See notes on Mk 5:28; Lk 8:45.

**9:22** *daughter.* See note on Lk 8:48. *healed.* See note on Mk 5:34.

**9:23** *noisy crowd.* May have included mourners hired to wail and lament (see Jer 9:20; Mk 5:38 and notes), *people playing pipes.* Musicians hired to play in mourning ceremonies.

**9:24** *not dead but asleep.* See note on Lk 8:52.

**9:25** *took the girl by the hand.* Touching a dead body ordinarily resulted in ceremonial uncleanness (see Lev 11:31; 21:1, 11 and note on 21:1; 22:4; Nu 19:14 and note), but Jesus’ action brought life, not ritual defilement.

**9:27** *blind men.* Isaiah predicted the healing of the blind in the Messianic age (Isa 35:5; see also Mt 11:4-5). *Son of David.* A popular Jewish title for the coming Messiah and a favorite title for Jesus in Matthew (e.g., 12:23; 20:30; 21:9; 22:41-45; see note on 1:1).

**9:29** *According to your faith.* That is, “Because you have faith,” not “In proportion to your faith.” Jesus did not pro-

vide healing according to the amount of faith the blind men had (see 17:20 and note). Cf. 8:13; Mk 9:23 and note; 11:23; Jn 11:40.

**9:30** For Jesus’ warnings against spreading news about him, see notes on 8:4; 16:20.

**9:32** *could not talk.* Isaiah also (see note on v. 27) predicted that people who were mute would be able to speak in the Messianic age (Isa 35:6).

**9:33** *amazed.* See 8:27; 13:54; 15:31; 21:20; 22:22; cf. Mk 1:22 and note.

**9:34** *prince of demons.* See note on 10:25.

**9:35** *synagogues.* See note on Mk 1:21. *good news.* See note on Mk 1:1.

**9:36** *compassion.* Jesus’ compassion for people is often noted in the Gospels (14:14; 15:22; 20:34; Mk 1:41; 6:34; 8:2). *like sheep without a shepherd.* An indictment of the Jewish leadership of Jesus’ day (see Eze 34:5; Zec 10:2; 13:7 and notes; see also Mk 6:34).

**10:2-4** See notes on Lk 6:14-16.

**10:2** *apostles.* The twelve disciples Jesus chose to be his closest followers (see note on Mk 6:30).

**10:3** *Thaddaeus.* Also called Judas (not Iscariot [Jn 14:22]); see Mk 3:18; Lk 6:16; Ac 1:13 and note.

**10:4** *the Zealot.* Either a description of Simon’s religious zeal or a reference to his political involvement in revolutionary



<sup>5</sup>These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.<sup>d</sup> <sup>6</sup>Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.<sup>e</sup> <sup>7</sup>As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven<sup>f</sup> has come near.’ <sup>8</sup>Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy,<sup>a</sup> drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

<sup>9</sup>“Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts<sup>g</sup> — <sup>10</sup>no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep.<sup>h</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. <sup>12</sup>As you enter the home, give it your greeting.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>13</sup>If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup>If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet.<sup>j</sup>

<sup>15</sup>Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah<sup>k</sup> on the day of judgment<sup>l</sup> than for that town.<sup>m</sup>

<sup>16</sup>“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves.<sup>n</sup> Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.<sup>o</sup> <sup>17</sup>Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils<sup>p</sup> and be flogged in the

**10:5** <sup>d</sup>1Kl 16:24; 2Kl 17:24; Lk 9:52; 10:33; 17:16; Jn 4:4–26, 39, 40; 8:48; Ac 8:5, 25  
**10:6** <sup>e</sup>Jer 50:6; Mt 15:24  
**10:7** <sup>f</sup>S Mt 3:2  
**10:9** <sup>g</sup>Lk 22:35  
**10:10** <sup>h</sup>S 1Ti 5:18  
**10:12** <sup>i</sup>Isa 25:6  
**10:14** <sup>j</sup>Ne 5:13; Mk 6:11; Lk 9:5; 10:11; Ac 13:51; 18:6  
**10:15** <sup>k</sup>Ge 18:20; 19:24; 2Pe 2:6; Jude 7 <sup>l</sup>Mt 12:36; Ac 17:31; 2Pe 2:9; 3:7; 1Jn 4:17; Jude 6  
**10:16** <sup>m</sup>Mt 11:22, 24  
**10:16** <sup>n</sup>Lk 10:3; Ac 20:29  
<sup>o</sup>S 1Co 14:20  
**10:17** <sup>p</sup>S Mt 5:22

<sup>q</sup>Mt 23:34; Mk 13:9; Ac 5:40; 22:19; 26:11  
**10:18** <sup>r</sup>Ac 25:24–26  
**10:19** <sup>s</sup>Ex 4:12  
**10:20** <sup>t</sup>Lk 12:11, 12; Ac 4:8  
**10:21** <sup>u</sup>ver 35, 36; Mic 7:6 <sup>v</sup>Mk 13:12  
**10:22** <sup>w</sup>S Jn 15:21  
<sup>x</sup>Mt 24:13; Mk 13:13; Lk 21:19; Rev 2:10  
**10:23** <sup>y</sup>S Lk 17:30  
**10:24** <sup>z</sup>S Jn 13:16  
**10:25** <sup>a</sup>S Mk 3:22

synagogues.<sup>q</sup> <sup>18</sup>On my account you will be brought before governors and kings<sup>r</sup> as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup>But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it.<sup>s</sup> At that time you will be given what to say,<sup>t</sup> for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father<sup>t</sup> speaking through you.

<sup>21</sup>“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents<sup>u</sup> and have them put to death.<sup>v</sup> <sup>22</sup>You will be hated by everyone because of me,<sup>w</sup> but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.<sup>x</sup> <sup>23</sup>When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.<sup>y</sup>

<sup>24</sup>“The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master.<sup>z</sup> <sup>25</sup>It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul,<sup>a</sup> how much more the members of his household!

<sup>26</sup>“So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made

<sup>a</sup> 8 The Greek word traditionally translated *leprosy* was used for various diseases affecting the skin.

activity against Roman rule (referred to by Josephus as the party of the Zealots; see chart, p. 1685).

**10:5** *Do not go.* The good news about the kingdom was to be proclaimed first to the Jewish people only, though Jesus himself in Matthew makes exceptions when he sees Gentiles of exceptional faith (8:10; 15:28). After his death and resurrection, Jesus commanded the message to be taken to all nations (28:19; cf. 21:43). *Samaritans.* The Jews considered them a mixed race resulting from the intermarriage of Israelites left behind when the people of the northern kingdom were exiled and Gentiles who were brought into the land by the Assyrians (2Kl 17:24). Bitter hostility existed between Jews and Samaritans in Jesus’ day (see Jn 4:9 and note).

**10:7** *kingdom of heaven.* See note on 3:2.

**10:8** *leprosy.* See NIV text note and note on Lev 13:2.

**10:9–10** See notes on Mk 6:8–9.

**10:10** *worker is worth his keep.* Cf. 1Co 9:4–14; 1Ti 5:17–18 and note on 5:18.

**10:11** *stay at their house.* See note on Lk 9:4.

**10:12** *your greeting.* The Jewish greeting was *shalom*, “peace” (Lk 10:5; see article, p. 1066).

**10:13** *If the home is deserving.* That is, “If the head of the house loves peace” (Lk 10:6). *let your peace return to you.* Either (1) retract your blessing or (2) leave the house.

**10:14** *shake the dust off your feet.* A symbolic act practiced by Jews when they left a ceremonially unclean Gentile area. Here it represented an act of solemn warning to those who rejected God’s message (see notes on Lk 9:5; Ac 13:51; cf. Ac 18:6).

**10:15** *Truly I tell you.* See note on Mk 3:28. *Sodom and Gomorrah.* See Ge 19:23–29; Lk 10:12 and note.

**10:16** Cf. 7:15; cf. also Paul’s statement in Ro 16:19: “I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.”

**10:17** *local councils.* The lower courts, connected with lo-

cal synagogues, that tried less serious cases and flogged those found guilty. *synagogues.* See notes on Mk 1:21; Lk 21:12.

**10:18** Anticipates the mission to the Gentiles. Matthew’s Gospel emphasizes the universality of the gospel (see note on 8:11; see also Introduction: Recipients).

**10:19** *do not worry about what to say.* Namely, to defend yourselves (Lk 21:14–15). *you will be given what to say.* “Words and wisdom” that cannot be resisted (Lk 21:15; see note there).

**10:20** *the Spirit of your Father.* Refers to the Holy Spirit and occurs only here in the Bible (cf. “the Spirit of Jesus” in Ac 16:6–7). See Mk 13:11; Lk 12:11–12; cf. Lk 21:14–15.

**10:21** The allusion is to Mic 7:6, which is quoted in vv. 35–36.

**10:22** *hated by everyone.* Hyperbole. *the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.* See note on Mk 13:13.

**10:23** Some take Jesus’ saying here as a reference to his second coming at the end of the age (24:30), understanding “going through the towns of Israel” to refer to the completion of the mission to the Jewish people. Others understand it to refer to his coming in judgment when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in AD 70. *the Son of Man comes.* The first of a number of Matthew’s allusions to Da 7:13–14, signaling the vindication of Jesus as God’s chosen one. Matthew alludes to Daniel to show that Jesus is vindicated at his resurrection (16:28; 26:64), at the fall of the temple as Jesus predicted (24:30), and at his second coming (24:36–37).

**10:25** *Beelzebul.* The prince of demons (12:24); the Greek form of the Hebrew name Baal-Zebul (“Exalted Baal” or “Baal the Prince”). Baal-Zebub (“lord of flies”) is a parody on and mockery of the actual epithet, Baal-Zebul (see note on Jdg 10:6). The name came to be used of Satan.

**10:26–33** See Lk 12:2–9 and notes.

**10:26** *them.* The persecutors (vv. 21–25).

known.<sup>b</sup> <sup>27</sup>What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. <sup>28</sup>Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One<sup>c</sup> who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.<sup>a</sup> <sup>30</sup>And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.<sup>d</sup> <sup>31</sup>So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>32</sup>"Whoever acknowledges me before others,<sup>f</sup> I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. <sup>33</sup>But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.<sup>g</sup>

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

"a man against his father,  
a daughter against her mother,  
a daughter-in-law against her  
mother-in-law<sup>h</sup>—

<sup>36</sup> a man's enemies will be the  
members of his own  
household.<sup>bi</sup>

<sup>37</sup>"Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.<sup>j</sup> <sup>38</sup>Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me.<sup>k</sup> <sup>39</sup>Whoever

**10:26** <sup>b</sup> Mk 4:22; Lk 8:17  
**10:28** <sup>c</sup> Isa 8:12, 13; Heb 10:31  
**10:30** <sup>d</sup> 1Sa 14:45; 2Sa 14:11; 1Ki 1:52; Lk 21:18; Ac 27:34  
**10:31** <sup>e</sup> Mt 6:26; 12:12  
**10:32** <sup>f</sup> Ro 10:9  
**10:33** <sup>g</sup> Mk 8:38; 2Ti 2:12  
**10:35** <sup>h</sup> ver 21  
**10:36** <sup>i</sup> Mic 7:6  
**10:37** <sup>j</sup> Lk 14:26  
**10:38** <sup>k</sup> Mt 16:24; Lk 14:27

**10:39** <sup>l</sup> S Jn 12:25  
**10:40** <sup>m</sup> Ex 16:8; Mt 18:5; Gal 4:14  
<sup>n</sup> Lk 9:48; 10:16; Jn 12:44; 13:20  
**10:42** <sup>o</sup> Pr 14:31; 19:17; Mt 25:40; Mk 9:41; Ac 10:4; Heb 6:10  
**11:1** <sup>p</sup> S Mt 7:28  
**11:2** <sup>q</sup> S Mt 3:1  
<sup>r</sup> Mt 14:3  
**11:3** <sup>s</sup> Ps 118:26; Jn 11:27; Heb 10:37

finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.<sup>l</sup>

<sup>40</sup>"Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me,<sup>m</sup> and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.<sup>n</sup>

<sup>41</sup>Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. <sup>42</sup>And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.<sup>o</sup>

## Jesus and John the Baptist

11:2–19pp — Lk 7:18–35

**11** After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples,<sup>p</sup> he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>2</sup>When John,<sup>q</sup> who was in prison,<sup>r</sup> heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples <sup>3</sup>to ask him, "Are you the one who is to come,<sup>s</sup> or should we expect someone else?"

<sup>4</sup>Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy<sup>d</sup> are cleansed, the deaf hear,

<sup>a</sup> 29 Or will; or knowledge <sup>b</sup> 36 Micah 7:6

<sup>c</sup> 1 Greek in their towns <sup>d</sup> 5 The Greek word traditionally translated *leprosy* was used for various diseases affecting the skin.

**10:28** cannot kill the soul. See Lk 12:4 and note. *soul*. The true self (see note on Ps 6:3). Body and soul are closely related in this life but are separated at death and then reunited at the resurrection (cf. 2Co 5:1–10 and notes; Php 1:23–24). *the One*. God. He alone determines the final destiny of us all. *destroy both soul and body in hell*. See Lk 12:5 and note. *hell*. See note on 5:22.

**10:29** two sparrows sold for a penny. Cf. Lk 12:6 and note.

**10:31** worth more than many sparrows. See 6:26.

**10:32–33** See Lk 12:8–9 and notes.

**10:34–36** Allegiance to Jesus as Messiah and Lord will even divide families, which in the ancient world usually shared the same loyalties. Family loyalty is not greater than loyalty to Jesus. When Jesus promises to provide peace (Jn 14:27), he means peace with God and with fellow believers. Yet the inevitable result of Christ's coming is conflict—between Christ and the antichrist, between light and darkness, between Christ's followers and unbelievers. This conflict can occur even between members of the same family (vv. 35–36; Mk 10:29–30; cf. 2Co 6:14–17 and notes).

**10:37** See Lk 14:26 and note.

**10:38** take up their cross. The first mention of the cross in Matthew's Gospel. The cross was an instrument of death (execution by Rome) and here symbolizes the necessity of total commitment—even to the point of death—on the part of Jesus' disciples (see note on Mk 8:34).

**10:39** See note on Lk 9:24.

**10:40–42** During times of persecution, hospitality was especially important and could be dangerous. So

Jesus indicates that those who provide it and show kindness to God's people will receive a reward.

**10:41** a prophet's reward ... a righteous person's reward. For Matthew, reward usually refers to receiving the kingdom itself (see 6:4, 6, 18 and article, p. 1649).

**10:42** cup of cold water. See note on Mk 9:41. *little ones*. Those of lower status than more esteemed disciples, such as prophets and righteous persons (vv. 40–41). Care for "little ones" concludes this list for hospitality as a surprising note about Jesus' care for those usually deemed least important (see 18:6–14 and note on 18:6, 10, 14).

**11:1** This verse transitions from the second of Jesus' discourses in Matthew by means of the formula, "After Jesus had finished [instructing his twelve disciples]" (see Introduction: Structure). *Galilee*. See note on 2:22.

**11:2** John. The Baptist (see note on 3:1). *in prison*. See note on Lk 7:19. *the deeds of the Messiah*. An inclusio (a framing device) with wisdom's "deeds" in v. 19 (see note there).

**11:3** the one who is to come. The Messiah. *expect someone else*. While languishing in prison, John began to wonder about the nature of Jesus' mission. John's own ministry focused on coming judgment, so he might not have understood Jesus' teaching and healing ministry to be the works of the Messiah (see note on Lk 7:19). This leads into Jesus' declaration of what his Messianic deeds actually look like (Mt 11:4–5).

**11:4** report to John what you hear and see. See note on Lk 7:22.

**11:5** leprosy. See NIV text note; see also note on Lev 13:2. *the good news is proclaimed to the poor*. See note on Lk 7:22.

the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.<sup>1</sup> <sup>6</sup>Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”<sup>u</sup>

<sup>7</sup>As John’s<sup>v</sup> disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness<sup>w</sup> to see? A reed swayed by the wind? <sup>8</sup>If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. <sup>9</sup>Then what did you go out to see? A prophet?<sup>x</sup> Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written:

“‘I will send my messenger ahead of you,<sup>y</sup>  
who will prepare your way before you.’<sup>az</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup>From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence,<sup>b</sup> and violent people have been raiding it. <sup>13</sup>For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.<sup>a</sup> <sup>14</sup>And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come.<sup>b</sup> <sup>15</sup>Whoever has ears, let them hear.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>16</sup>“To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

<sup>11:5</sup> <sup>1</sup>Isa 35:4-6; 61:1; Mt 15:31; Lk 4:18, 19  
<sup>11:6</sup> <sup>u</sup>Mt 13:21; 26:31  
<sup>11:7</sup> <sup>v</sup>S Mt 3:1  
<sup>11:8</sup> <sup>w</sup>Mt 3:1  
<sup>11:9</sup> <sup>x</sup>Mt 14:5; 21:26; Lk 1:76; 7:26  
<sup>11:10</sup> <sup>y</sup>Jn 3:28  
<sup>11:11</sup> <sup>z</sup>Mal 3:1; Mk 1:2; Lk 7:27  
<sup>11:13</sup> <sup>a</sup>Lk 16:16  
<sup>11:14</sup> <sup>b</sup>Mal 4:5; Mt 17:10-13; Mk 9:11-13; Lk 1:17; Jn 1:21  
<sup>11:15</sup> <sup>c</sup>Mt 13:9, 43; Mk 4:23; Lk 14:35; S Rev 2:7

<sup>11:18</sup> <sup>d</sup>Mt 3:4  
<sup>11:19</sup> <sup>e</sup>S Lk 1:15  
<sup>11:19</sup> <sup>f</sup>S Mt 9:11  
<sup>11:21</sup> <sup>g</sup>Mk 6:45; 8:22; Lk 9:10; Jn 1:44; 12:21  
<sup>11:21</sup> <sup>h</sup>Joel 3:4; Am 1:9; Mt 15:21; Mk 3:8; Lk 6:17; Ac 12:20  
<sup>11:22</sup> <sup>i</sup>Jnh 3:5-9  
<sup>11:22</sup> <sup>j</sup>ver 24; Mt 10:15  
<sup>11:23</sup> <sup>k</sup>S Mt 4:13  
<sup>11:24</sup> <sup>l</sup>Isa 14:13-15  
<sup>11:24</sup> <sup>m</sup>S Mt 10:15

<sup>17</sup>“We played the pipe for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’

<sup>18</sup>For John came neither eating<sup>d</sup> nor drinking,<sup>e</sup> and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ <sup>19</sup>The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’<sup>f</sup> But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.”

## Woe on Unrepentant Towns

11:21-23pp — Lk 10:13-15

<sup>20</sup>Then Jesus began to denounce the towns in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. <sup>21</sup>“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!<sup>g</sup> For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon,<sup>h</sup> they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.<sup>i</sup> <sup>22</sup>But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you.<sup>j</sup> <sup>23</sup>And you, Capernaum,<sup>k</sup> will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades.<sup>l</sup> For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. <sup>24</sup>But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”<sup>m</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 10 Mal. 3:1 <sup>b</sup> 12 Or *been forcefully advancing*  
<sup>c</sup> 23 That is, the realm of the dead

**11:6** *anyone who does not stumble.* An encouragement to see the true Messiah in Jesus’ healings and his preaching to the poor. See note on Lk 7:23.

**11:7–10** See Lk 7:24–28 and notes.

**11:10** See Mal 3:1 and note.

**11:11** *greater than he.* John belonged to the age of the old covenant, which was preparatory to Christ and the arrival of God’s kingdom. The least NT believer has a higher privilege in Christ as a part of his bride the church (Eph 5:25–27:32) than John the Baptist, who was only a friend of the bridegroom (Jn 3:29). Another view, however, stresses the expression “whoever is least,” holding that the key to its meaning is found in 18:4—“whoever takes the lowly position of this child.” Such a person, though “least,” is regarded by God as even greater than John the Baptist.

**11:12** *From the days of John the Baptist.* From the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. *kingdom of heaven.* See note on 3:2. *subjected to violence.* The persecution of the people of the kingdom, including John and Jesus. (But see NIV text note for the positive view of the kingdom’s forward movement.)

**11:13** *the Prophets and the Law.* The entire OT prophesied the coming of the kingdom. John represented the end of the old covenant era.

**11:14** *he is the Elijah who was to come.* A reference to Mal 4:5 (see note there), which prophesied the reappearance of Elijah before the day of the Lord. Some of the people remembered the prophecy and asked John the Baptist, “Are you Elijah?” He answered, “I am not” (Jn 1:21). John was not literally the reincarnation of Elijah, but he did fulfill the function and role of the prophet (see Mt 17:10–13 and note on Lk 1:17).

**11:16** *like children sitting in the marketplaces.* See note on Lk 7:32.

**11:17** *played the pipe.* As at a wedding, *sang a dirge.* As at a funeral. The latter symbolized the ministry of John, the former that of Jesus. The people of Jesus’ “generation” (v. 16) were like children who refused to respond positively on either occasion. Another interpretation understands this parable to refer to the people’s dissatisfaction with both John’s behavior and Jesus’ behavior (they didn’t “dance to their tune”).

**11:19** *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31. *friend of tax collectors and sinners.* See 9:9–13 and note on Lk 7:34. *wisdom is proved right by her deeds.* The lasting works of both Jesus and John will vindicate their ministries (see note on Lk 7:35). Given the repetition of “deeds” at the beginning and conclusion of this passage (vv. 2, 19), Matthew seems to be identifying Jesus’ deeds with wisdom’s deeds, thereby showing Jesus to be the full expression of wisdom.

**11:20** *repent.* See note on 3:2.

**11:21** *Chorazin.* Mentioned in the Bible only twice (here and in Lk 10:13), it was near the Sea of Galilee, probably about two miles north of Capernaum. *Bethsaida.* On the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. Philip the tetrarch rebuilt Bethsaida and named it “Julias,” after Julia, daughter of Caesar Augustus. *Tyre and Sidon.* Cities on the Phoenician coast north of the Holy Land (see note on Mk 7:31). *sackcloth.* Here a sign of repentance (see note on Ge 37:34). Cf. Rev 6:12. *ashes.* Also a sign of repentance.

**11:23** *Capernaum.* See note on Lk 10:15. *Sodom.* See notes on 10:15; Ge 13:10; Lk 10:12.

## The Father Revealed in the Son

11:25-27pp — Lk 10:21,22

<sup>25</sup>At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father,<sup>n</sup> Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.<sup>o</sup> <sup>26</sup>Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

<sup>27</sup>“All things have been committed to me<sup>p</sup> by my Father.<sup>q</sup> No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.<sup>r</sup>

<sup>28</sup>“Come to me,<sup>s</sup> all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.<sup>t</sup>

<sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,<sup>u</sup> for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.<sup>v</sup> <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”<sup>w</sup>

## Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

12:1-8pp — Mk 2:23-28; Lk 6:1-5

12:9-14pp — Mk 3:1-6; Lk 6:6-11

**12** At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain<sup>x</sup> and eat them. <sup>2</sup>When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, “Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath.”<sup>y</sup>

<sup>3</sup>He answered, “Haven’t you read what

**11:25** <sup>n</sup>Mt 16:17; Lk 22:42; 23:34; Jn 11:41; 12:27, 28 <sup>o</sup>S Mt 13:11; 1Co 1:26-29  
**11:27** <sup>p</sup>S Mt 28:18  
<sup>q</sup>S Jn 3:35  
<sup>r</sup>Jn 10:15; 17:25, 26  
**11:28** <sup>s</sup>Jn 7:37  
<sup>t</sup>Ex 33:14  
**11:29** <sup>u</sup>Jn 13:15; Php 2:5; 1Pe 2:21; 1Jn 2:6 <sup>v</sup>Ps 116:7; Jer 6:16  
**11:30** <sup>w</sup>1Jn 5:3  
**12:1** <sup>x</sup>Dt 23:25  
**12:2** <sup>y</sup>ver 10; Ex 20:10; 23:12; Dt 5:14; Lk 13:14; 14:3; Jn 5:10; 7:23; 9:16

**12:3** <sup>z</sup>Isa 21:6  
**12:4** <sup>a</sup>Lev 24:5, 9  
**12:5** <sup>b</sup>Nu 28:9, 10; Jn 7:22, 23  
**12:6** <sup>c</sup>ver 41, 42  
**12:7** <sup>d</sup>Hos 6:6; Mic 6:6-8; Mt 9:13  
**12:8** <sup>e</sup>S Mt 8:20  
**12:10** <sup>f</sup>Mk 3:2; 12:13; Lk 11:54; 14:1; 20:20  
<sup>g</sup>S ver 2  
**12:11** <sup>h</sup>Lk 14:5  
**12:12** <sup>i</sup>Mt 6:26; 10:31  
**12:14** <sup>j</sup>Ge 37:18; Ps 71:10; Mt 26:4; 27:1; Mk 3:6; Lk 6:11; Jn 5:18; 7:1, 19; 11:53

David did when he and his companions were hungry?<sup>z</sup> <sup>4</sup>He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests.<sup>a</sup> <sup>5</sup>Or haven’t you read in the Law that the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath<sup>b</sup> and yet are innocent? <sup>6</sup>I tell you that something greater than the temple is here.<sup>c</sup> <sup>7</sup>If you had known what these words mean, “I desire mercy, not sacrifice,”<sup>d</sup> you would not have condemned the innocent.<sup>e</sup> <sup>8</sup>For the Son of Man<sup>e</sup> is Lord of the Sabbath.”

<sup>9</sup>Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, <sup>10</sup>and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to bring charges against Jesus,<sup>f</sup> they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”<sup>g</sup>

<sup>11</sup>He said to them, “If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out?<sup>h</sup> <sup>12</sup>How much more valuable is a person than a sheep!<sup>i</sup> Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.”

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

<sup>a</sup> 7 Hosea 6:6

**11:25** *Lord of heaven and earth.* A title for God emphasizing his sovereignty and found only three times in the Bible (here; Lk 10:21; Ac 17:24). *these things.* Either the significance of Jesus’ miracles (vv. 20–24) or of his entire mission. *wise.* According to the standards of this age (see 1Co 1:26–29; cf. 1Co 3:18 and note). *little children.* The disciples or, more generally, the humble followers of Jesus.

**11:26** *what you were pleased to do.* Since God is “Lord of heaven and earth” (v. 25), he sovereignly reveals and conceals. The motifs of hiddenness and revelation begin in this passage and will be highlighted in the parables of the kingdom (ch. 13).

**11:27** *All things.* The full revelation of God (v. 25). *No one knows the Son.* Total knowledge of the Son belongs only to the Father. Believers can “know” the Son for salvation (1Jn 5:20) and in a deep and satisfying way, but not completely (see Jn 10:14 and note; cf. Php 3:7–11 and notes). *except ... those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.* The revelation of the Father through the Son, seen here, is a central theme of John’s Gospel (see Jn 1:18 and note).

**11:28–30** Jesus’ words echo the language used by wisdom in the OT and in other Jewish literature to invite discipleship and obedience that give life (cf. Pr 8; Sirach 24: 19; 51:26–27; Wisdom 6).

**11:28** *weary and burdened.* Probably a reference to the “heavy ... loads” the Pharisees placed “on other people’s shoulders” by insisting on behavior that they themselves didn’t practice (23:4; see note on Lk 11:46).

**11:29** *yoke.* Cf. v. 30 and note; see note on Eze 34:27. The yoke speaks of submission. *find rest for your souls.* See Jer 6:16 and note.

**11:30** *my burden is light.* Cf. Ps 55:22; 1Jn 5:3 and notes.

**12:1** *grainfields.* Of wheat or barley, the latter eaten by poor-

er people. *pick some heads of grain.* See note on Mk 2:23.

**12:2** *Pharisees.* See note on 3:7. *what is unlawful on the Sabbath.* See note on Mk 2:24.

**12:3** *what David did.* See note on Mk 2:25.

**12:4** *consecrated bread.* Each Sabbath, 12 fresh loaves of bread were to be set on a table in the Holy Place (Ex 25:30; Lev 24:5–9). The old loaves were eaten by the priests.

**12:5** *desecrate the Sabbath.* By doing required work associated with the sacrifices (see Nu 28:9; cf. Jn 7:22–23 and note on 7:22).

**12:7** *I desire mercy, not sacrifice.* While both are found in the Jewish law, Jesus prioritizes mercy over sacrifice by citing Hos 6:6 (see 9:13; 23:23 and notes). *you would not have condemned the innocent.* A clear claim that Jesus’ interpretation of the OT law is the correct one, exonerating him and his disciples from the charge of breaking the law.

**12:8** *the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.* See note on Lk 6:5.

**12:9** *synagogue.* See note on Mk 1:21.

**12:10** *heal on the Sabbath.* The rabbis prohibited healing on the Sabbath, unless it was feared the victim would die before the next day. Obviously the man with the shriveled hand was in no danger of this.

**12:11–12** Jesus contrasts the worth of an animal with that of a human being (cf. Lk 13:15–16; 14:5 and notes).

**12:12** *lawful to do good on the Sabbath.* See Mk 3:4; Lk 6:9 and notes.

**12:13** “Stretch out your hand.” So he stretched it out. The fact that the man stretched out his shriveled hand shows there is a connection in this instance between faith and Jesus’ healing power.

**12:14** The Pharisees evidence more concern for adherence to their understanding of the law than for human compas-



## God's Chosen Servant

<sup>15</sup>Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. A large crowd followed him, and he healed all who were ill.<sup>k</sup> <sup>16</sup>He warned them not to tell others about him.<sup>l</sup> <sup>17</sup>This was to fulfill<sup>m</sup> what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

<sup>18</sup>"Here is my servant whom I have chosen,  
the one I love, in whom  
I delight;<sup>n</sup>  
I will put my Spirit on him,<sup>o</sup>  
and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

<sup>19</sup>He will not quarrel or cry out;  
no one will hear his voice in the streets.

<sup>20</sup>A bruised reed he will not break,  
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out,  
till he has brought justice through to victory.

<sup>21</sup> In his name the nations will put  
their hope."<sup>ap</sup>

## Jesus and Beelzebul

12:25-29pp — Mk 3:23-27; Lk 11:17-22

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

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

<sup>25</sup>Jesus knew their thoughts<sup>u</sup> and said to them, "**Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every**

**12:15** <sup>k</sup> Mt 4:23  
**12:16** <sup>l</sup> S Mt 8:4  
**12:17** <sup>m</sup> S Mt 1:22  
**12:18** <sup>n</sup> S Mt 3:17  
<sup>o</sup> S Jn 3:34  
**12:21** <sup>p</sup> Isa 42:1-4  
**12:22** <sup>q</sup> S Mt 4:24  
**12:23** <sup>r</sup> S Mt 9:27  
**12:24** <sup>s</sup> S Mt 3:22  
<sup>t</sup> Mt 9:34  
**12:25** <sup>u</sup> S Mt 9:4

**12:26** <sup>v</sup> S Mt 4:10  
**12:27** <sup>w</sup> ver 24  
<sup>x</sup> Ac 19:13  
**12:28** <sup>y</sup> S Mt 3:2  
**12:30** <sup>z</sup> Mk 9:40;  
Lk 11:23  
**12:31** <sup>a</sup> Mk 3:28,  
29; Lk 12:10  
**12:32** <sup>b</sup> Titus 2:12  
<sup>c</sup> Mk 10:30;  
Lk 20:34, 35;  
Eph 1:21; Heb 6:5  
**12:33** <sup>d</sup> Mt 7:16,  
17; Lk 6:43, 44  
**12:34** <sup>e</sup> Mt 3:7;  
23:33 <sup>f</sup> Mt 15:18;  
Lk 6:45  
**12:37** <sup>g</sup> Job 15:6;  
Pr 10:14; 18:21;  
Jas 3:2

city or household divided against itself will not stand. <sup>26</sup>If Satan<sup>v</sup> drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? <sup>27</sup>And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul,<sup>w</sup> by whom do your people<sup>x</sup> drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. <sup>28</sup>But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God<sup>y</sup> has come upon you.

<sup>29</sup>"Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house.

<sup>30</sup>"Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.<sup>z</sup> <sup>31</sup>And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.<sup>a</sup> <sup>32</sup>Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age<sup>b</sup> or in the age to come.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>33</sup>"Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.<sup>d</sup> <sup>34</sup>You brood of vipers,<sup>e</sup> how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks<sup>f</sup> what the heart is full of. <sup>35</sup>A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. <sup>36</sup>But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. <sup>37</sup>For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."<sup>g</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 21 Isaiah 42:1-4

sion (see notes on Mk 3:6; Lk 6:11).

**12:16** not to tell others about him. See note on 8:4.

**12:18–21** Another fulfillment passage (see note on 1:22; see also chart, p. 1655). This one is from Isaiah's first servant song (see Isa 42:1–4 and note) and is the longest OT quotation in Matthew's Gospel. It summarizes the quiet and merciful ministry of the Lord's servant, who will bring justice and hope to the nations.

**12:18** my servant. Jesus is called God's servant only here and in Ac 3:13,26 (see note on 3:13); 4:27,30. *chosen*. See Lk 9:35 and note. *the one I love, in whom I delight*. See note on 3:17. *put my Spirit on him*. See Isa 11:2; 61:1 and notes.

**12:20** Jesus mends broken lives (see v. 15; Isa 42:3 and note; Jn 4:4–42; 8:3–11).

**12:22** demon-possessed. See notes on Mk 1:23; Lk 4:33.

**12:23** Son of David. See note on 9:27.

**12:24** Beelzebul... prince of demons. See 10:25; Lk 11:19 and notes.

**12:25** kingdom divided against itself. See note on Lk 11:17.

**12:28** kingdom of God. See note on 3:2. *has come upon you*. See note on Mk 1:15.



**12:30** There can be no double-mindedness in our relationship to Jesus (see note on Lk 11:23; cf. Ps 119:113; Mk 9:40; Lk 9:50 and note; Jas 1:8; 4:8).

**12:31** blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. The context (vv. 24,28,32) suggests that the unpardonable sin was attributing to Satan Christ's authenticating miracles done in the power of the Holy Spirit (see note on Mk 3:29) and never repenting of that attitude. In other words, the only unpardonable sin is a persistent refusal to acknowledge the presence of God in Christ.

**12:32** Son of Man. See note on Mk 8:31. *this age... the age to come*. See Eph 1:21 and note.

**12:33** See 3:16; cf. Jas 3:11–12.

**12:34** brood of vipers. In the NT an expression used only by John the Baptist (3:7; Lk 3:7) and Jesus (here; 23:33). In this context it refers to the Pharisees (v. 24). *the mouth speaks what the heart is full of*. See 15:18–19; Pr 4:23 and note. *heart*. See note on Ps 4:7.

**12:36** day of judgment. At Christ's second coming; sometimes referred to as "that day" (7:22; 2Ti 1:12,18), "the day of slaughter" (Jas 5:5; see note there). *empty word*. Words are incredibly powerful, so words spoken without thought or care can be terribly destructive (Jas 3:1–12).

## The Sign of Jonah

12:39-42pp — Lk 11:29-32

12:43-45pp — Lk 11:24-26

<sup>38</sup>Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign<sup>h</sup> from you.”<sup>i</sup>

<sup>39</sup>He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.<sup>j</sup> <sup>40</sup>For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish,<sup>k</sup> so the Son of Man<sup>l</sup> will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.<sup>m</sup> <sup>41</sup>The men of Nineveh<sup>n</sup> will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah,<sup>o</sup> and now something greater than Jonah is here. <sup>42</sup>The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came<sup>p</sup> from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.

<sup>43</sup>“When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. <sup>44</sup>Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. <sup>45</sup>Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first.<sup>q</sup> That is how it will be with this wicked generation.”

## Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

12:46-50pp — Mk 3:31-35; Lk 8:19-21

<sup>46</sup>While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother<sup>r</sup> and brothers<sup>s</sup> stood

**12:38** <sup>h</sup> S Jn 2:11; S 4:48 <sup>i</sup> Mt 16:1; Mk 8:11, 12; Lk 11:16; Jn 2:18; 6:30; 1Co 1:22  
**12:39** <sup>j</sup> Mt 16:4; Lk 11:29  
**12:40** <sup>k</sup> Jnh 1:17 <sup>l</sup> S Mt 8:20 <sup>m</sup> S Mt 16:21  
**12:41** <sup>n</sup> Jnh 1:2 <sup>o</sup> Jnh 3:5  
**12:42** <sup>p</sup> 1Ki 10:1; 2Ch 9:1  
**12:43** <sup>q</sup> 2Pe 2:20  
**12:46** <sup>r</sup> Mt 1:18; 2:11, 13, 14, 20; Lk 1:43; 2:33, 34, 48, 51; Jn 2:1, 5; 19:25, 26 <sup>s</sup> Mt 13:55; Jn 2:12; 7:3, 5; Ac 1:14; 1Co 9:5; Gal 1:19

**12:50** <sup>t</sup> Mt 6:10; Jn 15:14  
**13:1** <sup>u</sup> ver 36; Mt 9:28  
**13:2** <sup>v</sup> Lk 5:3  
**13:8** <sup>w</sup> Ge 26:12  
**13:9** <sup>x</sup> S Mt 11:15

outside, wanting to speak to him. <sup>47</sup>Someone told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.”

<sup>48</sup>He replied to him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” <sup>49</sup>Pointing to his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers. <sup>50</sup>For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven<sup>t</sup> is my brother and sister and mother.”

## The Parable of the Sower

13:1-15pp — Mk 4:1-12; Lk 8:4-10

13:16, 17pp — Lk 10:23, 24

13:18-23pp — Mk 4:13-20; Lk 8:11-15

**13** That same day Jesus went out of the house<sup>u</sup> and sat by the lake. <sup>2</sup>Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat<sup>v</sup> and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. <sup>3</sup>Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. <sup>4</sup>As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. <sup>5</sup>Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. <sup>7</sup>Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. <sup>8</sup>Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop — a hundred,<sup>w</sup> sixty or thirty times what was sown. <sup>9</sup>Whoever has ears, let them hear.”<sup>x</sup>

<sup>10</sup>The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?”

**12:38** *sign*. The Pharisees wanted to see a spectacular miracle, preferably in the sky (Lk 11:16), as the sign that Jesus was the Messiah. Instead, he cites them a “sign” from history. See note on Lk 11:29.

**12:39** *adulterous*. Referring to spiritual, not physical, adultery, in the sense that their generation had become unfaithful to its spiritual husband (God; see note on Ex 34:15). *sign of the prophet Jonah*. See note on Lk 11:30.

**12:40** *three days and three nights*. Including at least part of the first day and part of the third day, a common Jewish reckoning of time. See note on Lk 24:46. This is the first hint Jesus gives of his coming death. Jesus points to Jonah’s three days and three nights in the “huge fish” as a sign of his death and resurrection “on the third day” (Mt 16:21). *huge fish*. The Greek word does not mean “whale” but rather “sea creature,” i.e., a “huge fish” (see note on Jnh 1:17). *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31.

**12:41–42** *something greater than Jonah ... something greater than Solomon*. See note on Lk 11:31–32.

**12:42** *Queen of the South*. In 1Ki 10:1 she is called the queen of Sheba, a country in southwest Arabia now called Yemen.

**12:43–45** See notes on Lk 11:24–25.

**12:46** *mother and brothers*. See note on Lk 8:19.

**12:50** *whoever does the will of my Father*. Spiritual family ties are more important than biological ones (see notes on Mk 3:35; Lk 8:21).

**13:1** *went out of the house*. See “went into the house” (v. 36). These two phrases determine the setting of Jesus’ teaching in vv. 1–35 and reflect the themes of outsiders and insiders in relation to receiving and understanding kingdom knowledge (see the “secrets of the kingdom” language in v. 11; see also Mk 4:11). *the lake*. The Sea of Galilee (see note on Mk 1:16). **13:2** *sat in it*. See note on Mk 4:1.

**13:3–9** See vv. 18–23 for the interpretation of this first parable.

**13:3** *parables*. The word “parable” comes from the Greek *parabole*, which means a comparison or an illustration. Its most common use in the NT is for the illustrative stories that Jesus drew from nature and human life. The Synoptic Gospels contain about 40 of these stories. John’s Gospel contains no parables but uses other figures of speech (see notes on Mk 4:2; Lk 8:4; see also chart, p. 1798 and article, p. 1665). *to sow his seed*. See note on Lk 8:5. According to Mk 4:14; Lk 8:11 (see notes there), the seed is the word of God.

**13:4–6** See note on Mk 4:3–8.

**13:4** *birds*. Satan, “the evil one” (v. 19).

**13:5** *rocky places*. Not ground covered with small stones, but shallow soil on top of solid rock. See note on Lk 8:6.

**13:8** *a hundred*. See notes on Mk 4:8; Lk 8:8.

**13:9** *let them hear*. See note on Lk 8:8.

**13:10** See note on Lk 8:9.



<sup>11</sup>He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven<sup>y</sup> has been given to you,<sup>z</sup> but not to them. <sup>12</sup>Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.<sup>a</sup> <sup>13</sup>This is why I speak to them in parables:

“Though seeing, they do not see;  
though hearing, they do not hear or understand.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>14</sup>In them is fulfilled<sup>c</sup> the prophecy of Isaiah:

“You will be ever hearing but never understanding;  
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

<sup>15</sup>For this people’s heart has become calloused;

**13:11** <sup>y</sup>S Mt 3:2  
<sup>z</sup>Mt 11:25; 16:17;  
19:11; Jn 6:65;  
1Co 2:10, 14;  
Col 1:27; 1Jn 2:20,  
27  
**13:12** <sup>a</sup>S Mt 25:29  
**13:13** <sup>b</sup>Dt 29:4;  
Jer 5:21; Eze 12:2  
**13:14** <sup>c</sup>ver 35;  
S Mt 1:22

**13:15** <sup>d</sup>Isa 6:9,  
10; Jn 12:40;  
Ac 28:26, 27;  
Ro 11:8  
**13:16** <sup>e</sup>Mt 16:17  
**13:17** <sup>f</sup>Jn 8:56;  
Heb 11:13;  
1Pe 1:10-12  
**13:19** <sup>g</sup>Mt 4:23  
<sup>h</sup>S Mt 5:37

they hardly hear with their ears,  
and they have closed their eyes.  
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,

hear with their ears,  
understand with their hearts  
and turn, and I would heal them.<sup>a,d</sup>

<sup>16</sup>But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.<sup>e</sup>  
<sup>17</sup>For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see<sup>f</sup> but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

<sup>18</sup>“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the message about the kingdom<sup>g</sup> and does not understand it, the evil one<sup>h</sup> comes and snatches away what was sown

<sup>a</sup> 15 Isaiah 6:9,10 (see Septuagint)

**13:11** *secrets of the kingdom of heaven.* Refers to something previously hidden but now revealed to God’s people. In this chapter, only the “disciples” hear the explanations of the parables (cf. v. 10). See notes on Mk 4:11; Lk 8:10. *given to you ... not to them.* Accessed by the faith of Christ’s disciples and therefore inaccessible and inscrutable to those lacking faith. **13:13–14** Jesus speaks in parables because of the spiritual dullness of the people (see note on Lk 8:4).

**13:13** *Though seeing, they do not see.* See notes on Mk 4:12; Lk 8:10.

**13:14–15** See Isa 6:9–10 and notes.

**13:18** *what the parable of the sower means.* Jesus seldom interpreted his parables to this extent, but here he does.

**13:19** *message.* Cf. Luke’s “word of God” (8:11). *evil one.* Satan (the devil; see Mk 4:15; Lk 8:12 and note).

## Jesus’ Parables

Mt 13:3



Common-sense wisdom suggests that Jesus used illustrative stories to make his message clearer. It is one thing to announce that God welcomes repentant sinners no matter how far from him they have run, but it is quite something else to hear the story of the lost son (Lk 15:11–32) and relate directly to the characters it depicts. Yet when the disciples asked Jesus why he spoke in parables, he did not say that they were given to reveal the nature of God’s kingdom but to conceal it (Mk 4:11–12; cf. Mt 13:13 and Lk 8:10). What could he possibly have meant?

Mark 12:12 concludes the parable of the wicked tenants with Jesus’ opponents plotting to kill him because they recognized he told the parable against them. They understood his cognitive meaning all too well; Jesus was claiming that they were the farmers who mistreated their landlord’s servants and who would execute his son (vv. 1–9). The kind of understanding these Jewish leaders lacked was volitional—the willingness to act properly based on their knowledge and follow Jesus as his disciples. The same is true in Mk 4. When Jesus said he taught in parables so that some people would not truly see or understand, it was after the parable of the sower (vv. 3–9), which contains four different kinds of responses to Jesus’ teaching. Some reject but others accept the word.

If Jesus’ parables both reveal and conceal, it is because they create a polarized response. They lure people into a seemingly innocuous story only for them to discover they are trapped in it; they have to admit that they are like one of the characters in the story. If they are not prepared to respond in discipleship, they do not remain in a neutral position but find themselves moving even further away from Jesus. One shouldn’t read vv. 11–12, however, as suggesting that this movement away from Jesus is irreversible. These verses quote Isa 6:9–10, a section of prophecy that concludes with hope for a righteous remnant in the land (v. 13). So, too, Ac 6:7 discloses many of the Jewish priests, who had been at the heart of the opposition to Jesus, becoming believers. Repenting is always possible in this life for those who genuinely want to do so.

in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. <sup>20</sup>The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. <sup>21</sup>But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. <sup>22</sup>The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth<sup>i</sup> choke the word, making it unfruitful. <sup>23</sup>But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”<sup>k</sup>

### The Parable of the Weeds

<sup>24</sup>Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like<sup>l</sup> a man who sowed good seed in his field. <sup>25</sup>But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. <sup>26</sup>When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

<sup>27</sup>“The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’

<sup>28</sup>“‘An enemy did this,’ he replied.

“The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’

<sup>29</sup>“‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be

**13:21** <sup>1</sup>Mt 11:6; 26:31  
**13:22** <sup>1</sup>Mt 19:23; 1Ti 6:9, 10, 17  
**13:23** <sup>k</sup>ver 8  
**13:24** <sup>l</sup>ver 31, 33, 45, 47; Mt 18:23; 20:1; 22:2; 25:1; Mk 4:26, 30

**13:30** <sup>m</sup>Mt 3:12  
**13:31** <sup>n</sup>S ver 24  
<sup>o</sup>Mt 17:20;  
Lk 17:6  
**13:32** <sup>p</sup>Ps 104:12; Eze 17:23; 31:6; Da 4:12  
**13:33** <sup>q</sup>S ver 24  
<sup>r</sup>Ge 18:6 <sup>s</sup>Gal 5:9  
**13:34** <sup>t</sup>S Jn 16:25  
**13:35** <sup>u</sup>ver 14;  
S Mt 1:22  
<sup>v</sup>Ps 78:2;  
Ro 16:25, 26;  
1Co 2:7; Eph 3:9;  
Col 1:26  
**13:36** <sup>w</sup>Mt 15:15  
**13:37** <sup>x</sup>S Mt 8:20

burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.”<sup>m</sup>

### The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast

**13:31, 32pp** — Mk 4:30-32

**13:31-33pp** — Lk 13:18-21

<sup>31</sup>He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like<sup>n</sup> a mustard seed,<sup>o</sup> which a man took and planted in his field. <sup>32</sup>Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”<sup>p</sup>

<sup>33</sup>He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like<sup>a</sup> yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds<sup>a</sup> of flour<sup>r</sup> until it worked all through the dough.”<sup>s</sup>

<sup>34</sup>Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable.<sup>t</sup> <sup>35</sup>So was fulfilled<sup>u</sup> what was spoken through the prophet:

“I will open my mouth in parables,  
I will utter things hidden since the  
creation of the world.”<sup>bv</sup>

### The Parable of the Weeds Explained

<sup>36</sup>Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable<sup>w</sup> of the weeds in the field.”

<sup>37</sup>He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man.<sup>x</sup> <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom.

<sup>a</sup> 33 Or about 27 kilograms <sup>b</sup> 35 Psalm 78:2

**13:21** Cf. 24:10–12; see note on Lk 8:13.

**13:22** the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth. Lk 8:14 adds life’s “pleasures” to these two phrases. *deceitfulness of wealth*. See note on Mk 4:19.

**13:23** understands. Cf. the Isaiah quotation in vv. 14–15. Matthew uses this word six times in this chapter (here and in vv. 13, 14, 15, 19, 51). *hundred ... times*. See note on Lk 8:8.

**13:24–30** See vv. 36–43 for the interpretation.

**13:24** The kingdom of heaven is like. This phrase introduces six of the seven parables in this chapter (all but the parable of the sower). Jesus compares the kingdom to the entire story that he narrates, not just to the character mentioned first.

**13:25** weeds. Probably darnel, which looks very much like wheat while it is young, but can later be distinguished. This parable does not refer to unbelievers in the professing church. The field is the world (v. 38). Thus in this world the people of the kingdom live side by side with the people of the evil one.

**13:28–30** The parable of the weeds emphasizes that we are not to try to make a separation between believers and unbelievers in the present. That is entirely the Lord’s business (vv. 41–42; see 7:1 and note).

**13:30** harvest. The final judgment (see notes on Joel 3:13; Mk 4:29; Rev 14:15).

**13:31–32** Although the kingdom will seem to have an insignificant beginning, it will eventually spread throughout the world (see note on Mk 4:30–34).

**13:32** the smallest ... the largest. The mustard seed is not the smallest seed known today, but it was the smallest seed used by farmers and gardeners there and at that time, and under favorable conditions the plant could reach about ten feet in height. a tree ... its branches. Likely an allusion to Eze 17:23 and perhaps Da 4:21, suggesting that the kingdom of heaven will expand to the entire world and that people from all nations will find rest in it (cf. Da 2:35, 44–45; 7:27; Rev 11:15). **13:33** In the Bible, yeast usually symbolizes that which is evil or unclean (see note on Mk 8:15). Here, however, it is a symbol of growth. As yeast permeates a batch of dough, so the kingdom of heaven, often having a hidden quality in the present, will expand throughout the whole world. See note on Lk 13:21.

**13:35** spoken through the prophet. The quotation is from Ps 78 (see note on 78:2), a psalm ascribed to Asaph, who according to 2Ch 29:30 was a “seer” (prophet). *I will utter things hidden*. Emphasizing the theme of the kingdom’s previous hiddenness and subsequent revelation as in vv. 31–33, 44.

**13:37, 41** Son of Man. See note on Mk 8:31.

The weeds are the people of the evil one,<sup>y</sup> <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest<sup>z</sup> is the end of the age,<sup>a</sup> and the harvesters are angels.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>40</sup>“As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man<sup>c</sup> will send out his angels,<sup>d</sup> and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. <sup>42</sup>They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.<sup>e</sup> <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun<sup>f</sup> in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.<sup>g</sup>

### The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

<sup>44</sup>“The kingdom of heaven is like<sup>h</sup> treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>45</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like<sup>j</sup> a merchant looking for fine pearls. <sup>46</sup>When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

### The Parable of the Net

<sup>47</sup>“Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like<sup>k</sup> a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds<sup>l</sup> of fish. <sup>48</sup>When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. <sup>49</sup>This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous<sup>m</sup> <sup>50</sup>and throw them into the blazing

**13:38** <sup>y</sup>Jn 8:44, 45; 1Jn 3:10  
**13:39** <sup>z</sup>Joel 3:13  
**13:40** <sup>a</sup>Mt 24:3; 28:20  
**13:41** <sup>b</sup>Rev 14:15  
**13:41** <sup>c</sup>S Mt 8:20  
**13:42** <sup>d</sup>Mt 24:31  
**13:42** <sup>e</sup>S Mt 8:12  
**13:43** <sup>f</sup>Da 12:3  
**13:44** <sup>g</sup>S Mt 11:15  
**13:44** <sup>h</sup>S ver 24  
**13:45** <sup>i</sup>Isa 55:1; Mt 19:21; Php 3:7, 8  
**13:45** <sup>j</sup>S ver 24  
**13:47** <sup>k</sup>S ver 24  
**13:47** <sup>l</sup>Mt 22:10  
**13:49** <sup>m</sup>Mt 25:32

**13:50** <sup>n</sup>S Mt 8:12  
**13:53** <sup>o</sup>S Mt 7:28  
**13:54** <sup>p</sup>S Mt 4:23  
**13:54** <sup>q</sup>S Mt 7:28  
**13:55** <sup>r</sup>Lk 3:23; Jn 6:42  
**13:55** <sup>s</sup>S Mt 12:46  
**13:55** <sup>t</sup>S Mt 12:46  
**13:57** <sup>u</sup>Jn 6:61  
**13:57** <sup>v</sup>Lk 4:24; Jn 4:44  
**14:1** <sup>w</sup>Mk 8:15; Lk 3:1, 19; 13:31; 23:7, 8; Ac 4:27; 12:1  
**14:2** <sup>x</sup>Lk 9:7-9  
**14:2** <sup>y</sup>S Mt 3:1

furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.<sup>n</sup>

<sup>51</sup>“Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked.

“Yes,” they replied.

<sup>52</sup>He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

### A Prophet Without Honor

13:54–58pp — Mk 6:1–6

<sup>53</sup>When Jesus had finished these parables,<sup>o</sup> he moved on from there. <sup>54</sup>Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue,<sup>p</sup> and they were amazed.<sup>q</sup> “Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?” they asked. <sup>55</sup>“Isn’t this the carpenter’s son?” Isn’t his mother’s<sup>s</sup> name Mary, and aren’t his brothers<sup>t</sup> James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? <sup>56</sup>Aren’t all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” <sup>57</sup>And they took offense<sup>u</sup> at him.

But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town and in his own home.”<sup>v</sup>

<sup>58</sup>And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.


### John the Baptist Beheaded

14:1–12pp — Mk 6:14–29

**14** At that time Herod<sup>w</sup> the tetrarch heard the reports about Jesus,<sup>x</sup> <sup>2</sup>and he said to his attendants, “This is John the Baptist;<sup>y</sup> he has risen from the dead! That is why miraculous powers are at work in him.”

**13:42** *blazing furnace.* Often mentioned in connection with the final judgment in apocalyptic literature (Rev 19:20; 20:14). *weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Occurs six times in Matthew’s Gospel (here; v. 50; 8:12; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30) and nowhere else in the NT (but see note on 8:12).

**13:43** *the righteous will shine like the sun.* See Da 12:3. *let them hear.* See note on Lk 8:8.

 **13:44–46** These two parables teach the same truth: The kingdom, though its true worth is hidden at present, is of such great value that one should be willing to give up all one has in order to gain it. Jesus did not imply that one can purchase the kingdom with money or good deeds. **13:44** *treasure hidden in a field.* In ancient times it was common to hide treasure in the ground since there were no banks—though there were “bankers” (25:27; see note there). **13:47–51** The parable of the net teaches the same general lesson as the parable of the weeds (see vv. 28–30 and note): There will be a final separation of the righteous and the wicked.

**13:50** See note on v. 42.

**13:51** Yes. Probably an overstatement by the disciples, especially in view of Jesus’ words in 15:16.

**13:53** Formula that concludes a teaching section and introduces a narrative section (cf. 7:28–29; Introduction: Structure).

**13:54** *his hometown.* Nazareth (see note on 2:23). *teaching the people in their synagogue.* See note on Mk 1:21. *synagogue.* See note on Mk 1:21. *amazed.* See note on 7:28.

**13:55–56** The fact that all of Jesus’ family members are mentioned here except the father may indicate that Joseph was no longer alive at the time of this incident.

**13:55** *carpenter’s son.* See note on Mk 6:3. *brothers.* Sons born to Joseph and Mary after the virgin birth of Jesus (see note on Lk 8:19). *James.* See Introduction to James: Author. *Judas.* See Introduction to Jude: Author.

**13:58** *lack of faith.* The close relationship between faith and miracles is stressed in Matthew’s Gospel (cf. 8:10, 13; 9:2, 22, 28–29). But elsewhere we are reminded that miracles may occur to instill faith and are not dependent on faith already existing (cf. Jn 2:1–11; 4:43–54).

**14:1** *tetrarch.* The ruler of a fourth part of a region. “Herod the tetrarch” (Herod Antipas) was one of several sons of Herod the Great. When Herod the Great died, his kingdom was divided among three of his sons (see chart, p. 1638; see also map, p. 1768). Herod Antipas ruled over Galilee and Perea (4 BC–AD 39). Matthew correctly refers to him as tetrarch here, as Luke regularly does (Lk 3:19; 9:7; Ac 13:1). But in v. 9 Matthew calls him “king”—as Mk 6:14 also does—because that was his popular title among the Galileans, as well as in Rome.

**14:2** *John ... risen from the dead.* See note on Mk 6:16.

<sup>3</sup>Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison<sup>2</sup> because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife,<sup>a</sup> <sup>4</sup>for John had been saying to him: "It is not lawful for you to have her."<sup>b</sup> <sup>5</sup>Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they considered John a prophet.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>6</sup>On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for the guests and pleased Herod so much <sup>7</sup>that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. <sup>8</sup>Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist."<sup>9</sup> The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted<sup>10</sup> and had John beheaded<sup>d</sup> in the prison. <sup>11</sup>His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother. <sup>12</sup>John's disciples came and took his body and buried it.<sup>e</sup> Then they went and told Jesus.

### Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

14:13-21pp — Mk 6:32-44; Lk 9:10-17; Jn 6:1-13

14:13-21Ref — Mt 15:32-38

<sup>13</sup>When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. <sup>14</sup>When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them<sup>f</sup> and healed their sick.<sup>g</sup>

<sup>15</sup>As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food."

14:3 <sup>2</sup>Mt 4:12; 11:2 <sup>a</sup>Lk 3:19, 20  
14:4 <sup>b</sup>Lev 18:16; 20:21  
14:5 <sup>c</sup>S Mt 11:9  
14:10 <sup>d</sup>Mt 17:12  
14:12 <sup>e</sup>Ac 8:2  
14:14 <sup>f</sup>S Mt 9:36  
9 S Mt 4:23

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

<sup>17</sup>"We have here only five loaves<sup>h</sup> of bread and two fish," they answered.

<sup>18</sup>"Bring them here to me," he said.

<sup>19</sup>And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves.<sup>i</sup> Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. <sup>20</sup>They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. <sup>21</sup>The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

### Jesus Walks on the Water

14:22-33pp — Mk 6:45-51; Jn 6:16-21

14:34-36pp — Mk 6:53-56

<sup>22</sup>Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>23</sup>After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray.<sup>j</sup> Later that night, he was there alone, <sup>24</sup>and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

<sup>25</sup>Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. <sup>26</sup>When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost,"<sup>k</sup> they said, and cried out in fear.

<sup>27</sup>But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage!<sup>l</sup> It is I. Don't be afraid."<sup>m</sup>

<sup>28</sup>"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

14:17 <sup>h</sup>Mt 16:9  
14:19 <sup>i</sup>Isa 9:13; Mt 26:26;  
Mk 8:6; Lk 9:16;  
24:30; Ac 2:42;  
20:7, 11; 27:35;  
1Co 10:16; 1Ti 4:4  
14:23 <sup>j</sup>S Lk 3:21  
14:26 <sup>k</sup>Lk 24:37  
14:27 <sup>l</sup>Mt 9:2;  
Ac 23:11  
<sup>m</sup>Da 10:12;  
Mt 17:7; 28:10;  
Lk 1:13, 30; 2:10;  
Ac 18:9; 23:11;  
Rev 1:17

**14:3** Herod had arrested John. See note on Mk 6:17. Herodias. A granddaughter of Herod the Great (see chart, p. 1639). First she married her uncle, Herod Philip (Herod the Great also had another son named Philip), who lived in Rome. While a guest in their home, Herod Antipas persuaded Herodias to leave her husband for him. Marriage to one's brother's wife while the brother was still living was forbidden by the Mosaic law (Lev 18:16). Philip's. The son of Herod the Great and Mariamne, the daughter of Simon the high priest, and thus a half brother of Herod Antipas, born to Malthace (see chart, p. 1638).

**14:6** daughter of Herodias. Salome, according to Josephus. She later married her granduncle, the other Philip (son of Herod the Great), who ruled the northern territories (Lk 3:1). In light of the typical debauchery of an event like this in the Herodian court, her dance may have been provocative, and the performance pleased both Herod and his guests.

**14:9** because of his oaths and his dinner guests. Herod's pride and fear of losing face before his guests prevented him from refusing to do what he had promised.

**14:10** The Jewish historian Josephus also refers to Herod's arrest and execution of John the Baptist (*Antiquities*, 18.5.2).

**14:13-21** See 15:37; Mk 6:32-44; Lk 9:10-17; Jn 6:1-13 and notes.

**14:13** what had happened. Probably refers to vv. 1-2, namely, Herod's response to reports about Jesus. *withdrew ... to a solitary place.* To avoid the threat of Herod and the pressing

of the crowds. Jesus' time had not yet come (see Jn 2:4 and note; cf. Jn 6:15).

**14:14** compassion. See note on 9:36.

**14:20** twelve basketfuls. See notes on 15:37; Jn 6:13. The 12 baskets were possibly the lunch baskets of the 12 apostles. The 12 baskets of leftovers may also suggest a sufficient abundance to feed all 12 tribes of Israel (cf. note on Ex 25:30). **14:21** besides women and children. Matthew alone notes this, emphasizing the size of the crowd.

**14:23** pray. Matthew speaks of Jesus praying only here and in Gethsemane (cf. 26:36-46).

**14:24** considerable distance from land. See Jn 6:19 and note.

**14:25** Shortly before dawn. Or, more formally, "During the fourth watch of the night," 3:00-6:00 a.m. According to Roman reckoning the night was divided into four watches: (1) 6:00-9:00 p.m., (2) 9:00-midnight, (3) midnight-3:00 a.m. and (4) 3:00-6:00 a.m. (see note on Mk 13:35). The Jews had only three watches during the night: (1) sunset-10:00 p.m., (2) 10:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m. and (3) 2:00 a.m.-sunrise (see Jdg 7:19 and note; 1Sa 11:11). *walking on the lake.* See note on Mk 6:48. *lake.* The Sea of Galilee (see note on Mk 1:16).

**14:26** ghost. See note on Mk 6:49.

**14:27** It is I. Or "I am," possibly an allusion to the divine I AM (cf. Ex 3:14; Isa 43:10; 51:12; Jn 8:58 and note; see also article, p. 106).



<sup>29</sup>“Come,” he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. <sup>30</sup>But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”

<sup>31</sup>Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,”<sup>n</sup> he said, “why did you doubt?”

<sup>32</sup>And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. <sup>33</sup>Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”<sup>o</sup>

<sup>34</sup>When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. <sup>35</sup>And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him <sup>36</sup>and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak,<sup>p</sup> and all who touched it were healed.

### That Which Defiles

15:1-20pp — Mk 7:1-23

**15** Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, <sup>2</sup>“Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!”<sup>q</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? <sup>4</sup>For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’<sup>ar</sup> and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’<sup>bs</sup> <sup>5</sup>But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ <sup>6</sup>they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. <sup>7</sup>You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

<sup>8</sup>“These people honor me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me.

14:31 <sup>o</sup> S Mt 6:30  
14:33 <sup>o</sup> Ps 2:7;  
S Mt 4:3  
14:36 <sup>p</sup> S Mt 9:20  
15:2 <sup>q</sup> Lk 11:38  
15:4 <sup>r</sup> Ex 20:12;  
Dt 5:16; Eph 6:2  
5 Ex 21:17;  
Lev 20:9

15:9 <sup>t</sup> Col 2:20-22 <sup>u</sup> Isa 29:13; Mal 2:2  
15:11 <sup>v</sup> S Ac 10:14, 15 <sup>w</sup> ver 18  
15:13 <sup>x</sup> Isa 60:21; 61:3  
15:14 <sup>y</sup> Mt 23:16, 24; Ro 2:19  
15:15 <sup>z</sup> Lk 6:39  
15:15 <sup>a</sup> Mt 13:36  
15:16 <sup>b</sup> Mt 16:9  
15:18 <sup>c</sup> Mt 12:34;  
Lk 6:45; Jas 3:6  
15:19 <sup>d</sup> Gal 5:19-21  
15:20 <sup>e</sup> Ro 14:14  
15:21 <sup>f</sup> S Mt 11:21  
15:22 <sup>g</sup> S Mt 9:27  
15:22 <sup>h</sup> S Mt 4:24

<sup>9</sup>They worship me in vain;  
their teachings are merely human  
rules.”<sup>cu</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand. <sup>11</sup>What goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them,<sup>v</sup> but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.”<sup>w</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”

<sup>13</sup>He replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted<sup>x</sup> will be pulled up by the roots. <sup>14</sup>Leave them; they are blind guides.<sup>dy</sup> If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.”<sup>z</sup>

<sup>15</sup>Peter said, “Explain the parable to us.”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>16</sup>“Are you still so dull?”<sup>b</sup> Jesus asked them. <sup>17</sup>“Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? <sup>18</sup>But the things that come out of a person’s mouth come from the heart,<sup>c</sup> and these defile them. <sup>19</sup>For out of the heart come evil thoughts — murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.<sup>d</sup> <sup>20</sup>These are what defile a person;<sup>e</sup> but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.”

### The Faith of a Canaanite Woman

15:21-28pp — Mk 7:24-30

<sup>21</sup>Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.<sup>f</sup> <sup>22</sup>A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David,<sup>g</sup> have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.”<sup>h</sup>

<sup>23</sup>Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him,

<sup>a</sup> 4 Exodus 20:12; Deut. 5:16 <sup>b</sup> 4 Exodus 21:17; Lev. 20:9 <sup>c</sup> 9 Isaiah 29:13 <sup>d</sup> 14 Some manuscripts blind guides of the blind

**14:31** You of little faith. See notes on 6:30; Mk 9:24. why did you doubt? See Jas 1:5–8.

**14:33** Son of God. This is the first time the disciples use the full title in addressing Jesus (cf. 3:17, where God called him “my Son”; see also Jn 3:16 and note).

**14:34** Gennesaret. Either the narrow plain (about four miles long and less than two miles wide) on the west side of the Sea of Galilee near the north end (north of Magdala), or a town in the plain. The plain was considered a garden spot, fertile and well watered.

**14:36** just touch the edge of his cloak. See note on Mk 5:28. The Greek word for “edge” indicates the cloak’s tassels, prescribed in the law to be worn by Jewish men (Nu 15:38; also Mt 9:20).

**15:2** tradition of the elders. After the Babylonian exile, the Jewish rabbis began to make meticulous rules and regulations governing the daily life of the people. These were interpretations and applications of the law of Moses, handed down from generation to generation. In Jesus’ day this “tradition of the elders” was in oral form. It was not until

c. AD 200 that it was put into writing in the Mishnah (see note on Ne 10:34). wash. See note on Mk 7:3.

**15:5–6** See notes on Mk 7:11,13.

**15:7–20** See Mk 7:6–23 and notes.

**15:7** hypocrites. See note on 6:2.

**15:8–9** See Isa 29:13 and note.

**15:13** Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted. Probably refers to various Pharisees and teachers of the law who were in Jesus’ audience (vv. 1,12).

**15:15** parable. See note on 13:3. The parable Peter refers to is found in v. 11.

**15:18** See Mk 7:20 and note.

**15:20** eating with unwashed hands does not defile. Jesus, by his “parable” (v. 15) about what is clean and unclean, answers the Pharisees’ initial question (v. 1).

**15:21** Tyre. See note on Mk 7:24. Sidon. About 25 miles north of Tyre.

**15:22** Canaanite. A term found many times in the OT but only here in the NT. In NT times there was no country





**First-century synagogue at Magdala, which is likely the site of Magadan (Mt 15:39).**

trabantos/Shutterstock

“Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”

<sup>24</sup>He answered, **“I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”**<sup>i</sup>

<sup>25</sup>The woman came and knelt before him.<sup>j</sup> “Lord, help me!” she said.

<sup>26</sup>He replied, **“It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”**

<sup>27</sup>“Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.”

<sup>28</sup>Then Jesus said to her, **“Woman, you have great faith!<sup>k</sup> Your request is granted.”** And her daughter was healed at that moment.

### Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

15:29–31pp — Mk 7:31–37

15:32–39pp — Mk 8:1–10

15:32–39Ref — Mt 14:13–21

<sup>29</sup>Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on

15:24 <sup>i</sup>Mt 10:6,  
23; Ro 15:8  
15:25 <sup>j</sup>S Mt 8:2  
15:28 <sup>k</sup>S Mt 9:22

a mountainside and sat down. <sup>30</sup>Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them.<sup>l</sup> <sup>31</sup>The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.<sup>m</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Jesus called his disciples to him and said, **“I have compassion for these people;<sup>n</sup> they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way.”**

<sup>33</sup>His disciples answered, “Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?”

<sup>34</sup>**“How many loaves do you have?”** Jesus asked.

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

15:30 <sup>l</sup>S Mt 4:23  
15:31 <sup>m</sup>S Mt 9:8  
15:32 <sup>n</sup>S Mt 9:36

known as Canaan, but Matthew likely uses this archaic designation to evoke the past enmity between Israel and the people of Canaan. This heightens the impact of Jesus’ healing. Mark says the woman was “a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia” (7:26; see note there). *Son of David*. See note on 9:27; shows that this pagan woman had some recognition of Jesus’ Messianic claims. *demon-possessed*. See Mk 1:23; Lk 4:33 and notes.

**15:24** *I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel*. Specifying the scope of Jesus’ earthly ministry (cf. 10:5), which makes more pronounced his healing of Gentiles who exhibit exceptional faith (e.g., here and in 8:5–13). What seems like a deliberate insult may have been intended to draw out the woman’s faith and show Jesus’ disciples that she should not be sent away as inferior or unworthy of God’s blessing.

**15:26** *children’s*. “The lost sheep of Israel” (v. 24). *bread*. God’s covenanted blessings. *dogs*. An insult referring to Gentiles. Jesus’ point was that the gospel was to be given first to Jews. The woman understood Jesus’ implication and was willing to settle for “crumbs” (v. 27). Jesus rewarded her “great faith” (v. 28).

**15:28** Jesus was pleased with the woman’s reply (v. 27). It revealed not only her wit but also her faith and humility. *Woman*. See NIV text note on Jn 2:4.

**15:29** *there*. The “region of Tyre and Sidon” (v. 21; see note on Mk 7:31).

**15:31** *amazed*. Cf. Mk 1:22 and note.

**15:32–39** See notes on Mk 8:1–10.

**15:32** *compassion*. See note on 9:36.

<sup>35</sup>He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. <sup>36</sup>Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them<sup>o</sup> and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people. <sup>37</sup>They all ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.<sup>p</sup> <sup>38</sup>The number of those who ate was four thousand men, besides women and children. <sup>39</sup>After Jesus had sent the crowd away, he got into the boat and went to the vicinity of Magadan.

### The Demand for a Sign

16:1-12pp — Mk 8:11-21

**16** The Pharisees and Sadducees<sup>q</sup> came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven.<sup>r</sup>

<sup>2</sup>He replied, “When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’<sup>3</sup> and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.”<sup>4s</sup> <sup>4</sup>A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.”<sup>t</sup> Jesus then left them and went away.

### The Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

<sup>5</sup>When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. <sup>6</sup>“Be careful,” Jesus said to them. “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”<sup>u</sup>

15:36 <sup>o</sup>S Mt 14:19  
15:37 <sup>p</sup>Mt 16:10  
16:1 <sup>q</sup>S Ac 4:1  
16:1 <sup>r</sup>S Mt 12:38  
16:3 <sup>s</sup>Lk 12:54-56  
16:4 <sup>t</sup>Mt 12:39  
16:6 <sup>u</sup>Lk 12:1

<sup>7</sup>They discussed this among themselves and said, “It is because we didn’t bring any bread.”

<sup>8</sup>Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, “You of little faith,<sup>v</sup> why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? <sup>9</sup>Do you still not understand? Don’t you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered?<sup>w</sup> <sup>10</sup>Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered?<sup>x</sup> <sup>11</sup>How is it you don’t understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” <sup>12</sup>Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.<sup>y</sup>

### Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

16:13-16pp — Mk 8:27-29; Lk 9:18-20

<sup>13</sup>When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

<sup>14</sup>They replied, “Some say John the Baptist;<sup>z</sup> others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>15</sup>“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

<sup>16</sup>Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 2,3 Some early manuscripts do not have *When evening comes . . . of the times.*

**15:36** when he had given thanks. The Jewish practice at meals (1Ti 4:3–5).

**15:37** The feeding of the 5,000 is recorded in all four Gospels, but the feeding of the 4,000 is only in Matthew and Mark. The seven baskets mentioned here were probably larger than those mentioned in the feeding of the 5,000 and may represent the number of completeness, signifying the gospel going out into all the world.

**15:39** Magadan. Also called Magdala, the home of Mary Magdalene. In 2009 the remains of a 2,000-year-old synagogue were discovered in Magdala. Mk 8:10 has “Dalmanutha” (see note there; see also photo, p. 1670; and map, p. 1841).

**16:1** Pharisees and Sadducees. See note on 3:7. Normally these two groups were opponents, but they had a common enemy in Jesus. *sign from heaven.* See note on Mk 8:11.

**16:4** sign of Jonah. See 12:39–40 and note on Lk 11:30.

**16:6** yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees. See v. 12; see also note on Mk 8:15.

**16:7** because we didn’t bring any bread. Apparently the disciples took Jesus’ statement about “yeast” (v. 6) to somehow relate to their being short of bread. Perhaps they assumed they would be required to bake bread when they arrived at the other side of the lake and thought they were being warned by Jesus not to use any yeast provided by the spiritually contaminated religious leaders.

**16:8** little faith. See 14:31 and note on 6:30. Here the dis-

ciples’ “little faith” is closely connected to their misunderstanding of Jesus’ teachings (vv. 8–10).

**16:12** Matthew often explains the meaning of Jesus’ words (cf. 17:13).

**16:13** Caesarea Philippi. To be distinguished from the magnificent city of Caesarea, which Herod the Great had built on the Mediterranean coast. Caesarea Philippi, rebuilt by Herod’s son Philip (who named it after Tiberius Caesar and himself), was north of the Sea of Galilee near one of the three sources of the Jordan River. Originally it was called Paneas (the ancient name survives today as Banias) in honor of the Greek god Pan, whose shrine was located there. The region was especially pagan. *Who do people say the Son of Man is?* See note on Lk 9:18. *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31.

**16:14** John the Baptist. See Mk 6:16 and note. *Elijah.* See Mk 6:15 and note.

**16:16** Peter answered. As spokesperson for the Twelve. *Messiah.* See second NIV text note on 1:1; see also note on Jn 1:25. The Hebrew word for *Messiah* (“anointed one”) can be used of anyone who was anointed with the holy oil, such as the priests and kings of Israel (e.g., Ex 29:7,21; 1Sa 10:1,6; 16:13; 2Sa 1:14,16). The word carries the idea of being chosen by God, consecrated to his service, and endowed with his power to accomplish the assigned task. Toward the end of the OT period the word assumed a special meaning. It denoted the ideal king anointed and empowered by God to rescue his people from their enemies and establish his

## Jesus Builds His Church

Mt 16:18



**W**hen Jesus says to Peter, “you are Peter (Greek: *petros*), and on this rock (Greek: *petra*) I will build my church,” what does he mean? This statement has been interpreted in quite a variety of ways in the history of the church, especially given the potential ambiguity of the wordplay used. What forms the church’s foundation (“this rock”) according to Jesus’ words?

A common Protestant view is that the rock stands as an analogy for (or a “type” of) Peter’s faith. Given that Peter has, just before this affirmation, confessed by faith that Jesus is the Messiah (16:16), this view has contextual support. Similarly, the Eastern view sees “this rock” expressly as the confession of Jesus as the Messiah, which provides the bedrock for the church’s faithful teaching. In both views, Peter’s faith or confession is to be emulated by other disciples of Jesus.

Another line of interpretation understands Jesus himself to be the rock on which the church is built, taking the content of the confession of Jesus as the Messiah to be the referent of “this rock.” This was, for example, Augustine’s view.

Those who understand Peter to be “this rock” emphasize that the wordplay itself points clearly in this direction. The two terms, *petros* (Peter’s name) and *petra* (a feminine noun, meaning rock), are to mutually inform each other. And if the saying was originally in Aramaic (Jesus’ mother-tongue), the same term—*kepha*—would have likely been used in both cases (in other words, the slight distinction in Greek is not significant). Furthermore, the immediate context fits this view, since Peter is given very high authority (the “keys of the kingdom”; v. 19) in the following sentence.

This last view can be divided into two distinct interpretive camps. The Catholic view sees Peter as the foundation of the church, which provides apostolic continuity and papal succession from the time of the NT until today. This viewpoint, however, only became official Roman Catholic doctrine after the time of the Reformation with its Protestant critique of the papacy. The other camp understands Peter to be the clearest referent in context (given the wordplay), though not as a unique basis for the church but as a model and representative for the other disciples and for future believers. This view has support from later in Matthew’s Gospel, since the authority promised to Peter in 16:19 as a part of this saying of Jesus (to bind and loose) is given to all the disciples by Jesus in 18:19. This interpretation may also find some additional support in the statement in Eph 2:20 that the church is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.”

<sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood,<sup>c</sup> but by my Father in heaven.<sup>d</sup> <sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter,<sup>ae</sup> and on this rock I will build my church,<sup>f</sup> and the gates of Hades<sup>b</sup> will not overcome it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys<sup>g</sup>

<sup>16:17</sup> <sup>1</sup>Co 15:50;  
Eph 6:12;  
Heb 2:14  
<sup>d</sup> S Mt 13:11  
<sup>16:18</sup> <sup>e</sup> Jn 1:42  
<sup>f</sup> S Eph 2:20  
<sup>16:19</sup> <sup>g</sup> Isa 22:22;  
Rev 3:7  
<sup>h</sup> Mt 18:18;  
Jn 20:23

of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be<sup>e</sup> bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be<sup>e</sup> loosed in heaven.”<sup>h</sup> <sup>20</sup> Then he ordered his

<sup>a</sup> 18 The Greek word for *Peter* means *rock*. <sup>b</sup> 18 That is, the realm of the dead <sup>c</sup> 19 Or *will have been*

righteous kingdom (Da 9:25–26). The ideas that clustered around the title *Messiah* tended to be political and national in nature. Probably for that reason Jesus seldom used the term. When he did accept it as applied to himself, he did so with reservations (Mt 16:21; cf. Mk 8:27–30; 14:61–63).

**16:17** *Simon son of Jonah.* In Jn 1:42 Jesus identifies Peter as “Simon son of John.” Probably Simon Peter was the son of Johanan (the Hebrew form of the name), and Jonah is an Aramaic abbreviation of Johanan, while John is from the Greek form of the name. *flesh and blood.* See notes on 1Co 15:50; Gal 1:16.

**16:18** *Peter ... rock ... church.* In the Greek “Peter” is *petros* (“rock” or “stone”), and “rock” is *petra* (“rock” or “bed-rock”). The rock on which the church is built is (1) Peter’s confession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah (v. 16) or (2) Peter himself, understood in terms of his role on the day of Pente-

cost (Ac 2), the Cornelius incident (Ac 10) and his leadership among the apostles. Eph 2:20 indicates that the church is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (see note on Jn 1:42). *church.* In the Gospels this word is used only by Matthew (here and twice in 18:17). In the Septuagint (the pre-Christian Greek translation of the OT) it is used for the congregation of Israel. In Greek circles of Jesus’ day it indicated the assembly of free, voting citizens in a city (cf. Ac 19:32,39,41). *Hades.* The place of departed spirits, generally equivalent to the Hebrew *Sheol* (see note on Ge 37:35). The “gates of Hades” (see note on Job 17:16) here may refer to the powers of death (i.e., all forces opposed to Christ and his kingdom), which will not prove victorious over Christ’s church. See article above.

**16:19** *keys.* Perhaps Peter used these “keys” on the day of

disciples not to tell anyone<sup>i</sup> that he was the Messiah.

### Jesus Predicts His Death

16:21-28pp — Mk 8:31–9:1; Lk 9:22-27

<sup>21</sup>From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem<sup>j</sup> and suffer many things<sup>k</sup> at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law,<sup>l</sup> and that he must be killed<sup>m</sup> and on the third day<sup>n</sup> be raised to life.<sup>o</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!”

<sup>23</sup>Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan!<sup>p</sup> You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

<sup>24</sup>Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.<sup>q</sup> <sup>25</sup>For whoever wants to save their life<sup>a</sup> will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.” <sup>26</sup>What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

16:20<sup>i</sup> S Mk 8:30  
16:21<sup>j</sup> S Lk 9:51  
k Ps 22:6;  
Isa 53:3;  
Mt 26:67, 68;  
Mk 10:34;  
Lk 17:25; Jn 18:22,  
23; 19:31 Mt 27:1,  
2<sup>m</sup> Ac 2:23;  
3:13<sup>n</sup> Hos 6:2;  
Mt 12:40;  
Lk 24:21, 46;  
Jn 2:19; 1Co 15:3,  
4<sup>o</sup> Mt 17:22, 23;  
27:63; Mk 9:31;  
Lk 9:22; 18:31-33;  
24:6, 7  
16:23<sup>p</sup> S Mt 4:10  
16:24<sup>q</sup> Mt 10:38;  
Lk 14:27  
16:25<sup>r</sup> S Jn 12:25

16:27<sup>s</sup> S Mt 8:20  
t S Lk 17:30;  
Jn 14:3; Ac 1:11;  
S 1Co 1:7;  
S 1Th 2:19; 4:16;  
S Rev 1:7; 22:7,  
12, 20<sup>u</sup> 2Ch 6:23;  
Job 34:11;  
Ps 62:12;  
Jer 17:10;  
Eze 18:20;  
1Co 3:12-15;  
2Co 5:10;  
Rev 22:12  
17:1<sup>v</sup> S Mt 4:21

<sup>27</sup>For the Son of Man<sup>s</sup> is going to come<sup>t</sup> in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.<sup>u</sup>

<sup>28</sup>“Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

### The Transfiguration

17:1-8pp — Lk 9:28-36

17:1-13pp — Mk 9:2-13

**17** After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John<sup>v</sup> the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. <sup>2</sup>There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. <sup>3</sup>Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

<sup>4</sup>Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters — one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

<sup>5</sup>While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from

<sup>a</sup> 25 The Greek word means either *life* or *soul*; also in verse 26.

Pentecost (Ac 2) when he announced that the door of the kingdom was unlocked to Jews and converts to Judaism and later when he acknowledged that it was also opened to Gentiles (Ac 10; cf. Isa 22:22; Rev 3:7 and notes). *bind ... loose*. Not authority to determine, but to announce, guilt or innocence (see 18:18 and context; cf. Jn 20:23 and note; Ac 5:3,9). As these were terms used in Jewish discussions of the law, it may be that the church is being given authority to determine the application of laws.

**16:20** *not to tell*. Because of the false concepts of the Jews, who looked for a primarily national and political Messiah, Jesus didn't want to precipitate a revolution against Rome (see notes on 8:4; Lk 9:21).

**16:21** *began*. The beginning of a new emphasis in Jesus' ministry. Instead of teaching the crowds in parables, he concentrated on preparing the disciples for his coming suffering and death. *must go ... suffer ... be killed ... be raised*. See 17:12,22-23; 20:17-19 and parallels in the other Gospels. This assertion by Jesus was contrary to Jewish expectations (see Jn 12:34 and note). It was, nevertheless, in accordance with the OT (see 26:24,31,54; Mk 14:21,27,49; Lk 18:31-33; 22:37; 24:25-27,44-46 and note on 24:44).

**16:22** *Peter ... began to rebuke him*. See note on Mk 8:32.

**16:23** *Satan*. A loanword from Hebrew, meaning “adversary” or “accuser” (see NIV text note on Job 1:6; see also notes on Mk 8:33; Rev 2:9). *stumbling block*. The “rock” (see NIV text note on v. 18) became a “stumbling block.”

**16:24** See note on Mk 8:34. *take up their cross*. See note on 10:38 (Lk 9:23 adds “daily”; see also note there).

**16:25** *save their life*. See note on Mk 8:35. *whoever loses their life*. See note on Lk 9:24.

**16:26** *whole world*. See note on Mk 8:36. *soul*. See note on 10:28.

**16:27** *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31. *is going to come*. The second coming of Christ. *in his Father's glory*. See note on Mk 8:38; cf. Jn 17:1-5. *according to what they have done*. See

Ps 62:12 and note; see also notes on Ro 2:1-16; 2:6-8.

**16:28** There are two main interpretations of this verse: (1) It is a prediction of the transfiguration, which happened a week later (17:1) and which demonstrated that Jesus will return “in his Father's glory” (16:27). (2) It refers to the Son of Man's authority and kingly reign in his postresurrection church. Some of his disciples will witness—even participate in—this as described in the book of Acts. The context seems to favor the first view, though given that the transfiguration is a foreshadowing of the resurrection, both horizons might be in view. See note on 2Pe 1:16. *Son of Man coming in his kingdom*. An allusion to Da 7:13-14 (see note on 10:23).

**17:1-9** The transfiguration was: (1) a revelation of the glory of the Son of God, a glory hidden now but to be fully revealed when he returns (2Th 1:10); (2) a confirmation of Peter's confession (16:13-20); and (3) a beneficial experience for the disciples, who were discouraged after having been reminded so recently of Jesus' impending suffering and death (16:21). See notes on Mk 9:2-7; Lk 9:28-35.

**17:1** *six days*. Mark also says “six days” (Mk 9:2), counting just the days between Peter's confession and the transfiguration, whereas Luke, counting all the days involved, says, “About eight days” (Lk 9:28). *Peter, James and John*. See 26:37; Mk 5:37 and note. *high mountain*. See note on Lk 9:28. *by themselves*. Luke adds “to pray” (Lk 9:28).

**17:2** *he was transfigured*. His appearance changed. The three disciples saw Jesus in his glorified state (Jn 17:5; 2Pe 1:17).

**17:3** *Moses and Elijah*. Moses the lawgiver appears as the representative of the old covenant and the promise of salvation, which was soon to be fulfilled in the death of Jesus. Elijah the prophet appears as the appointed restorer of all things (Mal 4:5-6; Mk 9:11-13). Lk 9:31 says that they talked about Christ's death. See note on Lk 9:30.

**17:4** *three shelters*. See notes on Mk 9:5; Lk 9:33.

**17:5** *bright cloud*. Signifying the presence of God (see Ex 13:21; 19:16 and notes; 24:15-16; 34:5; 40:34-38; see also note



the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”<sup>w</sup> Listen to him!”<sup>x</sup>

<sup>6</sup>When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified.

<sup>7</sup>But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.”<sup>y</sup> <sup>8</sup>When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

<sup>9</sup>As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone<sup>z</sup> what you have seen, until the Son of Man<sup>a</sup> has been raised from the dead.”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>10</sup>The disciples asked him, “Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?”

<sup>11</sup>Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things.<sup>c</sup> <sup>12</sup>But I tell you, Elijah has already come,<sup>d</sup> and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished.<sup>e</sup> In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer<sup>f</sup> at their hands.” <sup>13</sup>Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.<sup>g</sup>

### Jesus Heals a Demon-Possessed Boy

17:14-19pp — Mk 9:14-28; Lk 9:37-42

<sup>14</sup>When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. <sup>15</sup>“Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures<sup>h</sup> and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. <sup>16</sup>I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

<sup>17</sup>“You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.”

<sup>18</sup>Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came

<sup>17:5</sup> <sup>w</sup>S Mt 3:17  
<sup>x</sup>Ac 3:22, 23  
<sup>y</sup>17:9 <sup>v</sup>S Mt 14:27  
<sup>z</sup>17:9 <sup>v</sup>S Mk 8:30  
<sup>a</sup>S Mt 8:20  
<sup>b</sup>S Mt 16:21  
<sup>c</sup>17:11 <sup>c</sup>Mal 4:6;  
Lk 1:16, 17  
<sup>d</sup>17:12 <sup>d</sup>S Mt 11:14  
<sup>e</sup>Mt 14:3, 10  
<sup>f</sup>S Mt 16:21  
<sup>g</sup>17:13 <sup>g</sup>S Mt 3:1  
<sup>h</sup>17:15 <sup>h</sup>Mt 4:24

<sup>17:20</sup> <sup>i</sup>S Mt 21:21  
<sup>j</sup>Mt 13:31; Lk 17:6  
<sup>k</sup>1Co 13:2  
<sup>l</sup>17:22 <sup>i</sup>S Mt 8:20  
<sup>m</sup>17:23 <sup>m</sup>Ac 2:23;  
3:13  
<sup>n</sup>S Mt 16:21  
<sup>o</sup>S Mt 16:21  
<sup>p</sup>17:24 <sup>p</sup>Ex 30:13  
<sup>q</sup>17:25 <sup>q</sup>Mt 22:17-21; Ro 13:7  
<sup>r</sup>17:27 <sup>r</sup>Jn 6:61

out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment.

<sup>19</sup>Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

<sup>20</sup>He replied, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith<sup>i</sup> as small as a mustard seed,<sup>j</sup> you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move.<sup>k</sup> Nothing will be impossible for you.” [21]<sup>a</sup>

### Jesus Predicts His Death a Second Time

17:22-23pp — Mk 9:31-32; Lk 9:43b-45

<sup>22</sup>When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, “The Son of Man<sup>l</sup> is going to be delivered into the hands of men. <sup>23</sup>They will kill him,<sup>m</sup> and on the third day<sup>n</sup> he will be raised to life.”<sup>o</sup> And the disciples were filled with grief.

### The Temple Tax

<sup>24</sup>After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma temple tax<sup>p</sup> came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?”

<sup>25</sup>“Yes, he does,” he replied.

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes<sup>q</sup>—from their own children or from others?”

<sup>26</sup>“From others,” Peter answered.

“Then the children are exempt,” Jesus said to him. <sup>27</sup>“But so that we may not cause offense,<sup>r</sup> go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch;

<sup>a</sup> 21 Some manuscripts include here words similar to Mark 9:29 (see NIV text note there).

on Mk 9:7). *them*. Jesus, Moses and Elijah. *This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased*. The same words spoken from heaven at Jesus’ baptism, which allude to Isa 42:1 and Ps 2:7 (see 3:17 and note). No mere man, but the very Son of God, was transfigured. *Listen to him!* See note on Mk 9:7.

**17:6** *terrified*. Also with a sense of awe at the presence and majesty of God—a frequent response to theophanies (divine manifestations) in the Bible.

**17:9** *Don’t tell anyone*. See note on Mk 9:9; cf. Lk 9:36.

**17:10** Traditional Jewish eschatology, based on Mal 4:5–6, held that Elijah must appear before the coming of the Messiah. The disciples reasoned that if Jesus really was the Messiah, as the transfiguration proved him to be, then Elijah should have appeared.

**17:12** *In the same way*. As John the Baptist was not recognized and was killed (see 14:1–12), so Jesus would be rejected and killed (see vv. 22–23 and note).

**17:13** See note on 16:12.

**17:15** *seizures*. See note on 4:24.

**17:17** *unbelieving*. See v. 20 and note.

**17:18** Not all seizures were the result of demon possession, but these were.

**17:20** *little faith*. Not so much the quantity of their faith as its quality. Even though the Twelve have already been given authority to cast out demons (10:1), they could not do so here because of their inadequate faith. *mustard seed*. See 13:31–32 and notes. *say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there.’* A proverbial statement meaning to remove great difficulties (cf. Isa 54:10; Zec 4:7 and note; 1Co 13:2).

**17:22–23** The second prediction of Christ’s death, the first being in 16:21 (see note there).

**17:22** *Galilee*. See note on Mk 9:30. *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31.

**17:24** *Capernaum*. See note on 4:13. *two-drachma temple tax*. The annual temple tax required of every male 20 years of age and older (Ex 30:13; 2Ch 24:9; Ne 10:32). It was worth half a shekel (approximately two days’ wages) and was used for the upkeep of the temple.

**17:25** *What do you think ... ?* Jesus frequently asks this question in Matthew’s Gospel (18:12; 21:28; 22:17,42).

**17:26** *the children are exempt*. The implication is that Peter and the rest of the disciples belonged to God’s royal household and so were not required to pay the tax (see 21:43).

**17:27** *not cause offense*. The Son of God, who controls the entire universe (see Heb 1:2–3 and note), is careful





open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.”

## The Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven

18:1-5pp — Mk 9:33-37; Lk 9:46-48

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

<sup>2</sup>He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. <sup>3</sup>And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children,<sup>5</sup> you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.<sup>1</sup> <sup>4</sup>Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>u</sup> <sup>5</sup>And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.<sup>v</sup>

## Causing to Stumble

<sup>6</sup>“If anyone causes one of these little ones — those who believe in me — to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.<sup>w</sup> <sup>7</sup>Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come!<sup>x</sup> <sup>8</sup>If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble,<sup>y</sup> cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.<sup>z</sup> <sup>9</sup>And if your eye causes you to stumble,<sup>z</sup> gouge it out and throw it away. It is better

18:3 <sup>s</sup>Mt 19:14;  
1Pe 2:2 <sup>t</sup>S Mt 3:2  
18:4 <sup>u</sup>S Mk 9:35  
18:5 <sup>v</sup>Mt 10:40  
18:6 <sup>w</sup>Mk 9:42;  
Lk 17:2  
18:7 <sup>x</sup>Lk 17:1  
18:8 <sup>y</sup>S Mt 5:29  
18:9 <sup>z</sup>S Mt 5:29

for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.<sup>a</sup>

## The Parable of the Wandering Sheep

18:12-14pp — Lk 15:4-7

<sup>10</sup>“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels<sup>b</sup> in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.<sup>[1]</sup><sup>a</sup>

<sup>12</sup>“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? <sup>13</sup>And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. <sup>14</sup>In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.

## Dealing With Sin in the Church

<sup>15</sup>“If your brother or sister<sup>b</sup> sins,<sup>c</sup> go and point out their fault,<sup>c</sup> just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. <sup>16</sup>But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’<sup>dd</sup> <sup>17</sup>If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church;<sup>e</sup> and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup>S Mt 5:22  
18:10 <sup>b</sup>Ge 48:16;  
Ps 34:7; Ac 12:11,  
15; Heb 1:14  
18:15 <sup>c</sup>Lev 19:17;  
Lk 17:3; Gal 6:1;  
Jas 5:19, 20  
18:16 <sup>d</sup>Nu 35:30;  
Dt 17:6; 19:15;  
Jn 8:17; 2Co 13:1;  
1Ti 5:19;  
Heb 10:28  
18:17 <sup>e</sup>1Co 6:1-6  
<sup>f</sup>S Ro 16:17

<sup>a</sup> 11 Some manuscripts include here the words of Luke 19:10. <sup>b</sup> 15 The Greek word for brother or sister (*adelphos*) refers here to a fellow disciple, whether man or woman; also in verses 21 and 35. <sup>c</sup> 15 Some manuscripts *sins against you* <sup>d</sup> 16 Deut. 19:15

not to offend (cf. 11:28–30; 12:20) and expects his followers to avoid causing offense as well (18:6–9).

**18:1** Who ... is the greatest ... ? A question about status that Jesus subverts by using the example of children, who had little social status in the first century (see vv. 2–4 and note on Lk 9:46).

**18:3** like little children. Children in the ancient world were not accorded high status, so Jesus uses their example to teach that the kingdom is not about competing for positions of status (cf. 20:20–22).

**18:4** greatest. See note on Lk 9:48.

**18:6, 10, 14** little ones. This term refers to disciples, regardless of age, of lower status and so more vulnerable to harmful influence (see 10:42; see also Mk 9:42 and note; Lk 17:2).

**18:6** large millstone. Or, more formally, “millstone of a donkey,” i.e., a millstone turned by a donkey—far larger and heavier than the small millstones (24:41) used by women each morning.

**18:8–9** Hyperbole: Deal as drastically as necessary with sin in order to remove it from your life. This calls for self-discipline. See note on 5:29–30.

**18:8** thrown into eternal fire. See Rev 19:20 and note; 20:15.

**18:9** hell. See note on 5:22.

**18:10** their angels. This verse is often used to support the belief in personal guardian angels, but the point of the passage is that one role of angels is to care for God’s people (Ps 34:7; 91:11; Heb 1:14). *always see the face of*. Have constant access to.

**18:12–14** The parable of the wandering (vv. 12–13) sheep is also found in Lk 15:3–7 (there, “lost sheep”). There it applies to unbelievers, here to believers. Jesus used the same parable to teach different truths in different situations.

**18:12** sheep. See note on Lk 15:4.

**18:13** Cf. the “father” in the parable of the lost son (Lk 15:31–32).

**18:14** not willing that any ... should perish. See 1Ti 2:4; 2Pe 3:9 and notes.

**18:15** brother or sister. Fellow believer. *just between the two of you*. To protect the brother or sister from the harm caused by gossip. Cf. Gal 6:1–2 and notes.

**18:16** The citation of Dt 19:15 is a reminder that the additional person functions to protect the accused from false testimony.

**18:17** church. Local congregation, in Matthew’s context a fairly small church meeting in one of the member’s household. Here and 16:18 (see note there) are the only two places where the Gospels use the word “church.” *pagan*. For the Jews this meant any Gentile. *tax collector*. See note on 5:46. This verse establishes one basis for excluding someone from church fellowship or at least for not treating this person as a Christian (when people refuse to respond to church discipline; see 2Th 3:14 and note; cf. Ro 16:17). The goal, presumably, would be to make the absence of Christian fellowship keenly felt so the person would desire to return to the church (as implied in 1Co 5:5).

<sup>18</sup>“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be<sup>a</sup> bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be<sup>a</sup> loosed in heaven.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>19</sup>“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them<sup>b</sup> by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”<sup>i</sup>

### The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me?<sup>j</sup> Up to seven times?”<sup>k</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.”<sup>l</sup>

<sup>23</sup>“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like<sup>m</sup> a king who wanted to settle accounts<sup>n</sup> with his servants. <sup>24</sup>As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold<sup>c</sup> was brought to him. <sup>25</sup>Since he was not able to pay,<sup>o</sup> the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold<sup>p</sup> to repay the debt.

<sup>26</sup>“At this the servant fell on his knees before him.<sup>q</sup> ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’

<sup>27</sup>The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

<sup>28</sup>“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.<sup>d</sup> He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

<sup>29</sup>“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

<sup>30</sup>“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When the other servants saw what had happened, they

**18:18** <sup>9</sup> Mt 16:19; Jn 20:23  
**18:19** <sup>h</sup> S Mt 7:7  
**18:20**  
**18:21** <sup>i</sup> S Mt 28:20  
**18:22** <sup>l</sup> Ge 4:24  
**18:23** <sup>m</sup> S Mt 13:24  
**18:25** <sup>o</sup> Lk 7:42  
**18:26** <sup>p</sup> Lev 25:39; 2Ki 4:1; Ne 5:5,8  
**18:26** <sup>q</sup> S Mt 8:2

**18:35** <sup>r</sup> S Mt 6:14; S Jas 2:13  
**19:1** <sup>s</sup> S Mt 7:28  
**19:2** <sup>t</sup> S Mt 4:23  
**19:3** <sup>u</sup> Mt 5:31  
**19:4** <sup>v</sup> Ge 1:27; 5:2  
**19:5** <sup>w</sup> Ge 2:24; 1Co 6:16; Eph 5:31  
**19:7** <sup>x</sup> Dt 24:1-4; Mt 5:31

were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

<sup>32</sup>“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. <sup>33</sup>Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ <sup>34</sup>In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

<sup>35</sup>“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”<sup>r</sup>

### Divorce

19:1-9pp — Mk 10:1-12

**19** When Jesus had finished saying these things,<sup>s</sup> he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan. <sup>2</sup>Large crowds followed him, and he healed them<sup>t</sup> there.

<sup>3</sup>Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife<sup>u</sup> for any and every reason?”

<sup>4</sup>“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’<sup>ev</sup> <sup>5</sup>and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?<sup>f</sup> <sup>6</sup>So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

<sup>7</sup>“Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”<sup>x</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from

<sup>a</sup> 18 Or will have been <sup>b</sup> 22 Or seventy times seven

<sup>c</sup> 24 Greek ten thousand talents; a talent was worth about 20 years of a day laborer’s wages. <sup>d</sup> 28 Greek a hundred denarii; a denarius was the usual daily wage of a day laborer (see 20:2). <sup>e</sup> 4 Gen. 1:27 <sup>f</sup> 5 Gen. 2:24

**18:18** See note on 16:19.

**18:19** anything. Probably not a reference to prayer generally but to disciplinary decisions, especially in the context of vv. 15–18.

**18:20** Christ promises his presence with those involved in the proper disciplinary function of the church as well as in the meeting of the church more generally.

**18:22** seventy-seven times. An allusion to Ge 4:24, where revenge spirals out of control (from seven to seventy-seven times) between the generations of Cain and Lamech. Jesus now commends forgiveness as many times as is necessary (see NIV text note).

**18:23** kingdom of heaven. See note on 3:2.

**18:24** ten thousand bags of gold. See NIV text note.

**18:25** For this practice of selling into slavery, see Ex 21:2; Lev 25:39; 2Ki 4:1; Ne 5:5; Isa 50:1.

**18:28** hundred silver coins. See NIV text note.

**18:34** until he should pay back all he owed. Effectively never, because the debt was so large (v. 24) and because there was no opportunity to earn money while in prison.



**18:35** God is very forgiving, but he also judges those who refuse to forgive (v. 34; cf. 6:12,14–15).

**19:1** Judea. See note on Mk 10:1. other side of the Jordan. The east side, known later as Transjordan or Perea and today simply as Jordan. Jesus now began ministering there (see note on Lk 13:22). Jordan. See note on Mk 1:5.

**19:3** Pharisees. See note on Mk 2:16. for any and every reason. This last part of the question is not in the parallel passage in Mark (10:2). Matthew possibly included it because he was writing to Jews, who were aware of the dispute between the schools of Shammai and Hillel over the interpretation of Dt 24:1–4. Shammai held that “something indecent” (Dt 24:1) meant “sexual immorality” (Mt 19:9)—the only allowable cause for divorce. Hillel emphasized the preceding clause, “who becomes displeasing to him” (Dt 24:1). He would allow a man to divorce his wife if she did anything he disliked—even if she burned his food while cooking it. Jesus clearly took the side of Shammai (v. 9), but only after first pointing back to God’s original ideal for marriage in Ge 1:27; 2:24.

the beginning. <sup>9</sup>I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”<sup>y</sup>

<sup>10</sup>The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.”

<sup>11</sup>Jesus replied, “Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given.<sup>z</sup> <sup>12</sup>For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others—and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.”

### The Little Children and Jesus

19:13–15pp — Mk 10:13–16; Lk 18:15–17

<sup>13</sup>Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them<sup>a</sup> and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them.

<sup>14</sup>Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs<sup>b</sup> to such as these.”<sup>c</sup> <sup>15</sup>When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

### The Rich and the Kingdom of God

19:16–29pp — Mk 10:17–30; Lk 18:18–30

<sup>16</sup>Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”<sup>d</sup>

<sup>17</sup>“Why do you ask me about what is

19:9 <sup>y</sup>S Lk 16:18  
19:11 <sup>z</sup>S Mt 13:11;  
1Co 7:7–9, 17  
19:13 <sup>a</sup>S Mk 5:23  
19:14 <sup>b</sup>S Mt 25:34  
<sup>c</sup>Mt 18:3; 1Pe 2:2  
19:16  
<sup>d</sup>S Mt 25:46  
<sup>e</sup>Lk 10:25

19:17 <sup>f</sup>Lev 18:5  
19:18 <sup>g</sup>Jas 2:11  
19:19 <sup>h</sup>Ex 20:12–16; Dt 5:16–20  
<sup>i</sup>Lev 19:18;  
S Mt 5:43  
19:21 <sup>j</sup>Mt 5:48  
<sup>k</sup>S Ac 2:45  
<sup>l</sup>S Mt 6:20  
19:23 <sup>m</sup>Mt 13:22;  
1Ti 6:9, 10  
19:26 <sup>n</sup>Ge 18:14;  
Job 42:2;  
Jer 32:17; Lk 1:37;  
18:27; Ro 4:21  
19:27 <sup>o</sup>S Mt 4:19

good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.”<sup>i</sup>

<sup>18</sup>“Which ones?” he inquired.

Jesus replied, “‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery,<sup>9</sup> you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony,<sup>19</sup> honor your father and mother,’<sup>ah</sup> and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’”<sup>b”i</sup>

<sup>20</sup>“All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”

<sup>21</sup>Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect,<sup>j</sup> go, sell your possessions and give to the poor,<sup>k</sup> and you will have treasure in heaven.<sup>l</sup> Then come, follow me.”

<sup>22</sup>When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

<sup>23</sup>Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich<sup>m</sup> to enter the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>24</sup>Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>25</sup>When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, “Who then can be saved?”

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

<sup>27</sup>Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you!<sup>o</sup> What then will there be for us?”

<sup>a</sup> 19 Exodus 20:12–16; Deut. 5:16–20 <sup>b</sup> 19 Lev. 19:18

19:9 See note on v. 3.

19:10–12 See 1Co 7:7–8, 26, 32–35.

19:11 *this word.* The disciples’ conclusion in v. 10: “it is better not to marry.” This teaching is not meant for everyone. In v. 12 Jesus gives three examples of persons for whom it is meant.

19:12 *born that way.* Impotent. *made eunuchs.* By castration. *choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.* Those who have voluntarily adopted a celibate lifestyle in order to give themselves more completely to God’s work, as Jesus himself did. Under certain circumstances celibacy is recommended in Scripture (cf. 1Co 7:25–38), but it is never presented as superior to marriage.

19:14 *kingdom of heaven.* See note on 3:2. *belongs to such as these.* See 18:3; Mk 10:14 and notes.

19:15 *placed his hands on them.* Mk 10:16 adds “and blessed them.”

19:16 *a man.* See note on Mk 10:17. *what good thing must I do ... ?* The man’s question may be focused on what commandments to prioritize (see 12:7; 22:34–40; 23:23 and notes). Jesus will focus the man’s attention first on God himself, then on the 10 commandments as central ones, and finally on leaving behind his wealth to follow Jesus. *eternal life.* The first use of this term in Matthew’s Gospel (v. 29; 25:46). In John it occurs much more frequently, often taking the place of the term “kingdom of God (or heaven)” used in the Synoptics, which treat the following three expressions as synonymous: (1) eternal life (v. 16; Mk 10:17; Lk 18:18), (2) entering the kingdom of heaven (v. 23; cf. Mk 10:24; Lk 18:24) and (3) being saved (vv. 25–26; Mk 10:26–27; Lk 18:26–27).

19:17 *Why do you ask me about what is good?* Jesus moves the man from the topic of what is good (what command-

ments to keep) to contemplating who is good—God himself. *There is only One who is good.* The good is not something to be done as meritorious in itself. God alone is good, and all other goodness derives from him—even the keeping of the commandments, which Jesus proceeded to enumerate (vv. 18–20). *If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.* “To enter life” is the same as “to get eternal life” (v. 16). The requirement to “keep the commandments” is not to establish one’s merit before God but is to be an expression of true faith in God. The Bible always teaches that salvation is a gift of God’s grace received through faith (see Eph 2:8–9 and notes).

19:19 *love your neighbor as yourself.* See Lev 19:18 and note. 19:20 *All these I have kept.* See note on Mk 10:20. *lack.* The antonym of “be perfect” (v. 21).

19:21 *perfect.* The Greek word can also mean “whole” or “complete” (see 5:48 and note). The man’s wealth and lack of commitment stood in the way of his complete discipleship. *go, sell your possessions.* In his listing of the commandments (vv. 18–19), Jesus omitted “you shall not covet.” This was the rich man’s main problem and was preventing him from entering life (see note on Mk 10:21).

19:22 *went away sad.* See note on Mk 10:22.

19:23 *kingdom of heaven.* See note on 3:2.

19:24 *camel to go through the eye of a needle.* An impossibility (v. 26), intended to shock his hearers. See note on Mk 10:25.

19:25 *they were greatly astonished.* It was shocking to hear that those society considered divinely blessed would have a difficult time entering the kingdom of God.

19:26 See note on Mk 10:27.

<sup>28</sup>Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne,<sup>p</sup> you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.<sup>q</sup> <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 fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.<sup>r</sup> <sup>30</sup>But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.<sup>s</sup>

### The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

**20** “For the kingdom of heaven is like<sup>t</sup> a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard.<sup>u</sup> <sup>2</sup>He agreed to pay them a denarius<sup>b</sup> for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

<sup>3</sup>“About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. <sup>4</sup>He told them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ <sup>5</sup>So they went.

“He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. <sup>6</sup>About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’

<sup>7</sup>“‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered.

“He said to them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard.’

<sup>8</sup>“When evening came,<sup>v</sup> the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.’

<sup>9</sup>“The workers who were hired about five

**19:28** <sup>p</sup> Mt 20:21; 25:31 <sup>q</sup> Lk 22:28-30; Rev 3:21; 4:4; 20:4  
**19:29** <sup>r</sup> Mt 6:33; S 25:46  
**19:30** <sup>s</sup> Mt 20:16; Mk 10:31; Lk 13:30  
**20:1** <sup>t</sup> S Mt 13:24  
<sup>u</sup> Mt 21:28, 33  
**20:8** <sup>v</sup> Lev 19:13; Dt 24:15

**20:11** <sup>w</sup> Jnh 4:1  
**20:12** <sup>x</sup> Jnh 4:8; Lk 12:55; Jas 1:1  
**20:13** <sup>y</sup> Mt 22:12; 26:50  
**20:15** <sup>z</sup> Dt 15:9; Mk 7:22  
**20:16**  
<sup>a</sup> S Mt 19:30  
**20:18** <sup>b</sup> S Lk 9:51  
<sup>c</sup> S Mt 8:20  
<sup>d</sup> Mt 27:1, 2  
**20:19** <sup>e</sup> S Mt 16:21  
<sup>f</sup> S Ac 2:23  
<sup>g</sup> S Mt 16:21  
<sup>h</sup> S Mt 16:21  
**20:20** <sup>i</sup> S Mt 4:21  
<sup>j</sup> S Mt 8:2

in the afternoon came and each received a denarius.<sup>10</sup> So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius.<sup>11</sup> When they received it, they began to grumble<sup>w</sup> against the landowner.<sup>12</sup> “These who were hired last worked only one hour,” they said, “and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat<sup>x</sup> of the day.”

<sup>13</sup>“But he answered one of them, ‘I am not being unfair to you, friend.<sup>y</sup> Didn’t you agree to work for a denarius?’ <sup>14</sup>Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you.<sup>15</sup> Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’<sup>z</sup>

<sup>16</sup>“So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”<sup>a</sup>

### Jesus Predicts His Death a Third Time

20:17-19pp — Mk 10:32-34; Lk 18:31-33

<sup>17</sup>Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them, <sup>18</sup>“We are going up to Jerusalem,<sup>b</sup> and the Son of Man<sup>c</sup> will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law.<sup>d</sup> They will condemn him to death<sup>19</sup> and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged<sup>e</sup> and crucified.<sup>f</sup> On the third day<sup>g</sup> he will be raised to life!”<sup>h</sup>

### A Mother’s Request

20:20-28pp — Mk 10:35-45

<sup>20</sup>Then the mother of Zebedee’s sons<sup>i</sup> came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down,<sup>j</sup> asked a favor of him.

<sup>a</sup> 29 Some manuscripts do not have *or wife*. <sup>b</sup> 2 A denarius was the usual daily wage of a day laborer.

**19:28** *Truly I tell you.* See note on Mk 3:28. *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31. *judging.* Or governing or ruling (cf. OT “judge”; see Introduction to Judges: Title).

**19:29** *receive a hundred times as much.* Mark adds, “along with persecutions” (see note on Mk 10:30). *inherit eternal life.* Eternal life is not earned; it is a gift. The word “inherit” often occurs in eschatological contexts in the NT (5:5; Mk 10:17; 1Co 6:9-10; 15:50; Gal 5:21; Heb 1:14; 6:12; Rev 21:7).

**19:30** This saying of Jesus also appears in other contexts (see 20:16; Mk 10:31 and note; Lk 13:30). The disciples are to avoid presumption of their role and rank in the kingdom. In the kingdom of heaven there are many reversals, and the day of judgment will bring many surprises.

**20:1-16** This parable occurs only in Matthew’s Gospel. Its main point seems to be the sovereign graciousness and generosity of God extended to latecomers (e.g., Gentiles) into God’s kingdom. It is addressed to the grumblers (v. 11) who just cannot handle this amazing expression of God’s grace. In narrative context, the first-hour workers may represent the Twelve who have just been warned about presumption of reward (19:27-30). In historical context, they would also include the religious leaders opposing Jesus who assumed they would safely be in the kingdom ahead of others (3:7-9).

**20:2** *denarius.* The usual daily wage. A Roman soldier also received one denarius a day.

**20:8** *When evening came.* Because farm workers were poor, the law of Moses required that they be paid at the end of each day (cf. Lev 19:13; Dt 24:14-15).

**20:12** *you have made them equal to us.* The affront of the parable from the perspective of the first workers hired. Those who worked twelve hours were paid the same amount as those who had worked only one hour.

**20:13** *friend.* In Matthew, used as a term of mild rebuke (22:12; 26:50).

**20:15** *are you envious ... ?* An idiom; more formally, “is your eye evil ... ?” An evil eye was associated with jealousy and envy (cf. 1Sa 18:9). *because I am generous.* It was not a matter of justice but of generosity.

**20:16** This saying brackets the parable (see note on 19:30).

**20:17-19** The third passion prediction. See 16:21 and note; see also Mk 10:32-34; Lk 18:31-33 and notes.

**20:19** *will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified.* An additional statement in this third prediction. Jesus would not be killed by the Jews, which would have been by stoning, but would be crucified by the Romans. All three predictions include his resurrection on the third day (16:21; 17:23).

**20:20** *mother of Zebedee’s sons.* Mark has “James and John,



<sup>21</sup>“What is it you want?” he asked.

She said, “Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom.”<sup>k</sup>

<sup>22</sup>“You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said to them. “Can you drink the cup<sup>l</sup> I am going to drink?”

“We can,” they answered.

<sup>23</sup>Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink from my cup,<sup>m</sup> but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father.”

<sup>24</sup>When the ten heard about this, they were indignant<sup>n</sup> with the two brothers.

<sup>25</sup>Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup>Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,<sup>o</sup> <sup>27</sup>and whoever wants to be first must be your slave — <sup>28</sup>just as the Son of Man<sup>p</sup> did not come to be served, but to serve,<sup>q</sup> and to give his life as a ransom<sup>r</sup> for many.”

## Two Blind Men Receive Sight

20:29–34pp — Mk 10:46–52; Lk 18:35–43

<sup>29</sup>As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him. <sup>30</sup>Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, “Lord, Son of David,<sup>s</sup> have mercy on us!”

<sup>31</sup>The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”

<sup>32</sup>Jesus stopped and called them. “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

20:21<sup>k</sup> Mt 19:28  
20:22<sup>l</sup> Isa 51:17;  
22: Jer 49:12;  
Mt 26:39;  
42; Mk 14:36;  
Lk 22:42; Jn 18:11  
20:23<sup>m</sup> Ac 12:2;  
Rev 1:9  
20:24<sup>n</sup> Lk 22:24;  
25  
20:26<sup>o</sup> S Mk 9:35  
20:28  
P S Mt 8:20  
<sup>q</sup> Isa 42:1;  
Lk 12:37; 22:27;  
Jn 13:13–16;  
2Co 8:9; Php 2:7  
<sup>r</sup> Ex 30:12;  
Isa 44:22; 53:10;  
Mt 26:28; 1Ti 2:6;  
Titus 2:14;  
Heb 9:28;  
1Pe 1:18, 19  
20:30<sup>s</sup> S Mt 9:27

21:1<sup>t</sup> Mt 24:3;  
26:30; Mk 14:26;  
Lk 19:37; 21:37;  
22:39; Jn 8:1;  
Ac 1:12  
21:4<sup>u</sup> S Mt 1:22  
21:5<sup>v</sup> Isa 62:11;  
Zec 9:9  
21:8<sup>w</sup> 2Ki 9:13  
21:9<sup>x</sup> ver 15;  
S Mt 9:27

<sup>33</sup>“Lord,” they answered, “we want our sight.”

<sup>34</sup>Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

## Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

21:1–9pp — Mk 11:1–10; Lk 19:29–38

21:4–9pp — Jn 12:12–15

**21** As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives,<sup>t</sup> Jesus sent two disciples,<sup>2</sup> saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup>If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

<sup>4</sup>This took place to fulfill<sup>u</sup> what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup>“Say to Daughter Zion,

‘See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”<sup>av</sup>

<sup>6</sup>The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. <sup>7</sup>They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. <sup>8</sup>A very large crowd spread their cloaks<sup>w</sup> on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup>The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna<sup>b</sup> to the Son of David!”<sup>x</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 5 Zech. 9:9 <sup>b</sup> 9 A Hebrew expression meaning “Savel!” which became an exclamation of praise; also in verse 15

the sons of Zebedee,” asking the question (Mk 10:35–37), yet there is no contradiction. The three joined in making the petition, as the “We can” (v. 22) makes clear.

**20:21** want. See note on Mk 10:35–36. *sit at your right and the other at your left*. See note on Mk 10:37.

**20:22** drink the cup. A figure of speech meaning to “undergo” or “experience.” Here the reference is to suffering (cf. 26:39). The same figure of speech is used in Jer 25:15; Eze 23:31–32; Hab 2:16; Rev 14:10; 16:19; 18:6 for divine wrath or judgment. See note on Mk 10:38.

**20:23** drink from my cup. James was martyred (see Ac 12:2 and note); John was exiled (see Rev 1:9 and note). *is not for me to grant*. See note on Mk 10:40; see also Mt 11:27; 24:36; Jn 14:28.

**20:24** See note on Mk 10:41.

**20:25** lord it over them. Power corrupts.

**20:26** Not so with you. See note on Mk 10:43.

**20:28** Son of Man. See note on Mk 8:31. *ransom*. The Greek word was used most commonly for the price paid to redeem a slave. Similarly, Christ paid the ransom price of his own life to free us from the slavery of sin. *for*. Emphasizes the substitutionary nature of Christ’s death. *many*. An allusion to Isa 53:11 (“my righteous servant will justify many”), this term most likely refers in Isaiah’s context to the people of Israel. Matthew will show that Jesus as the Servant will die for Israel and also for all people (28:19;

cf. Isa 49:5–6). Christ “gave himself as a ransom for all people” (1Ti 2:6). See note on Mk 10:45.

**20:29** Jericho. See note on Mk 10:46.

**20:30** Two blind men. The other Synoptics mention only one (see note on Lk 18:35). *Son of David*. A Messianic title (see note on 9:27).

**20:34** compassion. See note on 9:36.

**21:1** Jerusalem. See maps, pp. 1716, 2475. *Bethphage*. Means “house of figs.” It is mentioned in the Bible only in connection with the “Triumphal” Entry. See map, p. 1745. *Mount of Olives*. See note on Mk 11:1.

**21:2** donkey. An animal symbolic of humility, peace and Davidic royalty (see notes on Zec 9:9; Lk 19:30). See also note on Mk 11:2. *colt*. By entering Jerusalem on a donkey, Jesus was making a claim to kingship (see note on Lk 19:30).

**21:3** Lord. See note on Lk 19:31.

**21:5** See note on Zec 9:9.

**21:7** cloaks ... for Jesus to sit on. We know from Mark (11:2) and Luke (19:30) that he rode the colt. Typically, a mother donkey followed her offspring closely. Matthew mentions two animals, while the other Gospels mention only one (see note on Lk 19:30).

**21:8** spread their cloaks on the road. An act of royal homage (2Ki 9:13). *branches*. See note on Mk 11:8.

**21:9** These are three separate quotations, not necessarily



"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"<sup>ay</sup>

"Hosanna<sup>b</sup> in the highest heaven!"<sup>z</sup>

<sup>10</sup>When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

<sup>11</sup>The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet<sup>a</sup> from Nazareth in Galilee."

### Jesus at the Temple

21:12-16pp — Mk 11:15-18; Lk 19:45-47

<sup>12</sup>Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying<sup>b</sup> and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers<sup>c</sup> and the benches of those selling doves.<sup>d</sup> <sup>13</sup>"It is written," he said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer,"<sup>ce</sup> but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'<sup>d,f</sup>

<sup>14</sup>The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.<sup>g</sup> <sup>15</sup>But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, "Hosanna to the Son of David,"<sup>h</sup> they were indignant.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>16</sup>"Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him.

"Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read,

"'From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise'<sup>e</sup>?"<sup>j</sup>

<sup>21:9</sup> y Ps 118:26;  
Mt 23:39 z Lk 2:14  
<sup>21:11</sup> a Dt 18:15;  
Lk 7:16, 39; 24:19;  
Jn 1:21, 25; 6:14;  
7:40  
<sup>21:12</sup> b Dt 14:26  
c Ex 30:13  
d Lev 1:14  
<sup>21:13</sup> e Isa 56:7  
f Jer 7:11  
<sup>21:14</sup> g S Mt 4:23  
<sup>21:15</sup> h ver 9;  
S Mt 9:27  
i Lk 19:39  
<sup>21:16</sup> j Ps 8:2

<sup>17</sup>And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany,<sup>k</sup> where he spent the night.

### Jesus Curses a Fig Tree

21:18-22pp — Mk 11:12-14, 20-24

<sup>18</sup>Early in the morning, as Jesus was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. <sup>19</sup>Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, "May you never bear fruit again!" Immediately the tree withered.<sup>l</sup>

<sup>20</sup>When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" they asked.

<sup>21</sup>Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt,<sup>m</sup> not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. <sup>22</sup>If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for<sup>n</sup> in prayer."

### The Authority of Jesus Questioned

21:23-27pp — Mk 11:27-33; Lk 20:1-8

<sup>23</sup>Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. "By what authority<sup>o</sup> are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you this authority?"

<sup>a</sup> 9 Psalm 118:25, 26 <sup>b</sup> 9 A Hebrew expression meaning "Save!" which became an exclamation of praise; also in verse 15 <sup>c</sup> 13 Isaiah 56:7  
<sup>d</sup> 13 Jer. 7:11 <sup>e</sup> 16 Psalm 8:2 (see Septuagint)

spoken at the same time. *Hosanna*. See notes on Ps 118:25-26; Jer 31:7; expresses both prayer and praise (see NIV text note). *Son of David*. See note on 9:27. *in the highest heaven*. That is, may those in heaven sing "Hosanna" (Ps 148:1-2; Lk 2:14). See Ps 118:25-26 and notes.

**21:10** *Who is this?* Because of Jesus' dramatic entry into the city, the people of Jerusalem were wondering who he really was.

**21:11** *The crowds answered*. Matthew distinguishes between the people of Jerusalem (v. 10) and the Galilean crowds who have been following Jesus and now celebrate his entry into the city (vv. 8, 9-11). *the prophet*. Refers either to a prophet in general (13:57) or to the prophet predicted in Dt 18:15-18 (see note on 18:15; see also Dt 34:10-12 and note on 34:12). The Galilean crowds who accompany Jesus into Jerusalem affirm him both as Messiah ("Son of David," 21:9) and as prophet.

**21:12-17** In the Synoptics the clearing of the temple occurs during the last week of Jesus' ministry; in John it takes place during the first few months (Jn 2:12-16). Two explanations are possible: (1) There were two clearings, one at the beginning and the other at the end of Jesus' public ministry. (2) There was only one clearing, which took place during Passion Week but which John placed at the beginning of his account for theological reasons—to emphasize a key truth about Jesus; namely, that he, like the temple, is the center of true worship (Jn 2:21-22). Different details are present in the two accounts (the selling of cattle and sheep in Jn 2:14, the whip in Jn 2:15, and the statements of Jesus in Mt 21:13; Jn 2:16). From Matthew's and Luke's accounts we might assume that the clearing of the temple took place on

Sunday, following the so-called "Triumphal" Entry (21:1-11). But Mark (11:15-19) clearly indicates that it was on Monday. Matthew often compressed narratives.

**21:12** *temple courts*. The "buying and selling" took place in the large outer court of the Gentiles, which covered several acres (see notes on Mk 11:15; Lk 19:45; Jn 2:14). *money changers*. See note on Mk 11:15.

**21:13** *house of prayer*. Mark adds "for all nations" (11:17; see note there). *den of robbers*. See Jer 7:11 and note.

**21:16** See Ps 8:1b-2 and note.

**21:17** *Bethany*. See note on Mk 11:1; a village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem and the final station on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem (see map, p. 1745). It was the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (Jn 12:1-3).

**21:18-22** See note on vv. 12-17; another example of compressing narratives. Mark (11:12-14, 20-25) places the cursing of the fig tree on Monday morning and the disciples' finding it withered on Tuesday morning. In Matthew's account the tree withered as soon as Jesus cursed it, emphasizing the immediacy of judgment. For the theological meaning of this event, see note on Mk 11:14.

**21:18** *city*. Jerusalem.

**21:21** *have faith and do not doubt*. See 17:20 and note; Jas 1:5-8. *Go, throw yourself into the sea*. A proverbial hyperbolic statement (cf. 17:20 and note).

**21:22** See 1Jn 5:14-15 and note on 5:14.

**21:23** *temple courts*. See note on Mk 11:27. *chief priests and the elders*. See notes on 2:4; Mk 8:31; Lk 19:47. *By what*

<sup>24</sup>Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. <sup>25</sup>John's baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?"

They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?'" <sup>26</sup>But if we say, 'Of human origin'—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet."<sup>p</sup>

<sup>27</sup>So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

Then he said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

### The Parable of the Two Sons

<sup>28</sup>"What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'<sup>q</sup>

<sup>29</sup>"I will not," he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

<sup>30</sup>"Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.

<sup>31</sup>"Which of the two did what his father wanted?"

"The first," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors<sup>r</sup> and the prostitutes<sup>s</sup> are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.

<sup>32</sup>For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness,<sup>t</sup> and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors<sup>u</sup> and the prostitutes<sup>v</sup> did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent<sup>w</sup> and believe him.

### The Parable of the Tenants

21:33-46 pp — Mk 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-19

<sup>33</sup>"Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted<sup>x</sup> a vineyard. He

21:26 <sup>p</sup> Mt 11:9  
21:28 <sup>q</sup> ver 33;  
Mt 20:1  
21:31 <sup>r</sup> Lk 7:29  
21:32 <sup>s</sup> Mt 3:1-12  
<sup>u</sup> Lk 3:12, 13; 7:29  
<sup>v</sup> Lk 7:36-50  
<sup>w</sup> Lk 7:30  
21:33 <sup>x</sup> Ps 80:8

put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower.<sup>y</sup> Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place.<sup>z</sup> <sup>34</sup>When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants<sup>a</sup> to the tenants to collect his fruit.

<sup>35</sup>"The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third.<sup>b</sup> <sup>36</sup>Then he sent other servants<sup>c</sup> to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. <sup>37</sup>Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said.

<sup>38</sup>"But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir.<sup>d</sup> Come, let's kill him<sup>e</sup> and take his inheritance.'<sup>f</sup> <sup>39</sup>So they took him and threw 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 tenants?"

<sup>41</sup>"He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,"<sup>g</sup> they replied, "and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants,<sup>h</sup> who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."

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

"The stone the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
the Lord has done this,  
and it is marvelous in our eyes"<sup>a</sup>?

<sup>43</sup>"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you<sup>i</sup> and given to a people who will produce its fruit. <sup>44</sup>Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed."<sup>b</sup>

<sup>45</sup>When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he


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

<sup>b</sup> 44 Some manuscripts do not have verse 44.

authority ... ? While Jesus will initially refuse to answer (v. 27), his riddle about David's son and Lord will show that he operates with divine authority (22:41-46). See notes on Mk 11:28; Lk 20:2.

**21:25** from heaven, or of human origin? See notes on Mk 11:30; Lk 20:4.

**21:31** tax collectors. See note on 5:46. kingdom of God. See notes on 3:2; Lk 4:43; 1Co 4:20.

 **21:32** way of righteousness. Doing what is right and obeying God's will, which included believing what Jesus was teaching about how one is to enter the kingdom of God.

**21:33-46** See notes on Mk 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-19.

**21:33** winepress. See notes on Isa 5:2; Rev 14:19. watchtower. For guarding the vineyard, especially when the grapes ripened, and for shelter (see Isa 5:2 and note).

**21:35-37** The vineyard represents the people of Israel (cf. Isa 5:1-7). The tenants represent the Jewish leaders. The servants represent the OT prophets, many of whom were killed. The son represents Christ, who was condemned to death by the religious leaders.

**21:41** other tenants. Gentiles, who are explicitly invited into the kingdom after Jesus' resurrection (28:19). The early church in Acts follows Jesus' pattern by going first to Jews and then to Gentiles (Ac 1:8; 13:14; 14:1; cf. Ro 1:16). Paul was called as an "apostle to the Gentiles" (Ro 11:13) and focused his work toward them when many Jews rejected the gospel (Ac 13:46; 18:6). By the second century much of the church was composed of Gentiles.

**21:42** See note on Ps 118:22. Have you never read ... ? See v. 16; 12:3; 19:4; Mk 12:10.

**21:43** kingdom ... given to a people who will produce its fruit. The kingdom will be taken from the Jewish leaders, who recognized that Jesus had spoken the parable against them (v. 45) and who represent unbelieving Israel. Instead, the kingdom will be given to a people comprised of both Jews and Gentiles who follow Jesus and obey his teachings (28:19-20).

**21:44** will be broken to pieces. See note on Lk 20:18.

**21:45** chief priests. See notes on 2:4; Mk 8:31; Lk 19:47. Pharisees. See notes on 3:7; Mk 2:16; Lk 5:17. parables. See notes on 13:3; Mk 4:2; Lk 8:4.

<sup>y</sup> Isa 5:1-7  
<sup>z</sup> Mt 25:14, 15  
21:34 <sup>a</sup> Mt 22:3  
21:35 <sup>b</sup> 2Ch 24:21;  
Mt 23:34, 37;  
Heb 11:36, 37  
21:36 <sup>c</sup> Mt 22:4  
21:38 <sup>d</sup> Heb 1:2  
<sup>e</sup> S Mt 12:14  
<sup>f</sup> Ps 2:8  
21:41 <sup>g</sup> Mt 8:11, 12  
<sup>h</sup> S Ac 13:46  
21:42 <sup>i</sup> Ps 118:22,  
23; S Ac 4:11  
21:43 <sup>j</sup> Mt 8:12  
21:44 <sup>k</sup> S Lk 2:34

was talking about them. <sup>46</sup>They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.<sup>1</sup>

### The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

22:2-14; Ref — Lk 14:16-24

**22** Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: <sup>2</sup>*“The kingdom of heaven is like<sup>m</sup> a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. <sup>3</sup>He sent his servants<sup>n</sup> to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.*

<sup>4</sup>*“Then he sent some more servants<sup>o</sup> and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.’*

<sup>5</sup>*“But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. <sup>6</sup>The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. <sup>7</sup>The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers<sup>p</sup> and burned their city.*

<sup>8</sup>*“Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. <sup>9</sup>So go to the street corners<sup>q</sup> and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ <sup>10</sup>So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good,<sup>r</sup> and the wedding hall was filled with guests.*

<sup>11</sup>*“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. <sup>12</sup>He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless.*

<sup>13</sup>*“Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him*

21:46 <sup>1</sup>S ver 11, 26  
22:2 <sup>m</sup>S Mt 13:24  
22:3 <sup>n</sup>Mt 21:34  
22:4 <sup>o</sup>Mt 21:36  
22:7 <sup>p</sup>Lk 19:27  
22:9 <sup>q</sup>Eze 21:21  
22:10 <sup>r</sup>Mt 13:47, 48  
22:12 <sup>s</sup>Mt 20:13; 26:50



**“Show me the coin used for paying the tax.’ They brought him a denarius” (Mt 22:19).**

Jay King

outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”<sup>t</sup>

<sup>14</sup>*“For many are invited, but few are chosen.”<sup>u</sup>*

### Paying the Imperial Tax to Caesar

22:15-22pp — Mk 12:13-17; Lk 20:20-26

<sup>15</sup>Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. <sup>16</sup>They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians.<sup>v</sup> “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. <sup>17</sup>Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax<sup>aw</sup> to Caesar or not?”

<sup>18</sup>But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, *“You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? <sup>19</sup>Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius,<sup>20</sup> and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”*

<sup>21</sup>*“Caesar’s,” they replied.*

<sup>a</sup> 17 A special tax levied on subject peoples, not on Roman citizens

22:13 <sup>t</sup>S Mt 8:12  
22:14 <sup>u</sup>Rev 17:14  
22:16 <sup>v</sup>Mk 3:6  
22:17 <sup>w</sup>Mt 17:25

**21:46** afraid ... because the people held that he was a prophet. Cf. v. 26.

**22:1-14** In Luke’s Gospel a similar parable is spoken by Jesus at a banquet in response to a remark made by one of the guests about “the feast in the kingdom of God” (Lk 14:15; see note there).

**22:7** burned their city. A common military practice; here possibly an allusion to the coming destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

**22:11** not wearing wedding clothes. It may have been the custom for a host to provide guests with wedding garments. This would have been necessary for the guests at this banquet in particular, for they were brought in directly from the streets (vv. 9–10). The failure of the man in question to avail himself of a wedding garment was therefore an insult to the host, who had made the garments available.

**22:12** friend. See note on 20:13.

**22:13** gnashing of teeth. See note on 13:42.

**22:14** A proverb-like summary of the meaning of the parable. God invites “many” (likely “all” in view of the Semitic usage of “many”; cf. 20:28; 26:28; Ro 5:15,19) to be

part of his kingdom, but only a comparative “few” are chosen by him. This does not mean that God chooses arbitrarily. The invitation must be accepted, followed by appropriate conduct. Proper behavior is evidence of being chosen.

**22:15-17** Some Pharisees were ardent nationalists, opposed to Roman rule, while the hated Herodians, as their name indicates, supported the Roman rule of the Herods. Now, however, the Pharisees enlisted the help of the Herodians to trap Jesus in his words (cf. note on Mk 3:6). After trying to put him off guard with flattery, they sprang their question: “Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?” (v. 17). If he said “No,” the Herodians could report him to the Roman governor and he would be executed for treason. If he said “Yes,” the Pharisees would denounce him to the people as disloyal to his nation.

**22:17** imperial tax to Caesar. See note on Mk 12:14.

**22:18** hypocrites. See note on 6:2.

**22:19** denarius. The common Roman coin of that day (see note on 20:2; see also photo above). On one side was the portrait of Emperor Tiberius and on the other the inscription in Latin: “Tiberius Caesar Augustus, son of the



Then he said to them, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s,<sup>x</sup> and to God what is God’s.”

<sup>22</sup>When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.<sup>y</sup>

### Marriage at the Resurrection

22:23–33pp — Mk 12:18–27; Lk 20:27–40

<sup>23</sup>That same day the Sadducees,<sup>z</sup> who say there is no resurrection,<sup>a</sup> came to him with a question. <sup>24</sup>“Teacher,” they said, “Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for him.<sup>b</sup> <sup>25</sup>Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. <sup>26</sup>The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. <sup>27</sup>Finally, the woman died. <sup>28</sup>Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”

<sup>29</sup>Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures<sup>c</sup> or the power of God. <sup>30</sup>At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage;<sup>d</sup> they will be like the angels in heaven. <sup>31</sup>But about the resurrection of the dead — have you not read what God said to you, <sup>32</sup>‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’<sup>a?e</sup> He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

<sup>33</sup>When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.<sup>f</sup>

### The Greatest Commandment

22:34–40pp — Mk 12:28–31

<sup>34</sup>Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees,<sup>g</sup> the Pharisees got together.

22:21<sup>x</sup> Ro 13:7  
22:22<sup>y</sup> Mk 12:12  
22:23<sup>z</sup> S Ac 4:1  
<sup>a</sup> Ac 23:8;  
1Co 15:12  
22:24<sup>b</sup> Dt 25:5, 6  
22:29<sup>c</sup> Jn 20:9  
22:30<sup>d</sup> Mt 24:38  
22:32<sup>e</sup> Ex 3:6;  
Ac 7:32  
22:33<sup>f</sup> S Mt 7:28  
22:34<sup>g</sup> S Ac 4:1

22:35<sup>h</sup> Lk 7:30;  
10:25; 11:45; 14:3  
22:37<sup>i</sup> Dt 6:5  
22:39<sup>j</sup> Lev 19:18;  
S Mt 5:43  
22:40<sup>k</sup> Mt 7:12;  
Lk 10:25–28  
22:42<sup>l</sup> S Mt 9:27  
22:44<sup>m</sup> Ps 110:1;  
1Ki 5:3; Ac 2:34;  
35; 1Co 15:25;  
Heb 1:13; 10:13  
22:46<sup>n</sup> Mk 12:34;  
Lk 20:40  
22:47<sup>o</sup> Ezr 7:6, 25

<sup>35</sup>One of them, an expert in the law,<sup>h</sup> tested him with this question: <sup>36</sup>“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

<sup>37</sup>Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’<sup>bi</sup> <sup>38</sup>This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup>And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’<sup>cj</sup> <sup>40</sup>All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”<sup>k</sup>

### Whose Son Is the Messiah?

22:41–46pp — Mk 12:35–37; Lk 20:41–44

<sup>41</sup>While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, <sup>42</sup>“What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?”

“The son of David,”<sup>l</sup> they replied.

<sup>43</sup>He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says,

<sup>44</sup>“‘The Lord said to my Lord:  
“Sit at my right hand  
until I put your enemies  
under your feet.”’<sup>dm</sup>

<sup>45</sup>If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” <sup>46</sup>No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.<sup>n</sup>

### A Warning Against Hypocrisy

23:1–7pp — Mk 12:38,39; Lk 20:45,46  
23:37–39pp — Lk 13:34,35

**23** Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: <sup>2</sup>“The teachers of the law<sup>o</sup> and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. <sup>3</sup>So you must be careful to do everything

<sup>a</sup> 32 Exodus 3:6 <sup>b</sup> 37 Deut. 6:5 <sup>c</sup> 39 Lev. 19:18  
<sup>d</sup> 44 Psalm 110:1

divine Augustus.” The other side of the coin referred to Tiberius’s priestly (religious) role over his empire. The coin was issued by Tiberius and was used for paying taxes to him. Jesus implicitly indicts the religious leaders for carrying coins with idolatrous images into the temple precincts. **22:22** *amazed*. See Mk 1:22 and note. This response likely signals that Jesus’ answer doesn’t satisfy either group. It functions more like a riddle, given that Jewish theology would claim God’s ownership and dominion over all things: In reality, all things belong to God.

**22:23–40** See Mk 12:18–31; Lk 20:27–40 and notes.

**22:23** *Sadducees*. See notes on 3:7; Ezr 7:2; Mk 12:18; Lk 20:27; Ac 4:1; see also chart, p. 1685, and article, p. 1620.

**22:24** *Moses told us*. Jesus quoted from the Pentateuch when arguing with the Sadducees, since for them only those books should be used to prove doctrine (see note on Mk 12:18). The reference (Dt 25:5–10) is to the levirate law (from Latin *levir*, “brother-in-law”), which was given to protect the widow and guarantee continuance of the family line.

**22:30** *they will be like the angels in heaven*. See Lk 20:36.

**22:34–40** When asked about the greatest commandment, Jesus prioritizes love for God and neighbor. This prioritization fits Jewish practice (see note on Mk 12:29–31) and fol-

lows Jesus’ practice throughout Matthew (see 9:13; 12:7; 19:16; 23:23 and notes).

**22:37** *with all your heart ... soul ... mind*. With your whole being. The Hebrew of Dt 6:5 (see note there) has “heart ... soul ... strength,” but some manuscripts of the Septuagint (the pre-Christian Greek translation of the OT) add “mind.” Jesus combined all four terms in Mk 12:30. *soul*. See note on 10:28.

**22:39** See note on Lev 19:18.

**22:40** *the Law and the Prophets*. The entire OT (see note on 5:17). *hang on these two commandments*. Because loving God and others sums up God’s will for humanity.

**22:41–46** See notes on Mk 12:35–40; Lk 20:44–47.

**22:44** See note on Ps 110:1. Jesus bases his argument on Ps 110, the most frequently quoted OT chapter in the NT (see introduction to Ps 110). He assumes the Davidic authorship of the psalm, which is essential to his argument. For the nature of the argument, see note on Lk 20:44.

**23:2** *teachers of the law*. See note on 2:4. *Pharisees*. See notes on 3:7; Lk 5:17. *sit in Moses’ seat*. A position of authority. They considered themselves to be the authorized successors of Moses as teachers of the law.

**23:3** *not practice what they preach*. A central critique of the Pharisees throughout Matthew is that they are disobedient





Phylacteries were small leather boxes holding verses from the Torah that were attached by leather straps to the forehead and left arm of a person in prayer (see Mt 23:5 and note). This photo shows how Jews continue to use phylacteries today.

Eliyahu Yosef Parypa/Shutterstock

they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. <sup>4</sup>They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>"Everything they do is done for people to see:<sup>6</sup> They make their phylacteries<sup>7</sup> wide and the tassels on their garments<sup>8</sup> long; <sup>6</sup>they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues;<sup>7</sup> <sup>7</sup>they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called 'Rabbi' by others.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>"But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers. <sup>9</sup>And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father,<sup>9</sup> and he is in heaven. <sup>10</sup>Nor are you to be

**23:4** P Lk 11:46; Ac 15:10; Gal 6:13  
**23:5** 9 Mt 6:1, 2, 5, 16; Ex 13:9; Dt 6:8; Nu 15:38; Dt 22:12  
**23:6** 1 Lk 11:43; 14:7; 20:46  
**23:7** 4 ver 8; Mt 26:25, 49; Mk 9:5; 10:51; Jn 1:38, 49; 3:2, 26; 20:16  
**23:9** 9 Mal 1:6; Mt 6:9; 7:11

**23:11** 10 S Mk 9:35  
**23:12** 11 Isa 2:8; Ps 18:27; Pr 3:34; Isa 57:15; Eze 21:26; Lk 1:52; 14:11  
**23:13** 12 ver 15, 23, 25, 27, 29  
**23:14** 13 Lk 11:52  
**23:15** 14 Ac 2:11; 6:5; 13:43  
**23:16** 15 S Mt 5:22  
**23:17** 16 ver 24; Isa 9:16; Mt 15:14  
**23:18** 17 Mt 5:33-35  
**23:19** 18 Ex 30:29  
**23:21** 19 1 Ki 8:13; Ps 26:8

called instructors, for you have one Instructor, the Messiah. <sup>11</sup>The greatest among you will be your servant.<sup>12</sup> For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.<sup>x</sup>

## Seven Woes on the Teachers of the Law and the Pharisees

<sup>13</sup>"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites!<sup>y</sup> You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.<sup>z</sup> [14]<sup>b</sup>

<sup>15</sup>"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert,<sup>a</sup> and when you have succeeded, you make them twice as much a child of hell<sup>b</sup> as you are.

<sup>16</sup>"Woe to you, blind guides!<sup>c</sup> You say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gold of the temple is bound by that oath.'<sup>d</sup>

<sup>17</sup>You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred?<sup>e</sup> <sup>18</sup>You also say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gift on the altar is bound by that oath.'<sup>f</sup> <sup>19</sup>You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred?<sup>g</sup> <sup>20</sup>Therefore, anyone who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. <sup>21</sup>And anyone who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells<sup>h</sup> in it. <sup>22</sup>And anyone who swears by heaven swears

<sup>a</sup> 5 That is, boxes containing Scripture verses, worn on forehead and arm <sup>b</sup> 14 Some manuscripts include here words similar to Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47.

to the law (e.g., 15:1–9). See Jas 1:22–25.

**23:4** tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders. Cf. Jesus' words in 11:28–30 and see note on 11:28; see also note on Lk 11:46.

**23:5** phylacteries. These boxes (see photo above; see also NIV text note) contained four Scripture passages (Ex 13:1–10; 13:11–16; Dt 6:4–9; 11:13–21). tassels. Jesus wore these prescribed tassels (see 9:20; 14:36 and note; see note on Nu 15:38). His critique of the Jewish leaders concerned their ostentatious practices of making their tassels excessively long (and their phylacteries wide).

**23:6** most important seats in the synagogues. See note on Mk 12:39.

**23:7** Rabbi. A Hebrew word meaning "(my) teacher."

**23:8–12** The warning is against seeking titles of honor to foster pride. All disciples are equal under their God and Messiah (see 20:14 and note).

**23:10** instructors ... Instructor. This translates an unusual Greek term (used only here in the Bible), likely referring to one who teaches personally—a guide or a leader. The word has high status connotations, which further highlights the inappropriate nature of elevating anyone in the community other than the Messiah and the Father.

**23:12** The great reversal that comes with the kingdom of God (5:3–12; Jas 4:6, 10; 1Pe 5:5–6).

**23:13–32** Seven woes pronounced by Jesus on a particular group of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law (see the six woes in Lk 11:42–44, 46–52; cf. the six woes in Isa 5:8–25 and in Isa 28:1–35:10 [see note there] and the five woes in Hab 2:6–20).

**23:13** hypocrites. See vv. 15, 23, 25, 27, 29; see also note on 6:2. shut the door of the kingdom ... in people's faces. See Lk 11:52 and note.

**23:15** Jesus does not criticize these Pharisees for their evangelistic zeal. He objects to its results. The converts became even more the children of hell (i.e., bound for hell) than their teachers. convert. The Greek for this word is found in the NT only here and in Ac 2:11 (see note there); 6:5 (see note there); 13:43. hell. See notes on 5:22; Lk 12:5.

**23:16–26** blind guides ... blind fools ... blind men ... Blind Pharisee! Although the Pharisees were supposed to be Israel's teachers, these were themselves spiritually blind.

**23:16–22** If anyone swears. When these teachers of the law and Pharisees took an oath, they differentiated between what was binding and what was not. This allowed for evasive oath-taking. Jesus rejected all such subtleties by showing



## JEWISH SECTS

### PHARISEES

Their roots can be traced to the Hasidim of the second century BC (see note on Mk 2:16).

- (1) Along with the Torah, they accepted as equally inspired and authoritative all the commands set forth in the oral traditions preserved by the rabbis.
- (2) On free will and determination, they held to a mediating view that did not allow either human free will or the sovereignty of God to cancel out the other.
- (3) They accepted a rather developed hierarchy of angels and demons.
- (4) They believed in the immortality of the soul and in reward and retribution after death.
- (5) They believed in the resurrection of the dead.
- (6) The main emphasis of their teaching was ethical rather than theological.
- (7) Their attentiveness to purity regulations arose in part from their concern to live as if they, like priests, were involved in temple service. This required a stricter code and attention to avoiding people who were currently in a state of ritual impurity.

### SADDUCEES

They probably had their beginning during the Hasmonean period (166–63 BC). Their demise occurred c. AD 70 with the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple. See article, p. 1620.

- (1) They considered only the books of Moses to be authoritative for proving doctrine, denying that the oral law was authoritative and binding.
- (2) They were very exacting in Levitical purity, given their regular temple involvement.
- (3) They attributed everything to free will.
- (4) They argued that there is neither resurrection of the dead nor a future life.
- (5) They rejected the idea of a spiritual world, including belief in angels and demons.

### ESSENES

They probably originated among the Hasidim, along with the Pharisees, from whom they later separated (1 Maccabees 2:42; 7:13). The Hasidim were a group of zealous Jews who took part with the Maccabees in a revolt against the Syrians c. 165–155 BC. A group of Essenes probably moved to Qumran c. 150 BC, where they copied scrolls and deposited them in nearby caves (see article, p. 1623).

- (1) They strictly observed the purity laws of the Torah because they were performing temple rituals (though apart from the temple itself).
- (2) They practiced communal ownership of property.
- (3) They had a strong sense of mutual responsibility.
- (4) Daily worship was an important feature along with daily study of their sacred scriptures.
- (5) Solemn oaths of piety and obedience had to be taken.
- (6) Sacrifices were offered on holy days and during their sacred seasons, but not at the temple, which they considered to be corrupt.
- (7) Marriage was avoided by some but was not condemned in principle.
- (8) They attributed to predestination or fate everything that happened.

### ZEALOTS

They originated during the reign of Herod the Great c. 6 BC but were not an identifiable group until the AD 60s. A group of Zealots were among the last defenders against the Romans at Masada in AD 73.

- (1) They opposed payment of taxes to a pagan emperor because they believed that allegiance was due to God alone.
- (2) They were fiercely loyal to Jewish tradition.
- (3) They endorsed the use of violence as long as it accomplished a good end.
- (4) They were opposed to the influence of Greek pagan culture in the Holy Land, including the Greek language.

by God's throne and by the one who sits on it.<sup>h</sup>

**23** "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth<sup>i</sup> of your spices — mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law — justice, mercy and faithfulness.<sup>j</sup> You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. **24** You blind guides!<sup>k</sup> You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

**25** "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish,<sup>l</sup> but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.<sup>m</sup> **26** Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

**27** "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs,<sup>n</sup> which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. **28** In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

**29** "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets<sup>o</sup> and decorate the graves of the righteous. **30** And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.'<sup>p</sup> **31** So you testify against yourselves that

**23:22** <sup>h</sup>Ps 11:4;  
Mt 5:34  
**23:23** <sup>i</sup>Lev 27:30  
<sup>j</sup>Mic 6:8; Lk 11:42  
**23:24** <sup>k</sup>ver 16  
<sup>l</sup>Mk 7:4  
**23:27** <sup>m</sup>Lk 11:39  
<sup>n</sup>Lk 11:44;  
Ac 23:3  
**23:29** <sup>o</sup>Lk 11:47;  
48

**23:31** <sup>p</sup>S Mt 5:12  
**23:32** <sup>q</sup>1Th 2:16  
<sup>r</sup>Eze 20:4  
**23:33** <sup>s</sup>Mt 3:7;  
12:34 <sup>t</sup>S Mt 5:22  
**23:34** <sup>u</sup>2Ch 36:15;  
16; Lk 11:49  
<sup>v</sup>S Mt 10:17  
<sup>w</sup>Mt 10:23  
**23:35** <sup>x</sup>Ge 4:8;  
Heb 11:4 <sup>y</sup>Zec 1:1  
<sup>z</sup>2Ch 24:21  
**23:36** <sup>z</sup>Mt 10:23;  
24:34; Lk 11:50, 51  
**23:37** <sup>z</sup>2Ch 24:21;  
S Mt 5:12  
<sup>aa</sup>Ps 57:1; 61:4;  
Isa 31:5  
**23:38** <sup>ab</sup>1Ki 9:7, 8;  
Jer 22:5  
**23:39** <sup>ac</sup>Ps 118:26;  
Mt 21:9

you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets.<sup>p</sup> **32** Go ahead, then, and complete<sup>q</sup> what your ancestors started!<sup>r</sup>

**33** "You snakes! You brood of vipers!<sup>s</sup> How will you escape being condemned to hell?<sup>t</sup> **34** Therefore I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify;<sup>u</sup> others you will flog in your synagogues<sup>v</sup> and pursue from town to town.<sup>w</sup> **35** And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel<sup>x</sup> to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah,<sup>y</sup> whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.<sup>z</sup> **36** Truly I tell you, all this will come on this generation.<sup>a</sup>

**37** "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you,<sup>b</sup> how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings,<sup>c</sup> and you were not willing. **38** Look, your house is left to you desolate.<sup>d</sup> **39** For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'<sup>a"</sup><sup>e</sup>

## The Destruction of the Temple and Signs of the End Times

24:1-51pp — Mk 13:1-37; Lk 21:5-36

**24** Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its

<sup>a</sup> 39 Psalm 118:26

how foolish they were and by insisting that people simply tell the truth (see 5:33–37 and note).

**23:23** Jesus does not criticize the observance of the details of the law (he says, "without neglecting" them—including the tithe) while the law is still in force, but he does criticize the hypocrisy of attending to peripheral laws while ignoring the central ones (see notes on 5:18–20; Lk 11:42). *cumin*. A spice indigenous to western Asia and resembling caraway in taste and appearance. *justice, mercy and faithfulness*. These are qualities extolled in the law and the prophets that characterize Jesus and are to typify his followers. For allusions to Micah, see Mic 6:6, 8 and notes.

**23:24** *strain out*. The strict Pharisee would carefully strain his drinking water through a cloth to be sure he did not swallow a gnat, the smallest of ceremonially unclean animals. But, figuratively, he would swallow a camel—one of the largest. *swallow a camel*. Hyperbole (see 7:3 and note; 19:24; Mk 10:25 and note).

**23:26** *clean the inside*. A total moral renewal that will manifest itself in righteous living (v. 23).

**23:27** *whitewashed tombs*. A person who touched a grave became ceremonially unclean (Nu 19:16), so graves were whitewashed to make them easily visible, especially at night. They appeared clean and beautiful on the outside, but they were dirty and rotten on the inside.

**23:29** *tombs for the prophets*. See note on Lk 11:47.

**23:31** *descendants*. In the sense that they imitate the actions of their murderous ancestors.

**23:32** Cf. Ge 15:16; 1Th 2:14–16; spoken ironically. They would

bring the sin of their ancestors to completion with the crucifixion of the Son of God (cf. 21:38–39 and note on 21:35–37).

**23:33** *hell*. See notes on 5:22; Lk 12:5.

**23:34** *prophets and sages and teachers*. Cf. Jer 18:18; Eze 7:26 and notes. *synagogues*. See note on Mk 1:21.

**23:35** *Abel to ... Zechariah*. Jesus was summing up the history of martyrdom in the OT. The murder of Abel is recorded in Ge 4:8 and that of Zechariah son (perhaps grandson, since he is here called "son of Berekiah"; see NIV text note on 1Ch 1:5; see also note on Da 5:1) of Jehoiada in 2Ch 24:20–22 (Chronicles comes at the close of the OT according to most Hebrew manuscripts). The expression was somewhat like our "from Genesis to Revelation." *between the temple and the altar*. Jesus' reference is more specific than the Chronicler's on the location of Zechariah's murder, perhaps referring to "the altar" as a place of sacrifice.

**23:36** *all this*. All the righteous blood of the martyrs (see v. 30). *will come on this generation*. Jesus' contemporaries; a prophecy fulfilled, at least in part, in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70 (see vv. 37–38).

**23:37–39** See notes on Lk 13:34–35.

**24:1–25:46** The Olivet discourse, the fifth and last of the great discourses in Matthew's Gospel, addresses the fall of the temple (which occurred in AD 70) and Jesus' return (see notes on 5:1–7:29; Mk 13:1–37; Lk 21:5–37; see also Introduction: Structure). Jesus deals with two questions ("when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?") but may not distinguish them sharply. However, it appears that generally the description of the destruction of Jerusalem ("when will this happen")

buildings. <sup>2</sup>“Do you see all these things?” he asked. <sup>3</sup>“Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another;<sup>f</sup> every one will be thrown down.”

<sup>3</sup>As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives,<sup>g</sup> the disciples came to him privately. <sup>4</sup>“Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming<sup>h</sup> and of the end of the age?”<sup>i</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered: <sup>5</sup>“Watch out that no one deceives you.<sup>j</sup> <sup>6</sup>For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many.<sup>k</sup> <sup>7</sup>You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. <sup>8</sup>Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.<sup>l</sup> There will be famines<sup>m</sup> and earthquakes in various places. <sup>9</sup>All these are the beginning of birth pains.

<sup>9</sup>“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted<sup>n</sup> and put to death,<sup>o</sup> and you will be hated by all nations because of me.<sup>p</sup> <sup>10</sup>At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate

**24:2** <sup>1</sup>Lk 19:44  
**24:3** <sup>2</sup>S Mt 21:1  
<sup>3</sup>S Lk 17:30  
<sup>4</sup>Mt 13:39; 28:20  
**24:4** <sup>5</sup>S Mk 13:5  
**24:5** <sup>6</sup>ver 11, 23,  
24; 1Jn 2:18  
**24:7** <sup>7</sup>Isa 19:2  
<sup>8</sup>Ac 11:28  
**24:9** <sup>9</sup>Mt 10:17  
<sup>10</sup>Jn 16:2  
<sup>11</sup>S Jn 15:21

**24:11** <sup>12</sup>S Mt 7:15  
<sup>13</sup>S Mk 13:5  
**24:13** <sup>14</sup>S Mt 10:22  
**24:14** <sup>15</sup>S Mt 4:23  
<sup>16</sup>Lk 21:4; 4:5;  
Ac 11:28; 17:6;  
S Ro 10:18  
**24:15** <sup>17</sup>S Ac 6:13  
<sup>18</sup>Da 9:27; 11:31;  
12:11  
**24:17** <sup>19</sup>1Sa 9:25;  
Mt 10:27; Lk 12:3;  
Ac 10:9  
**24:19** <sup>20</sup>Lk 23:29  
**24:21** <sup>21</sup>Eze 5:9;  
Da 12:1; Joel 2:2

each other,<sup>11</sup> and many false prophets<sup>q</sup> will appear and deceive many people.<sup>r</sup> <sup>12</sup>Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold,<sup>13</sup> but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.<sup>s</sup> <sup>14</sup>And this gospel of the kingdom<sup>t</sup> will be preached in the whole world<sup>u</sup> as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

<sup>15</sup>“So when you see standing in the holy place<sup>v</sup> ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’<sup>aw</sup> spoken of through the prophet Daniel — let the reader understand — <sup>16</sup>then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>17</sup>Let no one on the housetop<sup>x</sup> go down to take anything out of the house. <sup>18</sup>Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. <sup>19</sup>How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!<sup>y</sup> <sup>20</sup>Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. <sup>21</sup>For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now — and never to be equaled again.<sup>z</sup>

<sup>22</sup>“If those days had not been cut short,

<sup>a</sup> 15 Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11

occurs in vv. 4–22 or vv. 4–35 (see Lk 21:20). Jesus addresses his own return either starting in v. 23 or later in v. 36. Much of the discourse is taken up with warnings and exhortations to be prepared (a key motif) despite trials, persecutions and uncertainty about the exact timing of Jesus’ coming. The last section (24:36–25:46) contains several eschatological parables about preparedness and faithfulness (25:1–13, 14–30, 31–46).

**24:2** *not one stone ... left.* Fulfilled in AD 70, when the Romans under Titus completely destroyed Jerusalem and the temple buildings. Stones were even pried apart to collect the gold leaf that melted from the roof when the temple was set on fire. *stone.* See note on Mk 13:1. *thrown down.* Excavations in 1968 uncovered large numbers of these stones, toppled from the walls by the invaders (see photo, p. 980).

**24:3** *Mount of Olives.* A ridge a little more than a mile long, beyond the Kidron Valley east of Jerusalem and rising about 200 feet above the city (see map, pp. 1744–1745).

**24:4** *Watch out.* See note on Mk 13:5.

**24:5–14** See Lk 21:8–18 and note on 21:9.

**24:5** *in my name.* Claiming to be the Messiah (see Mk 13:6 and note). *Messiah.* See second NIV text note on 1:1. *will deceive many.* See 1Jn 2:18 and note.

**24:8** *birth pains.* The rabbis spoke of “birth pains,” i.e., sufferings, that would precede the coming of the Messiah (see Isa 13:8 and note). In general, Jesus’ teachings on the fall of Jerusalem warn about mistaking precursors (“birth pains”) with the actual event (e.g., 24:4–8), while his own return will be unusual in that it will arrive with no warning (e.g., 24:36–39).

**24:13** See note on Mk 13:13; cf. 2Ti 2:10–13; Heb 10:36; 11:27; Jas 1:12; 5:11.

**24:14** *preached in the whole world.* Despite his Jewish interests, Matthew has a universal outlook (see Introduction: Recipients). *testimony to all nations.* This missionary mandate (see 28:18–20 and notes) must be fulfilled before the end comes.

**24:15** *the abomination that causes desolation.* The detestable thing causing the desolation of the holy place. The primary reference in Daniel (see NIV text note for references) was to 168 BC, when Antiochus Epiphanes erected a pagan altar to Zeus on the sacred altar in the temple of Jerusalem. According to some, there were still two more stages in the progressive fulfillment of the predictions in Daniel and Matthew: (1) the Roman destruction of the temple in AD 70, and (2) a still future setting up of an image of the antichrist in Jerusalem (see 2Th 2:4; Rev 13:14–15; see also notes on Da 9:25–27; 11:31). *let the reader understand.* These are possibly Jesus’ words, not Matthew’s, exhorting the readers of Daniel’s prophecy to understand what they read (but see note on Mk 13:14).

**24:16** *mountains.* The Transjordan mountains, where Pella was located. Christians in Jerusalem fled to that area during the Roman siege shortly before AD 70. Some believe a similar fleeing will occur in a future tribulation period (identified with the 70th “seven” in Da 9:27; cf. Rev 12:6, 13–17 and notes).

**24:17** *housetop.* See notes on Mk 2:4; Lk 17:31.

**24:19** See note on Mk 13:17.

**24:20** *in winter.* See note on Mk 13:18. *or on the Sabbath.* Matthew alone includes this phrase because he was writing to Jews, who were forbidden to travel more than about three quarters of a mile on the Sabbath (“a Sabbath day’s walk,” Ac 1:12; see note there).

**24:21** *great distress, unequaled.* Josephus, the Jewish historian who was there, describes the destruction of Jerusalem in almost identical language (Wars, 5.10.3–5; 6.3.3–5). Some believe the reference is also to a future period of great distress (see note on v. 16; see also Da 12:1 and note; cf. Rev 6–18; cf. also article, p. 2252).

**24:22** *days ... cut short.* Some hold that this statement means that the distress will be of such intensity that, if allowed to continue, it would destroy everyone. Others believe that Christ is referring to the cutting short of a previously determined time period (such as the 70th “seven” of Da 9:27 or the 42 months of Rev 11:2; 13:5). *the elect.* The chosen people of God (see also vv. 24, 31).

no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect<sup>a</sup> those days will be shortened. <sup>23</sup>At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it.<sup>b</sup> <sup>24</sup>For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders<sup>c</sup> to deceive, if possible, even the elect. <sup>25</sup>See, I have told you ahead of time.

<sup>26</sup>"So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the wilderness,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. <sup>27</sup>For as lightning<sup>d</sup> that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming<sup>e</sup> of the Son of Man.<sup>f</sup> <sup>28</sup>Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.<sup>g</sup>

<sup>29</sup>"Immediately after the distress of those days

"the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light;  
the stars will fall from the sky,  
and the heavenly bodies will be  
shaken.<sup>h</sup>

<sup>30</sup>"Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth<sup>b</sup> will mourn<sup>i</sup> when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven,<sup>j</sup> with power and great glory.<sup>c</sup> <sup>31</sup>And he will send his angels<sup>k</sup> with a loud trumpet call,<sup>l</sup> and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

<sup>32</sup>"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup>Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it<sup>d</sup> is near, right at the door.<sup>m</sup> <sup>34</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.<sup>n</sup> <sup>35</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.<sup>o</sup>

**24:22** <sup>a</sup>ver 24, 31  
**24:23** <sup>b</sup>Lk 17:23;  
21:8  
**24:24** <sup>c</sup>Ex 7:11,  
22; 2Th 2:9-11;  
Rev 13:13; 16:14;  
19:20  
**24:27** <sup>d</sup>Lk 17:24  
<sup>e</sup>S Lk 17:30  
<sup>f</sup>S Mt 8:20  
**24:28** <sup>g</sup>Lk 17:37  
**24:29** <sup>h</sup>Isa 13:10;  
34:4; Eze 32:7;  
Joel 2:10,  
31; Zep 1:15;  
Rev 6:12, 13; 8:12  
**24:30** <sup>i</sup>Rev 1:7  
<sup>j</sup>S Rev 1:7  
**24:31** <sup>k</sup>Mt 13:41  
<sup>l</sup>Isa 27:13;  
Zec 9:14;  
1Co 15:52;  
1Th 4:16; Rev 8:2;  
10:7; 11:15  
**24:33** <sup>m</sup>Jas 5:9  
**24:34** <sup>n</sup>Mt 16:28;  
S 23:36  
**24:35** <sup>o</sup>S Mt 5:18

**24:36** <sup>p</sup>Ac 1:7  
**24:37** <sup>q</sup>Ge 6:5;  
7:6-23  
**24:38** <sup>r</sup>Mt 22:30  
**24:39** <sup>s</sup>S Lk 17:30  
**24:40** <sup>t</sup>Lk 17:34  
**24:41** <sup>u</sup>Lk 17:35  
**24:42** <sup>v</sup>Mt 25:13;  
Lk 12:40  
**24:43**  
<sup>w</sup>S Lk 12:39  
**24:44** <sup>x</sup>1Th 5:6  
**24:45** <sup>y</sup>Mt 25:21,  
23  
**24:46** <sup>z</sup>Rev 16:15  
**24:47** <sup>a</sup>Mt 25:21,  
23

## The Day and Hour Unknown

24:37-39pp — Lk 17:26,27

24:45-51pp — Lk 12:42-46

<sup>36</sup>"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son,<sup>e</sup> but only the Father.<sup>p</sup> <sup>37</sup>As it was in the days of Noah,<sup>q</sup> so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,<sup>r</sup> up to the day Noah entered the ark;<sup>s</sup> and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.<sup>s</sup> <sup>40</sup>Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.<sup>t</sup> <sup>41</sup>Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.<sup>u</sup>

<sup>42</sup>"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.<sup>v</sup> <sup>43</sup>But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming,<sup>w</sup> he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup>So you also must be ready,<sup>x</sup> because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

<sup>45</sup>"Who then is the faithful and wise servant,<sup>y</sup> whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? <sup>46</sup>It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns.<sup>z</sup> <sup>47</sup>Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.<sup>a</sup> <sup>48</sup>But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is staying away a long time,'<sup>49</sup> and he then begins to beat his fellow servants

<sup>a</sup> 29 Isaiah 13:10; 34:4 <sup>b</sup> 30 Or the tribes of the land  
<sup>c</sup> 30 See Daniel 7:13-14. <sup>d</sup> 33 Or he <sup>e</sup> 36 Some manuscripts do not have nor the Son.

**24:24** false messiahs. See 1Jn 2:18 and note.

**24:26** inner rooms. See Lk 12:3 and note.

**24:27** Christ's second coming will not be in secret, witnessed by only a favored few; it will be visible to all (see v. 30), as lightning. See note on Lk 17:24.

**24:28** there the vultures will gather. The gathering of vultures obviously indicates the presence of carrion; the coming of Christ will likewise be obvious. See note on Lk 17:37, where the saying is used in a slightly different sense. Cf. Rev 11:17-18 and note on 19:17.

**24:29** See note on Mk 13:25.

**24:30** sign. Here probably means "banner" or "standard" (Isa 11:12; 18:3; 49:22; Jer 4:21; 51:27). all the peoples... will mourn. Because they now face judgment (see Rev 1:7; cf. Zec 12:10-12), the Son of Man coming on the clouds. Alludes to Da 7:13, which refers to the Son of Man receiving glory, honor, and an eternal kingdom. This could refer to either (1) Christ's second coming (2Th 1:7-10; Rev 19:11-16) or (2) the victory that Christ achieved in his death, resurrection and ascension, and/or his invisible coming in judgment on

the temple in AD 70. Son of Man. See note on Mk 8:31. on the clouds. After the manner in which God came down on Mount Sinai (see 17:5 and note). with power and great glory. Cf. 1Ch 29:11; Ps 63:2; 66:2-3; Hab 3:3-4.

**24:31** gather his elect. See note on Mk 13:27.

**24:33** it. The kingdom of God (see Lk 21:31 and note on 21:29).

**24:34** Truly I tell you. See note on Mk 3:28. this generation. See note on Lk 21:32.

**24:35** Jesus' words are more certain than the existence of the universe.

**24:36** that day. See note on Lk 21:34. nor the Son. See note on Mk 13:32.

**24:38** eating... marrying. Carrying out their regular activities and so caught off-guard.

**24:40-41** taken. Either in judgment or for salvation; see note on Lk 17:35.

**24:42** keep watch. Cf. v. 4; 25:13. Vigilance is the order of the day, because the time of Christ's coming is unknown (see notes on Mk 13:32,37).

**24:44** be ready. See 25:10,29; 1Th 5:6 and notes; cf. 1Jn 2:28.





and to eat and drink with drunkards.<sup>b</sup> <sup>50</sup>The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. <sup>51</sup>He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.<sup>c</sup>

### The Parable of the Ten Virgins

**25** “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like<sup>d</sup> ten virgins who took their lamps<sup>e</sup> and went out to meet the bridegroom.<sup>f</sup> <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish and five were wise.<sup>g</sup> <sup>3</sup>The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. <sup>4</sup>The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.<sup>h</sup>

<sup>6</sup>“At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’

<sup>7</sup>“Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’<sup>i</sup>

<sup>9</sup>“‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’

<sup>10</sup>“But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet.<sup>j</sup> And the door was shut.

<sup>11</sup>“Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’

<sup>12</sup>“But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’<sup>k</sup>

<sup>13</sup>“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.<sup>l</sup>

### The Parable of the Bags of Gold

25:14–30 Ref — Lk 19:12–27

<sup>14</sup>“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey,<sup>m</sup> who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. <sup>15</sup>To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag,<sup>a</sup> each ac-

**24:49** <sup>b</sup>Lk 21:34;  
**24:51** <sup>c</sup>S Mt 8:12;  
**25:1** <sup>d</sup>S Mt 13:24;  
<sup>e</sup>Lk 12:35–38;  
<sup>f</sup>Ac 20:8; Rev 4:5;  
<sup>g</sup>Rev 19:7; 21:2  
**25:2** <sup>h</sup>Mt 24:45  
**25:5** <sup>i</sup>1Th 5:6  
**25:8** <sup>j</sup>Lk 12:35  
**25:10** <sup>k</sup>Rev 19:9  
**25:12** <sup>l</sup>ver 41;  
S Mt 7:23  
**25:13** <sup>m</sup>Mt 24:42;  
44; Mk 13:35;  
Lk 12:40  
**25:14** <sup>n</sup>Mt 21:33;  
Lk 19:12

cording to his ability.<sup>n</sup> Then he went on his journey. <sup>16</sup>The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. <sup>17</sup>So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. <sup>18</sup>But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

<sup>19</sup>“After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

<sup>21</sup>“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.<sup>p</sup> Come and share your master’s happiness!’

<sup>22</sup>“The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

<sup>23</sup>“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.<sup>q</sup> Come and share your master’s happiness!’

<sup>24</sup>“Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. <sup>25</sup>So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

<sup>26</sup>“His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? <sup>27</sup>Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.’

<sup>a</sup> 15 Greek *five talents . . . two talents . . . one talent*; also throughout this parable; a talent was worth about 20 years of a day laborer’s wage.


**24:51** *weeping and gnashing of teeth.* See note on 13:42.

**25:1–12** The parable emphasizes the need for watchfulness in the event of an unexpectedly long delay in Christ’s coming (see v. 13 and note).

**25:1** *At that time.* The time of Christ’s coming. *kingdom of heaven.* See note on 3:2. *ten virgins.* The bridesmaids, who were responsible for preparing the bride to meet the bridegroom. *lamps.* Probably torches that consisted of a long pole with oil-drenched rags at the top.

**25:3** *oil.* Olive oil.

**25:7** *trimmed.* The charred ends of the rags were cut off and oil was added.

 **25:9** *No.* When Christ returns, preparedness cannot be shared or transferred. Personal responsibility is emphasized (v. 12). *there may not be enough.* Torches re-

quired large amounts of oil in order to keep burning, and the oil had to be replenished about every 15 minutes.

**25:13** *keep watch.* The main point of the parable. *the day or the hour.* Of the coming of Christ.

**25:14–30** For a similar parable, see Lk 19:12–27.

**25:15** *bag.* See NIV text note. The term *talent* was first used for a unit of weight (about 75 pounds), then for a unit of coinage. The present-day use of “talent” to indicate an ability or gift is derived from this parable.

**25:21** *faithful with a few . . . in charge of many.* Cf. 13:12; see notes on v. 29; Mk 4:25; Lk 19:26.

**25:26** See note on Lk 19:22.

**25:27** *bankers.* Sat at small tables and changed money (cf. 21:12).

<sup>28</sup>“So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. <sup>29</sup>For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.” <sup>30</sup>And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

### The Sheep and the Goats

<sup>31</sup>“When the Son of Man comes<sup>t</sup> in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne.<sup>u</sup> <sup>32</sup>All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate<sup>v</sup> the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.<sup>w</sup> <sup>33</sup>He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

<sup>34</sup>“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom<sup>x</sup> prepared for you since the creation of the world.’<sup>y</sup> <sup>35</sup>For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,<sup>z</sup> <sup>36</sup>I needed clothes and you clothed me,<sup>a</sup> I was sick and you looked after me,<sup>b</sup> I was in prison and you came to visit me.”<sup>c</sup>

<sup>37</sup>“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?’ <sup>38</sup>When did we see you

<sup>25:29</sup> <sup>t</sup>Mt 13:12; Mk 4:25; Lk 8:18; 19:26  
<sup>25:30</sup> <sup>s</sup>Mt 8:12  
<sup>25:31</sup> <sup>t</sup>s Lk 17:30  
<sup>u</sup>Mt 19:28  
<sup>25:32</sup> <sup>t</sup>Mal 3:18  
<sup>w</sup>Eze 34:17, 20  
<sup>25:33</sup> <sup>s</sup>Mt 3:2; 5:3, 10, 19; 19:14; S Ac 20:32; 1Co 15:50; Gal 5:21; Jas 2:5  
<sup>y</sup>Heb 4:3; 9:26; Rev 13:8; 17:8  
<sup>25:35</sup> <sup>s</sup>Job 31:32; Heb 13:2  
<sup>25:36</sup> <sup>a</sup>Isa 58:7; Eze 18:7; Jas 2:15, 16  
<sup>b</sup>Jas 1:27  
<sup>c</sup>2Ti 1:16

<sup>25:40</sup> <sup>d</sup>s Mt 10:40, 42; Heb 13:2  
<sup>25:41</sup> <sup>s</sup>Mt 7:23  
<sup>f</sup>Isa 66:24; Mt 3:12; S 5:22; Mk 9:43, 48; Lk 3:17; Jude 7  
<sup>92Pe</sup> 2:4  
<sup>25:45</sup> <sup>h</sup>Pr 14:31; 17:5  
<sup>25:46</sup> <sup>i</sup>Mt 19:29; Jn 3:15, 16, 36; 17:2, 3; Ro 2:7; Gal 6:8; 1Jn 1:2; 5:11, 13, 20  
<sup>j</sup>Da 12:2; Jn 5:29; Ac 24:15; Ro 2:7, 8; Gal 6:8  
<sup>26:1</sup> <sup>k</sup>s Mt 7:28  
<sup>26:2</sup> <sup>s</sup>Jn 11:55

a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? <sup>39</sup>When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?”

<sup>40</sup>“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’<sup>d</sup>

<sup>41</sup>“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me,<sup>e</sup> you who are cursed, into the eternal fire<sup>f</sup> prepared for the devil and his angels.’<sup>g</sup> <sup>42</sup>For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup>I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

<sup>44</sup>“They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’


<sup>45</sup>“He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’<sup>h</sup>

<sup>46</sup>“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”<sup>i,j</sup>

### The Plot Against Jesus

26:2-5pp — Mk 14:1,2; Lk 22:1,2

**26** When Jesus had finished saying all these things,<sup>k</sup> he said to his disciples, <sup>2</sup>“As you know, the Passover<sup>l</sup> is two days away — and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

 **25:29** The main point of the parable. Being ready for Christ's coming involves more than playing it safe and doing little or nothing. It demands faithful service (as in 25:31–46; see note on Lk 19:26).


**25:30** weeping and gnashing of teeth. See note on 13:42.

**25:31–46** The two most widely accepted interpretations of this judgment are: (1) The final judgment at the end of the age (Rev 20:11–15). Its purpose will be to determine who will be allowed to enter the eternal kingdom of the saved and who will be consigned to eternal punishment in hell (vv. 34,46). (2) The judgment will occur at the beginning of an earthly millennial kingdom (vv. 31,34; see article, p. 2668). Its purpose will be to determine who will be allowed to enter the kingdom (v. 34). The basis for judgment in this case will be the kind of treatment shown to the Jewish people during the preceding great tribulation period (vv. 35–40,42–45). Ultimately, how one treats them will reveal whether or not one is saved (vv. 41,46). In both cases, the basis for judgment will be whether love is shown to “the least of these brothers and sisters of mine” (see note on v. 40).

**25:31** Son of Man. See note on Mk 8:31. in his glory. See 16:27; 24:30. angels. See 13:41–42; 2Th 1:7; Rev 14:17–20. sit on his glorious throne. Not only as judge but also as king (vv. 34,40).

**25:32** All the nations. Both Jews and Gentiles (see 28:19 and note). separates the sheep from the goats. Cf. 7:21–23; 13:40–43. sheep. “The righteous” (v. 37).

**25:33** on his right. See Mk 10:37 and note.

 **25:34–40** Rewards in the kingdom of heaven are given to those who serve without thought of reward. There is no hint of merit here, for God gives out of grace, not debt.

**25:34** inheritance. See Ac 20:32; Eph 1:14,18; 5:5; Col 1:12; 3:24; Heb 9:15; 1Pe 1:4. kingdom. See note on 3:2. since the creation of the world. Cf. Eph 1:4 and note.

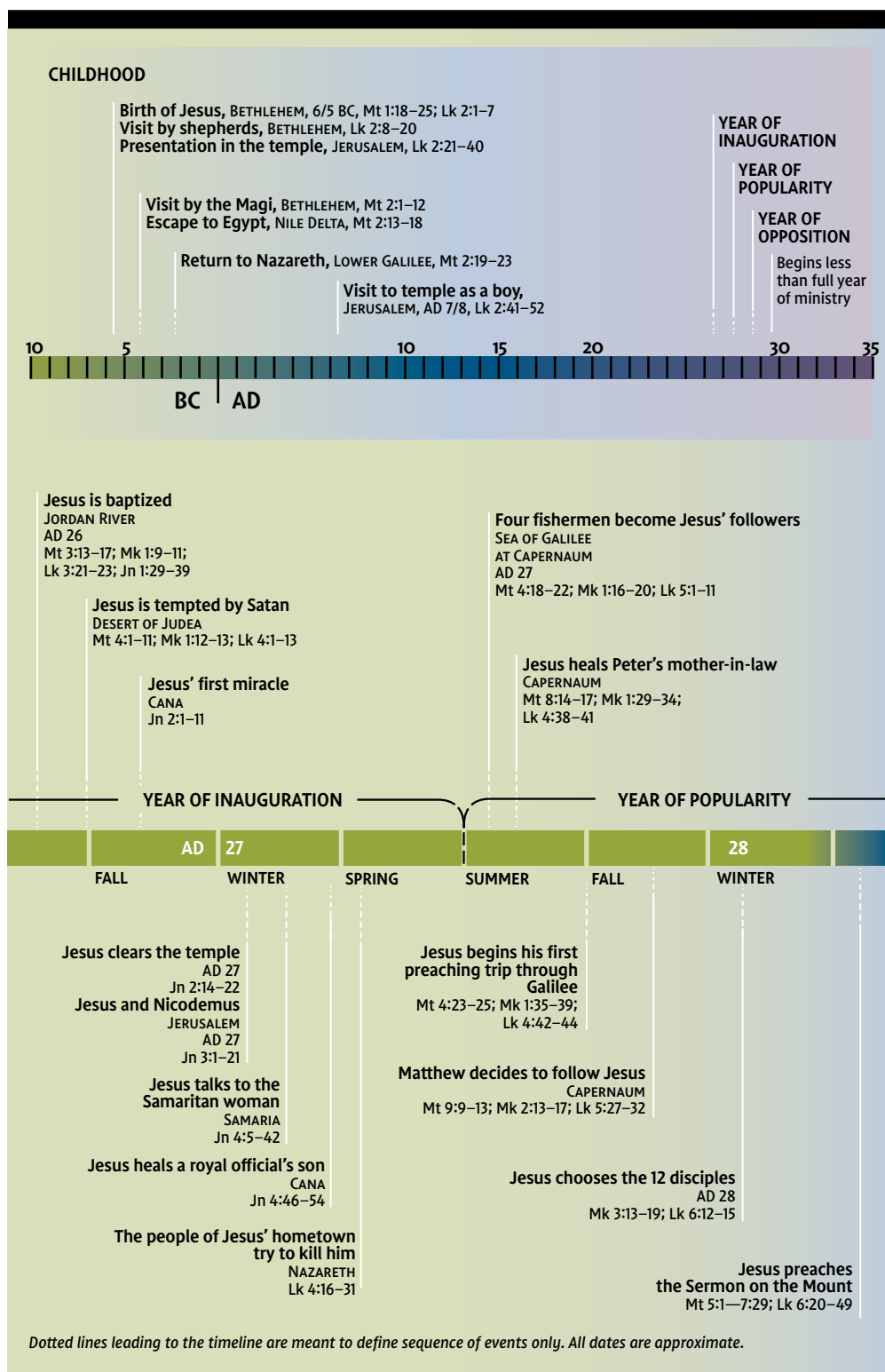
**25:40** least of these brothers and sisters of mine. The Greek term for “least of these” is the superlative form of (the Greek for) “little ones” (10:42; 18:6–14) and is a term indicating one of low status. Using both terms, Matthew highlights the importance for the church to care for those most on the margins of their communities. But to whom specifically does “the least of these” refer in this judgment scene? The principal views are: (1) all people who are hungry, thirsty, poor, needy or otherwise distressed, since the great surprise of both groups that they have served Jesus suggests the group goes beyond Christians only (25:45); (2) Christians who are hungry, thirsty, etc., since they are described here as “brothers and sisters of mine,” a term usually used for Christians in Matthew (e.g., 12:50; 18:15); (3) apostles and other Christian missionaries, who leave everything to travel in mission (10:5–20; 19:27–29); or (4) the Jews mentioned in the second interpretation in the note on vv. 31–46.

**25:41** eternal fire prepared for the devil. See Rev 20:10. fire. See Jude 7; Rev 19:20 and notes; 20:15.

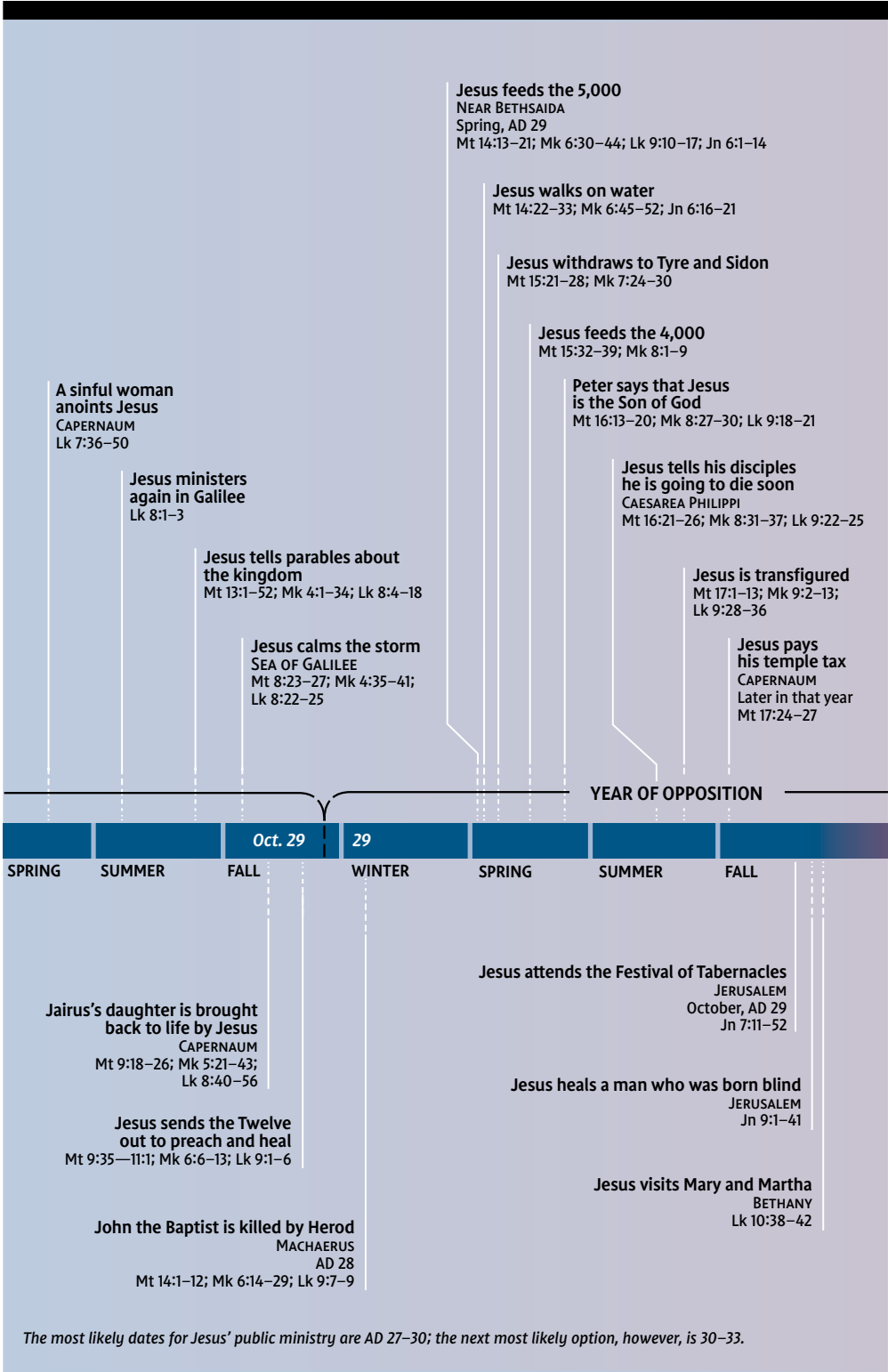
**25:46** eternal punishment ... eternal life. See Da 12:2; Jn 5:28–29; see also Jn 5:29; Ro 2:6–8; Gal 6:8 and notes. The parallelism between these two phrases prevents any weakening of the former.

**26:2** Passover. See notes on Mk 14:1; Jn 2:13. Son of Man. See note on Mk 8:31.

## THE LIFE OF CHRIST



THE LIFE OF CHRIST (CONT.)



The most likely dates for Jesus' public ministry are AD 27–30; the next most likely option, however, is 30–33.



## THE LIFE OF CHRIST (CONT.)

**Jesus begins his last trip to Jerusalem**AD 30  
Lk 17:11**Jesus blesses the little children**ACROSS THE JORDAN  
Mt 19:13–15; Mk 10:13–16; Lk 18:15–17**Jesus talks to the rich young man**ACROSS THE JORDAN  
Mt 19:16–30; Mk 10:17–31; Lk 18:18–30**Jesus again predicts his death and resurrection**NEAR THE JORDAN  
Mt 20:17–19; Mk 10:32–34; Lk 18:31–34**Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus**JERICHO  
Mt 20:29–34; Mk 10:46–52; Lk 18:35–43**Jesus talks to Zacchaeus**JERICHO  
Lk 19:1–10**Jesus returns to Bethany to visit Mary and Martha**BETHANY  
Jn 11:55–12:1

## THE LAST WEEK

**The “Triumphal” Entry, JERUSALEM, Sunday**  
Mt 21:1–11; Mk 11:1–10; Lk 19:29–44; Jn 12:12–19**Jesus curses the fig tree, Monday**  
Mt 21:18–19; Mk 11:12–14**Jesus clears the temple, Monday**  
Mt 21:12–13; Mk 11:15–18**The authority of Jesus questioned, Tuesday**  
Mt 21:23–27; Mk 11:27–33; Lk 20:1–8**Jesus teaches in the temple, Tuesday**  
Mt 21:28–23:39; Mk 12:1–44; Lk 20:9–21:4**Jesus anointed, BETHANY, Tuesday**  
Mt 26:6–13; Mk 14:3–9; Jn 12:2–11**The plot against Jesus, Wednesday**  
Mt 26:14–16; Mk 14:10–11; Lk 22:3–6**The Last Supper, Thursday**  
Mt 26:17–29; Mk 14:12–25; Lk 22:7–20; Jn 13:1–38**Jesus comforts the disciples, Thursday**  
Jn 14:1–16:33**Gethsemane, Thursday**  
Mt 26:36–46; Mk 14:32–42; Lk 22:40–46**Jesus’ arrest and trial, Thursday night and Friday**  
Mt 26:47–27:26; Mk 14:43–15:15;  
Lk 22:47–23:25; Jn 18:2–19:16**Jesus’ crucifixion and death, GOLGOTHA, Friday**  
Mt 27:27–56; Mk 15:16–41;  
Lk 23:26–49; Jn 19:17–30**The burial of Jesus, Joseph’s Tomb, Friday**  
Mt 27:57–66; Mk 15:42–47;  
Lk 23:50–56; Jn 19:31–42

30

WINTER

SPRING

SUMMER

FALL

31

WINTER

SPRING

SUMMER

## AFTER THE RESURRECTION

**The empty tomb, JERUSALEM, Sunday**  
Mt 28:1–10; Mk 16:1–8; Lk 24:1–12; Jn 20:1–10**Mary Magdalene sees Jesus in the garden**  
JERUSALEM, Sunday  
Mt 16:9–11; Jn 20:11–18**Jesus appears to the two going to Emmaus**  
Sunday  
Mk 16:12–13; Lk 24:13–35**Jesus appears to 10 disciples**  
JERUSALEM, Sunday  
Mt 16:14; Lk 24:36–43; Jn 20:19–25**Jesus appears to the 11 disciples**  
JERUSALEM, One week later  
Jn 20:26–31**Jesus talks with some of his disciples**  
SEA OF GALILEE, One week later  
Jn 21:1–25**Jesus ascends to his Father in heaven**  
MOUNT OF OLIVES, 40 days later  
Mt 28:16–20; Mk 16:19–20; Lk 24:44–53**Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead**  
BETHANY  
Winter, AD 30  
Jn 11:1–44

<sup>3</sup>Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled<sup>m</sup> in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas,<sup>n</sup> and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him.<sup>o</sup> <sup>5</sup>“But not during the festival,” they said, “or there may be a riot<sup>p</sup> among the people.”

### Jesus Anointed at Bethany

26:6-13pp — Mk 14:3-9

26:6-13Ref — Lk 7:37,38; Jn 12:1-8

<sup>6</sup>While Jesus was in Bethany<sup>q</sup> in the home of Simon the Leper, <sup>7</sup>a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

<sup>8</sup>When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. “Why this waste?” they asked. <sup>9</sup>“This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.”

26:3 <sup>m</sup>Ps 2:2  
<sup>n</sup>ver 57; Lk 3:2;  
Jn 11:47-53; 18:13;  
14, 24, 28; Ac 4:6  
26:4 <sup>o</sup>S Mt 12:14  
26:5 <sup>p</sup>Mt 27:24  
26:6 <sup>q</sup>S Mt 21:17

<sup>10</sup>Aware of this, Jesus said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>11</sup>The poor you will always have with you,<sup>a</sup> but you will not always have me. <sup>12</sup>When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial.<sup>s</sup> <sup>13</sup>Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

### Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

26:14-16pp — Mk 14:10,11; Lk 22:3-6

<sup>14</sup>Then one of the Twelve — the one called Judas Iscariot<sup>t</sup> — went to the chief priests<sup>15</sup> and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver.<sup>u</sup> <sup>16</sup>From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

<sup>a</sup> 11 See Deut. 15:11.

**26:3** *chief priests and the elders of the people.* The priestly and lay leadership of the Sanhedrin (see note on 2:4). *Caiaphas.* High priest AD 18–36 and the son-in-law of Annas (see Jn 18:13 and note), a former high priest, who served AD 6–15. In 1991 an ossuary (a limestone chest containing the bones of the dead) was found in Jerusalem inscribed with the name Caiaphas (see photo, p. 1695).

**26:5** *there may be a riot.* Hundreds of thousands of Jewish pilgrims came to Jerusalem for Passover (see note on Mk 14:2), and riots were not unknown, especially during this festival that celebrated liberation from Egypt. The religious leaders (v. 3) knew that many people admired Jesus.

**26:6–13** See note on Jn 12:1–11.

**26:6** *Bethany.* See note on 21:17. *Simon the Leper.* Mentioned elsewhere only in Mk 14:3, though Simon was a common Jewish name in the first century. He was probably a well-known victim of leprosy who had been healed by Jesus.

**26:7** *a woman.* Not named, but John identifies her as Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus (see Jn 12:3 and note). *alabaster jar.* Most alabaster of ancient times was actually marble (see note on Mk 14:3).

**26:8** *the disciples ... were indignant.* The reaction of the disciples to the anointing of Jesus contrasts with the woman's act of devotion.

**26:9** *given to the poor.* See note on Mk 14:5.

**26:11** *The poor you will always have with you.* See note on Mk 14:7.

**26:12** *prepare me for burial.* See note on Mk 14:8.

**26:14** *Iscariot.* See note on Mk 3:19. *chief priests.* See note on 2:4.

**26:15** *thirty pieces of silver.* Equivalent to 120 denarii. Laborers customarily received one denarius for a day's work (20:1–16). See notes on 20:2; Zec 11:12.

## “This Is My Body” ... “This Is My Blood” Mt 26:26–29

These words, uttered by Jesus at the Passover meal with his disciples the night before his crucifixion, inform the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (also called the Eucharist, or Communion). The occasion of the Passover ties Israel's deliverance from Egypt, commemorated by the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, to the much greater deliverance from sin effected by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (1Co 5:7; cf. Jn 1:29).

Jesus calls the broken bread his body, given for his disciples (Lk 22:19), and the wine his blood, “poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Mt 26:28). Jesus further describes the wine as blood “of the covenant,” indicating that its shedding effectuates a communal relationship between God and the participants in the sacrament. Those who eat the bread and drink the wine participate mysteriously but truly in the body and blood of Christ (1Co 10:16) and have the eternal life such intimate fellowship necessarily yields (Jn 6:53–58).

Exactly how Jesus is present in the bread and wine has understandably been the subject of much debate in the church throughout the ages. What is clear, however, is that the bread and wine are a means of grace by which God nourishes and strengthens believers in relationship with him and one another by their faith in the One whose sacrifice has made that relationship possible.



## The Last Supper

26:17-19pp — Mk 14:12-16; Lk 22:7-13

26:20-24pp — Mk 14:17-21

26:26-29pp — Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:17-20;

1Co 11:23-25

<sup>17</sup>On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread,<sup>v</sup> the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?”<sup>w</sup>

<sup>18</sup>He replied, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says: My appointed time<sup>x</sup> is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.’” <sup>19</sup>So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

<sup>20</sup>When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. <sup>21</sup>And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.”<sup>y</sup>

<sup>22</sup>They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely you don’t mean me, Lord?”

<sup>23</sup>Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.”<sup>z</sup> <sup>24</sup>The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him.<sup>a</sup> But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

<sup>25</sup>Then Judas, the one who would betray him,<sup>b</sup> said, “Surely you don’t mean me, Rabbi?”<sup>c</sup>

Jesus answered, “You have said so.”

<sup>26</sup>While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it<sup>d</sup> and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

<sup>27</sup>Then he took a cup,<sup>e</sup> and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. <sup>28</sup>This is my

<sup>26:17</sup> <sup>v</sup> Ex 12:18-20 <sup>w</sup> Dt 16:5-8

<sup>26:18</sup> <sup>x</sup> Mk 14:35, 41; Jn 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 17:1

<sup>26:21</sup> <sup>y</sup> Lk 22:21-23; Jn 13:21

<sup>26:23</sup> <sup>z</sup> Ps 41:9; Jn 13:18

<sup>26:24</sup> <sup>a</sup> ver 31, 54, 56; Isa 53; Da 9:26; Mk 9:12; Lk 24:25-27, 46; Ac 17:2, 3; 26:22, 23; 1Pe 1:10, 11

<sup>26:25</sup> <sup>b</sup> S Mt 10:4 <sup>c</sup> S Mt 23:7

<sup>26:26</sup>

<sup>d</sup> S Mt 14:19

<sup>26:27</sup> <sup>e</sup> 1Co 10:16



This ossuary (a limestone chest containing the bones of the dead) of Caiaphas (see 26:3) was found in Jerusalem and dates to the 1st century. The inscription on the side of the box reads, “Joseph son of Caiaphas.” Joseph Caiaphas, high priest from AD 18 to 36, is chiefly known for his involvement in the arrest of Jesus, trying Jesus for blasphemy, and eventually handing him over to Pontius Pilate.

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blood of the<sup>a</sup> covenant,<sup>f</sup> which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.<sup>g</sup>

<sup>29</sup>I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you<sup>h</sup> in my Father’s kingdom.”

<sup>30</sup>When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.<sup>i</sup>

## Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial

26:31-35pp — Mk 14:27-31; Lk 22:31-34

<sup>31</sup>Then Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me,<sup>j</sup> for it is written:

<sup>a</sup> 28 Some manuscripts *the new*

**26:17** *first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread.* The 14th of Nisan (March-April), it was also called the preparation of the Passover. The Passover meal was eaten the evening of the 14th after sunset—and therefore technically on the 15th, since the Jewish day ended at sunset. The Festival of Unleavened Bread lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st of Nisan (Lev 23:5–6), but in the first century the entire period, Nisan 14–21, was referred to under that name (see note on Mk 14:12).

**26:18–30** These verses indicate that Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples the night before his crucifixion. For more information on the Lord’s Supper, see notes on Mk 14:22, 24.

**26:18** *The Teacher says.* See note on Lk 22:11. *My appointed time.* Jesus’ crucifixion.

**26:19** *as Jesus had directed them.* See note on Lk 22:13.

**26:20** *When evening came.* See note on Mk 14:17. *reclining at the table.* See note on Mk 14:18.

**26:21** *Truly I tell you.* See note on Mk 3:28.

**26:23** *dipped his hand into the bowl with me.* It was the custom—still practiced by some in the Middle East—to

take a piece of bread, or a piece of meat wrapped in bread, and dip it into a bowl of sauce (made of stewed fruit) on the table. *will betray me.* In that culture to eat with a person was tantamount to saying, “I am your friend and will not hurt you.” This fact made Judas’s deed all the more despicable (cf. Ps 41:9 and note).

**26:24** *as it is written about him.* See notes on Mk 14:21; Lk 24:44. *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31.

**26:25** *one who would betray him.* See Jn 13:30 and note.

**26:26–28** See notes on Mk 14:22–24.

**26:27** *took a cup.* See note on Lk 22:17.

**26:28** *blood of the covenant... poured out for many.* See note on Mk 14:24.

**26:29** *drink it new... in my Father’s kingdom.* At the Messianic banquet (see Lk 22:16 and note).

**26:30** *hymn.* The Passover fellowship was concluded with the second half of the Egyptian Hallel Psalms (Ps 115–118). Ps 113–114 were sung before the meal. *Mount of Olives.* See note on Mk 11:1.

**26:31** *all fall away.* Not Peter only, but all the eleven (Judas had previously withdrawn, Jn 13:30). The meaning of the

**“I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep of the flock will be  
scattered.”<sup>ak</sup>**

**32**But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.<sup>ai</sup>

**33**Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.”

**34**“Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”<sup>m</sup>

**35**But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you,<sup>n</sup> I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same.

## Gethsemane

26:36-46pp — Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:40-46

**36**Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, **“Sit here while I go over there and pray.”** **37**He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee<sup>o</sup> along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. **38**Then he said to them, **“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow<sup>p</sup> to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”<sup>q</sup>**

**39**Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, **“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup<sup>r</sup> be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”<sup>s</sup>**

**40**Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. **“Couldn’t you men keep watch with me<sup>t</sup> for one hour?”** he asked Peter. **41**“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.<sup>u</sup> The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

**42**He went away a second time and prayed, **“My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”<sup>v</sup>**

**43**When he came back, he again found

**26:31**<sup>k</sup> Zec 13:7;

Jn 16:32

**26:32**<sup>l</sup> Mt 28:7, 10, 16

**26:34**<sup>m</sup> ver 75;

Jn 13:38

**26:35**<sup>n</sup> Jn 13:37

**26:37**<sup>o</sup> S Mt 4:21

**26:38**<sup>p</sup> S Jn 12:27

<sup>q</sup> ver 40, 41

**26:39**

<sup>r</sup> S Mt 20:22

<sup>s</sup> ver 42; Ps 40:6-8; Isa 50:5;

Mt 6:10; Jn 4:34;

5:30; 6:38

**26:40**<sup>t</sup> ver 38

**26:41**<sup>u</sup> Mt 6:13

**26:42**<sup>v</sup> S ver 39

them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. **44**So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

**45**Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, **“Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour<sup>w</sup> has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. **46**Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”**

## Jesus Arrested

26:47-56pp — Mk 14:43-50; Lk 22:47-53

**47**While he was still speaking, Judas,<sup>x</sup> one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. **48**Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: **“The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.”** **49**Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, **“Greetings, Rabbi!”<sup>y</sup>** and kissed him.

**50**Jesus replied, **“Do what you came for, friend.”<sup>z</sup>**

Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. **51**With that, one of Jesus’ companions reached for his sword,<sup>a</sup> drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.<sup>b</sup>

**52**“Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, **“for all who draw the sword will die by the sword.”<sup>c</sup>** **53**Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?<sup>d</sup> **54**But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled<sup>e</sup> that say it must happen in this way?<sup>f</sup>

**55**In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, **“Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture**

<sup>a</sup> 31 Zech. 13:7

<sup>b</sup> 50 Or “Why have you come, friend?”


words “fall away” is seen in Peter’s denial (vv. 69–75) and in the terrified flight of the other disciples (v. 56). *I will strike the shepherd*. See note on Zec 13:7.

**26:32** *into Galilee*. Cf. 28:10, 16–20; Mk 16:7; Jn 21:1–23.

**26:34** *before the rooster crows*. The reference may be to the third of the Roman watches into which the night was divided (see note on 14:25; see also Mk 13:35 and note). Or it may simply refer to early morning when the rooster crows.

**26:36** *Gethsemane*. The name means “oil press,” a place for squeezing the oil from olives (see note on Mk 14:32).

**26:37** *Peter and the two sons of Zebedee*. The latter were James and John. These three disciples seem to have been especially close to Jesus and/or the leaders among the Twelve (see 17:1; see note on Mk 5:37).

 **26:38–39** Jesus faced real temptation in Gethsemane to be deterred from his mission to die on behalf of humanity. The temptations narrated in ch. 4 culminate in this passage, where we see Jesus struggle in prayer and emerge ready for the ordeal ahead.

**26:38** *soul*. See 10:28 and note. *overwhelmed with sorrow*. See Isa 53:3 and note.

**26:39** *cup*. A symbol of deep sorrow, suffering and judg-

ment, alluding to the cup filled with God’s wrath against all human sin (see Jer 25:15 and note).

**26:41** See note on Mk 14:38.

**26:45** *the hour*. See note on Lk 22:53. *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31.

**26:47** *Judas*. See notes on Jn 6:70; 17:12. *large crowd armed with swords and clubs*. See note on Mk 14:43. *chief priests and the elders*. See notes on v. 3; 2:4.

**26:48** *The one I kiss*. See note on Lk 22:47.

**26:49** *Rabbi*. Hebrew word for “(my) teacher.” *kissed him*. See notes on Mk 14:45; Lk 22:47.

**26:50** *friend*. See note on 20:13.

**26:51** *one of Jesus’ companions ... servant of the high priest*. John identifies the companion as Peter and the servant as Malchus (see Jn 18:10 and note).

**26:53** *legions*. A Roman legion had 6,000 soldiers.

**26:54** *Scriptures be fulfilled*. Here and in v. 56 Jesus is referring to the Scriptures more generally rather than to specific verses (see notes on Mk 14:49; Lk 24:44).

**26:55** Jesus protested the manner of his arrest. The crowd sent by the Sanhedrin (see note on Mk 14:55) had come after him as if he were a dangerous criminal or insurrectionist.



me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching,<sup>f</sup> and you did not arrest me. <sup>56</sup>But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.”<sup>g</sup> Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

### Jesus Before the Sanhedrin

26:57-68pp — Mk 14:53-65; Jn 18:12,13,19-24

<sup>57</sup>Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas<sup>h</sup> the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled. <sup>58</sup>But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest.<sup>i</sup> He entered and sat down with the guards<sup>j</sup> to see the outcome.

<sup>59</sup>The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin<sup>k</sup> were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. <sup>60</sup>But they did not find any, though many false witnesses<sup>l</sup> came forward.

Finally two<sup>m</sup> came forward <sup>61</sup>and declared, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’”<sup>n</sup>

<sup>62</sup>Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” <sup>63</sup>But Jesus remained silent.<sup>o</sup>

The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath<sup>p</sup> by the living God:<sup>q</sup> Tell us if you are the Messiah,<sup>r</sup> the Son of God.”<sup>s</sup>

<sup>64</sup>“You have said so,”<sup>t</sup> Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One<sup>u</sup> and coming on the clouds of heaven.”<sup>av</sup>

<sup>65</sup>Then the high priest tore his clothes<sup>w</sup> and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. <sup>66</sup>What do you think?”

“He is worthy of death,”<sup>x</sup> they answered.

<sup>26:55</sup> <sup>f</sup>Mk 12:35; Lk 21:37; Jn 7:14, 28; 18:20  
<sup>26:56</sup> <sup>g</sup>S Mt 24:1; 26:57  
<sup>26:57</sup> <sup>h</sup>S ver 3  
<sup>26:58</sup> <sup>i</sup>ver 69; Mk 14:66; Lk 22:55; Jn 18:15  
<sup>26:59</sup> <sup>j</sup>Mt 15:16; Lk 11:21; Jn 7:32, 45, 46  
<sup>26:59</sup> <sup>k</sup>S Mt 5:22  
<sup>26:60</sup> <sup>l</sup>Ps 27:12; 35:11; Ac 6:13  
<sup>26:61</sup> <sup>m</sup>Dt 19:15  
<sup>26:61</sup> <sup>n</sup>S Jn 2:19  
<sup>26:63</sup> <sup>o</sup>S Mk 14:61  
<sup>26:63</sup> <sup>p</sup>Lev 5:1  
<sup>26:63</sup> <sup>q</sup>S Mt 16:16  
<sup>26:63</sup> <sup>r</sup>Lk 22:67  
<sup>26:63</sup> <sup>s</sup>Mt 4:3  
<sup>26:64</sup> <sup>t</sup>Mt 27:11; Lk 22:70  
<sup>26:64</sup> <sup>u</sup>S Mk 16:19  
<sup>26:65</sup> <sup>v</sup>S Rev 1:7  
<sup>26:65</sup> <sup>w</sup>S Mk 14:63  
<sup>26:66</sup> <sup>x</sup>Lev 24:16; Jn 19:7

### Peter Disowns Jesus

26:69-75pp — Mk 14:66-72; Lk 22:55-62; Jn 18:16-18,25-27

<sup>69</sup>Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. “You also were with Jesus of Galilee,” she said.

<sup>70</sup>But he denied it before them all. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said.

<sup>71</sup>Then he went out to the gateway, where another servant girl saw him and said to the people there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

<sup>72</sup>He denied it again, with an oath: “I don’t know the man!”

<sup>73</sup>After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, “Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away.”

<sup>74</sup>Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know the man!”

Immediately a rooster crowd. <sup>75</sup>Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: “Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”<sup>a</sup> And he went outside and wept bitterly.

### Judas Hangs Himself

**27** Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people made their plans how to have Jesus executed. <sup>b</sup>So they bound him, led him away and handed him over<sup>c</sup> to Pilate the governor.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 64 See Psalm 110:1; Daniel 7:13.

**26:56** *disciples deserted him.* Contrast v. 35.

**26:57—27:26** For a summary of the two stages (Jewish and Roman) of the trial of Jesus see note on Mk 14:53—15:15.

**26:57** *Caiaphas.* See v. 3; Jn 11:49 and notes. *teachers of the law.* See note on 2:4. *elders.* See notes on Ex 3:16; 2Sa 3:17.

**26:59** *Sanhedrin.* See note on Mk 14:55.

**26:61** *I am able to destroy the temple of God.* Possibly an intentional distortion of Jesus’ words found in John (see Mk 14:58; Jn 2:19 and notes).

**26:63** *I charge you under oath.* Jesus refused to answer the question of v. 62 (see v. 63a). But when the high priest used this form, Jesus was legally obliged to reply. *Messiah.* See note on 16:16.

**26:64** *You have said so.* A veiled affirmative implying, “That’s your way of saying it” or “You have acknowledged it yourself.” This Son of Man saying brings together Ps 110:1 and Da 7:13 (see note on 10:23). This combination indicates that Jesus will share God’s rule in heaven and will judge all people. See Mt 17:5; 24:30 and notes.

**26:65** *tore his clothes.* Ordinarily the high priest was forbidden by law to do this (Lev 10:6; 21:10), but this was consid-

ered a highly unusual circumstance. The high priest interpreted Jesus’ answer in v. 64 as blasphemy (see note on Mk 14:64).

**26:67—68** Mark (14:65) and Luke (22:64) report that they blindfolded Jesus, which explains the mocking command: “Prophecy . . . Who hit you?”

**26:73** *After a little while.* Lk 22:59 says “About an hour later.” *your accent gives you away.* Peter had a Galilean accent that was conspicuous in Jerusalem.

**27:1** *Early in the morning.* Continues the narrative from 26:68. The Sanhedrin could not have a legal session at night, so at daybreak they held a special meeting to make the death sentence (26:66) official. See notes on Mk 14:53—15:15; 15:1; Lk 22:66; Jn 18:28.

**27:2** *handed him over to Pilate.* The Sanhedrin had been deprived by the Roman government of the right to carry out capital punishment, except in the case of a foreigner who entered the sacred precincts of the temple. So Jesus had to be handed over to Pilate for execution. For additional information about Pilate, see note on Lk 3:1.

<sup>3</sup>When Judas, who had betrayed him,<sup>e</sup> saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver<sup>f</sup> to the chief priests and the elders. <sup>4</sup>“I have sinned,” he said, “for I have betrayed innocent blood.”

“What is that to us?” they replied. “That’s your responsibility.”<sup>g</sup>

<sup>5</sup>So Judas threw the money into the temple<sup>h</sup> and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>6</sup>The chief priests picked up the coins and said, “It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.”

<sup>7</sup>So they decided to use the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners. <sup>8</sup>That is why it has been called the Field of Blood<sup>j</sup> to this day. <sup>9</sup>Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:<sup>k</sup> “They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on him by the people of Israel, <sup>10</sup>and they used them to buy the potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.”<sup>al</sup>

### Jesus Before Pilate

27:11–26pp — Mk 15:2–15; Lk 23:2,3,18–25;  
Jn 18:29 – 19:16

<sup>11</sup>Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”<sup>m</sup>

“You have said so,” Jesus replied.

<sup>12</sup>When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer.<sup>n</sup> <sup>13</sup>Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?”<sup>o</sup> <sup>14</sup>But Jesus made no reply,<sup>p</sup> not even to a single charge — to the great amazement of the governor.

<sup>15</sup>Now it was the governor’s custom at

27:3 <sup>e</sup>S Mt 10:4  
<sup>f</sup>Mt 26:14, 15  
27:4 <sup>g</sup>ver 24  
27:5 <sup>h</sup>Lk 1:9, 21  
<sup>i</sup>Ac 1:18  
27:8 <sup>j</sup>Ac 1:19  
27:9 <sup>k</sup>S Mt 1:22  
27:10 <sup>l</sup>Zec 11:12, 13; Jer 32:6–9  
27:11 <sup>m</sup>S Mt 2:2  
27:12 <sup>n</sup>S Mk 14:61  
27:13 <sup>o</sup>Mt 26:62  
27:14 <sup>p</sup>S Mt 14:61

27:15 <sup>q</sup>Jn 18:39  
27:17 <sup>r</sup>ver 22;  
Mt 1:16  
27:19 <sup>s</sup>Jn 19:13  
<sup>t</sup>ver 24, <sup>u</sup>Ge 20:6;  
Nu 12:6; <sup>v</sup>1Ki 3:5;  
Job 33:14–16;  
Mt 1:20; 2:12, 13,  
19, 22  
27:20 <sup>w</sup>Ac 3:14  
27:22 <sup>x</sup>Mt 1:16  
27:24 <sup>y</sup>Mt 26:5  
<sup>z</sup>Ps 26:6  
<sup>aa</sup>2 Pt 21:6–8 <sup>ab</sup>ver 4  
27:25 <sup>ac</sup>Jos 2:19;  
S Ac 5:28

the festival to release a prisoner<sup>a</sup> chosen by the crowd. <sup>16</sup>At that time they had a well-known prisoner whose name was Jesus<sup>b</sup> Barabbas. <sup>17</sup>So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, “Which one do you want me to release to you: Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?”<sup>r</sup> <sup>18</sup>For he knew it was out of self-interest that they had handed Jesus over to him.

<sup>19</sup>While Pilate was sitting on the judge’s seat,<sup>s</sup> his wife sent him this message: “Don’t have anything to do with that innocent<sup>t</sup> man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream<sup>u</sup> because of him.”

<sup>20</sup>But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.<sup>v</sup>

<sup>21</sup>“Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” asked the governor.

“Barabbas,” they answered.

<sup>22</sup>“What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?”<sup>w</sup> Pilate asked.

They all answered, “Crucify him!”

<sup>23</sup>“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

<sup>24</sup>When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar<sup>x</sup> was starting, he took water and washed his hands<sup>y</sup> in front of the crowd. “I am innocent of this man’s blood,”<sup>z</sup> he said. “It is your responsibility!”<sup>aa</sup>

<sup>25</sup>All the people answered, “His blood is on us and on our children!”<sup>ab</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Then he released Barabbas to them.

<sup>a</sup> 10 See Zech. 11:12,13; Jer. 19:1–13; 32:6–9. <sup>b</sup> 16 Many manuscripts do not have *Jesus*; also in verse 17.

27:3–10 See Ac 1:16–19.

27:3 *thirty pieces of silver*. See 26:15 and note.

27:5 *temple*. Probably the treasury room of the temple (v. 6). *hanged himself*. See note on Ac 1:18.

27:8 *Field of Blood*. Cf. “Valley of Slaughter” in Jer 19:6.

27:9 *Jeremiah*. The quotation that follows seems to combine Zec 11:12–13 and Jer 19:1–13 (or perhaps Jer 18:2–12 or 32:6–9). But Matthew attributes it to the better-known prophet Jeremiah. Alternatively, he cites the less obvious reference to encourage his readers to look for it. For a similar composite quotation, see Mk 1:2–3 and note on Mk 1:2.

27:11 *governor*. Pontius Pilate (see note on v. 2). *king of the Jews*. See note on Jn 18:33.


27:14 *Jesus made no reply*. See 26:63; Mk 15:4; Isa 53:7 and notes. *amazement of the governor*. That Jesus said nothing to defend himself (see note on Mk 15:14).

27:16 Barabbas had achieved notoriety by taking part in a rebellion (Lk 23:19; Jn 18:40), presumably against the Romans. So he would have been a folk hero among the Jews. See notes on Mk 15:7; Lk 23:18; Jn 18:40. Some manuscripts use Barabbas’s full name, Jesus Barabbas, in vv. 16–17 (as in the NIV; see NIV text note on v. 16). If that is the correct reading, it sharpens the point of Pilate’s question in v. 17.

27:19 Matthew is the only writer who records this incident about Pilate’s wife, which adds another positive Gentile

portrayal to his others (e.g., 8:5–13; 15:21–28) and also highlights the positive role of women in the passion narrative (26:5–13; 27:55–56). *dream*. Dreams play an important role in the life of Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel (1:20; 2:12,13, 19,22).

27:24 *washed his hands*. See Dt 21:6; Ps 26:6 and notes; 73:13. Although Pilate tries to absolve himself from responsibility, he is the only one who is authorized to send Jesus to his crucifixion.

 27:25 The people accept responsibility for their choice, which was influenced by the Jewish leaders (v. 20). Sadly, their words have often been inappropriately used to justify persecution of the Jewish people. Yet the last thing Matthew notes about the people is that they are open to the truth of Jesus’ resurrection (what their leaders call a “deception,” 27:64). If there was a fulfillment of their declaration, it was most likely in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, which would account for the two generations indicated in “us and our children.” All the following passages should be studied regarding responsibility for Christ’s death on the cross: Isa 53:10; Ac 2:23; Jn 10:17–18; Heb 9:14; Mt 26:47,50,57,59,63–66; 27:1–2,20,22,26–27,31,41; Ro 5:8. Because of these and other similar Scriptures, a truly biblical Christian should never be guilty of anti-Semitism.

27:26 *flogged*. Roman floggings were so brutal that sometimes the victim died before crucifixion (see note on Mk 15:15).

But he had Jesus flogged,<sup>c</sup> and handed him over to be crucified.

### The Soldiers Mock Jesus

27:27-31pp — Mk 15:16-20

<sup>27</sup>Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium<sup>d</sup> and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. <sup>28</sup>They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him,<sup>e</sup> <sup>29</sup>and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said.<sup>f</sup> <sup>30</sup>They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again.<sup>g</sup> <sup>31</sup>After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.<sup>h</sup>

### The Crucifixion of Jesus

27:33-44pp — Mk 15:22-32; Lk 23:33-43;  
Jn 19:17-24

<sup>32</sup>As they were going out,<sup>i</sup> they met a man from Cyrene,<sup>j</sup> named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross.<sup>k</sup> <sup>33</sup>They came to a place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull").<sup>l</sup> <sup>34</sup>There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall;<sup>m</sup> but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. <sup>35</sup>When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.<sup>n</sup> <sup>36</sup>And sitting down, they kept watch<sup>o</sup> over him there. <sup>37</sup>Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

<sup>38</sup>Two rebels were crucified with him,<sup>p</sup> one on his right and one on his left. <sup>39</sup>Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads<sup>q</sup> <sup>40</sup>and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple

<sup>27:26</sup> <sup>c</sup>Isa 53:5; Jn 19:1  
<sup>27:27</sup> <sup>d</sup>Jn 18:28, 33; 19:9  
<sup>27:28</sup> <sup>e</sup>Jn 19:2  
<sup>27:29</sup> <sup>f</sup>Isa 53:3; Jn 19:2, 3  
<sup>27:30</sup> <sup>g</sup>5 Mt 16:21  
<sup>27:31</sup> <sup>h</sup>Isa 53:7  
<sup>27:32</sup> <sup>i</sup>Heb 13:12  
<sup>27:33</sup> <sup>j</sup>Ac 2:10; 6:9; 11:20; 13:1  
<sup>27:34</sup> <sup>k</sup>Mk 15:21; Lk 23:26  
<sup>27:35</sup> <sup>l</sup>Jn 19:17  
<sup>27:36</sup> <sup>m</sup>ver 48; Ps 69:21  
<sup>27:37</sup> <sup>n</sup>Ps 22:18  
<sup>27:38</sup> <sup>o</sup>ver 54  
<sup>27:39</sup> <sup>p</sup>Isa 53:12  
<sup>27:40</sup> <sup>q</sup>Ps 22:7; 109:25; La 2:15

<sup>27:40</sup> <sup>r</sup>S Jn 2:19  
<sup>27:41</sup> <sup>s</sup>ver 42 <sup>t</sup>Mt 4:3, 6  
<sup>27:42</sup> <sup>u</sup>Jn 1:49; 12:13 <sup>v</sup>S Jn 3:15  
<sup>27:43</sup> <sup>w</sup>Ps 22:8  
<sup>27:44</sup> <sup>x</sup>Am 8:9  
<sup>27:45</sup> <sup>y</sup>Ps 22:1  
<sup>27:46</sup> <sup>z</sup>ver 34; Ps 69:21  
<sup>27:50</sup> <sup>a</sup>Jn 19:30  
<sup>27:51</sup> <sup>b</sup>Ex 26:31-33; Heb 9:3, 8; 10:19, 20 <sup>c</sup>ver 54

and build it in three days,<sup>t</sup> save yourself!<sup>s</sup> Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!<sup>t</sup> <sup>41</sup>In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. <sup>42</sup>"He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel!"<sup>u</sup> Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe<sup>v</sup> in him. <sup>43</sup>He trusts in God. Let God rescue him<sup>w</sup> now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'<sup>x</sup> <sup>44</sup>In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

### The Death of Jesus

27:45-56pp — Mk 15:33-41; Lk 23:44-49;  
Jn 19:29-30

<sup>45</sup>From noon until three in the afternoon darkness<sup>x</sup> came over all the land. <sup>46</sup>About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli,<sup>a</sup> lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").<sup>by</sup>

<sup>47</sup>When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."

<sup>48</sup>Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar,<sup>z</sup> put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. <sup>49</sup>The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."

<sup>50</sup>And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>51</sup>At that moment the curtain of the temple<sup>b</sup> was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split<sup>c</sup> <sup>52</sup>and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. <sup>53</sup>They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and<sup>c</sup> went

<sup>a</sup> 46 Some manuscripts Eloi, Eloi <sup>b</sup> 46 Psalm 22:1  
<sup>c</sup> 53 Or tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they

**27:27** *Praetorium.* The governor's official residence in Jerusalem (see notes on Mk 15:16; Ac 23:25).

**27:28** *robe.* The outer cloak of a Roman soldier.

**27:29** *crown of thorns.* See note on Mk 15:17. *staff.* A mock scepter. *Hail, king of the Jews!* See note on Mk 15:18.

**27:30–31** See Isa 50:6 and note.

**27:30** *spit on him.* See note on Mk 15:19.

**27:32–50** In the crucifixion narrative, Matthew highlights Jesus as the Messianic king who experiences intense suffering in spite of his innocence (like the righteous sufferer of Ps 22).

**27:32** *they.* See v. 27. *Cyrene.* See note on Mk 15:21. *Simon ... to carry the cross.* See note on Mk 15:21.

**27:33** *Golgotha.* See note on Mk 15:22.

**27:34** *mixed with gall.* Tradition says that the women of Jerusalem customarily furnished this pain-killing narcotic to prisoners who were crucified. Jesus refused to drink it because he wanted to be fully conscious until his death (v. 50).

**27:35** *crucified.* See note on Mk 15:24. *casting lots.* Explained more precisely in Jn 19:23–24 (see notes there; see also NIV text note on Jn 19:24).

**27:37** See notes on Mk 15:26; Lk 23:38; Jn 19:19.

**27:38** *Two rebels.* See note on Mk 15:27.

**27:39** *shaking their heads.* See Ps 22:7 and note.

**27:41** *chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders.* The Sanhedrin (see note on v. 1).

**27:43** See Ps 22:8 and note.

**27:44** *rebels ... heaped insults on him.* But one came to believe (Lk 23:42–43).

**27:46** *Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?* Here Jesus spoke a dialect of Aramaic, which Matthew translates for his readers (see note on Mk 15:34).

**27:47** *Elijah.* See note on Mk 15:35.

**27:48** *sponge.* See note on Jn 19:29. *wine vinegar.* See notes on Mk 15:36; Lk 23:36; Jn 19:29.

**27:49** See note on Mk 15:35.

**27:50** *loud voice.* See note on Jn 19:30.

**27:51** *curtain.* The curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. The tearing of the curtain signified Christ's making it possible for believers to go directly into God's presence (see Mk 15:38; Lk 23:45; Heb 9:1–14; 10:14–22 and notes).



**The Garden Tomb in Jerusalem is visited by hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. This tomb is typical of first-century tombs with a groove for a stone that would be rolled in front of it to close it.**

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into the holy city<sup>d</sup> and appeared to many people.

<sup>54</sup>When the centurion and those with him who were guarding<sup>e</sup> Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”<sup>f</sup>

<sup>55</sup>Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs.<sup>g</sup> <sup>56</sup>Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph,<sup>h</sup> and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.<sup>i</sup>

### The Burial of Jesus

27:57-61pp — Mk 15:42-47; Lk 23:50-56;  
Jn 19:38-42

<sup>57</sup>As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup>Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus’ body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. <sup>59</sup>Joseph took the body, wrapped

27:53 <sup>d</sup>S Mt 4:5  
27:54 <sup>e</sup>ver 36  
<sup>f</sup>S Mt 4:3; 17:5  
27:55 <sup>g</sup>Lk 8:2, 3  
27:56 <sup>h</sup>Mk 15:47;  
Lk 24:10; Jn 19:25

it in a clean linen cloth,<sup>60</sup> and placed it in his own new tomb<sup>i</sup> that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. <sup>61</sup>Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

### The Guard at the Tomb

<sup>62</sup>The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. <sup>63</sup>“Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’”<sup>j</sup> <sup>64</sup>So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body<sup>k</sup> and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first.”

<sup>65</sup>“Take a guard,”<sup>l</sup> Pilate answered. “Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.” <sup>66</sup>So they went and made the tomb

27:60 <sup>i</sup>Mt 27:66;  
28:2; Mk 16:4;  
Ac 13:29  
27:63 <sup>j</sup>S Mt 16:21  
27:64 <sup>k</sup>Mt 28:13  
27:65 <sup>l</sup>ver 66;  
Mt 28:11

<sup>a</sup> 56 Greek *Joses*, a variant of *Joseph*

**27:54** *centurion*. Another Gentile who responds positively to Jesus (see note on 8:5). *Son of God*. See note on Lk 23:47. **27:55** *women ... to care for his needs*. Women played a significant role in the ministry of Jesus (Mk 15:41; Lk 23:49) and his disciples (see Lk 8:3 and note).

**27:56** See notes on Mk 15:40; Lk 24:10.

**27:57** *Arimathea*. A village in the hill country of Ephraim, about 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem; perhaps to be identified with Ramathaim, the birthplace of the prophet Samuel (see 1Sa 1:1 and note). *Joseph*. See notes on Lk 23:50; Jn 19:38.

**27:58** *asked for Jesus’ body*. See notes on Lk 23:52; Jn 19:39.

**27:60** *new tomb*. See notes on Mk 15:46; 16:3.

**27:61** *the other Mary*. Presumably the mother of James and Joseph (v. 56). Mary was a very common name in the first-century Jewish world, so second names or other descriptors were often used to distinguish particular persons.

**27:62** *The next day, the one after Preparation Day*. Saturday, the Sabbath. Friday was the preparation day for the Sabbath (sunset Friday to sunset Saturday).

**27:65** *Take a guard*. Either of Roman soldiers or of their own temple police; 28:14 implies that they were answerable to Pilate (“the governor”), which may favor Roman soldiers. On the other hand, the fact that in 28:11 they “reported to



secure by putting a seal<sup>m</sup> on the stone<sup>n</sup> and posting the guard.<sup>o</sup>

### Jesus Has Risen

28:1-8pp — Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-10; Jn 20:1-8

**28** After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene<sup>p</sup> and the other Mary<sup>q</sup> went to look at the tomb.

<sup>2</sup>There was a violent earthquake,<sup>r</sup> for an angel<sup>s</sup> of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone<sup>t</sup> and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.<sup>u</sup> <sup>4</sup>The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

<sup>5</sup>The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid,<sup>v</sup> for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here; he

**27:66** <sup>m</sup> Da 6:17  
<sup>n</sup> ver 60; Mt 28:2  
<sup>o</sup> Mt 28:11  
**28:1** <sup>p</sup> Lk 8:2  
<sup>q</sup> Mt 27:56  
**28:2** <sup>r</sup> Mt 27:51  
<sup>s</sup> Jn 20:12;  
<sup>t</sup> S Ac 5:19  
<sup>u</sup> Mt 27:60  
**28:3** <sup>v</sup> Da 7:9;  
<sup>w</sup> 10:6; Mk 9:3;  
<sup>x</sup> S Jn 20:12  
**28:5** <sup>y</sup> ver 10;  
<sup>z</sup> S Mt 14:27

**28:6** <sup>w</sup> S Mt 16:21  
**28:7** <sup>x</sup> ver 10, 16;  
Mt 26:32  
**28:9** <sup>y</sup> Jn 20:14-18  
**28:10** <sup>z</sup> Mt 12:50;  
<sup>aa</sup> 25:40; Mk 3:34;  
Jn 20:17; Ro 8:29;  
Heb 2:11-13, 17  
**28:11** <sup>aa</sup> Mt 27:65,  
66

has risen, just as he said.<sup>w</sup> Come and see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup>Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee.’ There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

<sup>8</sup>So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup>Suddenly Jesus met them.<sup>y</sup> “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers<sup>z</sup> to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

### The Guards' Report

<sup>11</sup>While the women were on their way, some of the guards<sup>z</sup> went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. <sup>12</sup>When the chief priests had

the chief priests” (instead of to Pilate) may favor temple police, who would have been under the authority of the religious leaders. (“Take a guard” may also be rendered “You have a guard.”)

**28:1** *first day of the week.* See note on Lk 24:1. *the other Mary.* See note on 27:61. Mk 16:1 adds Salome, and Lk 24:10 adds Joanna.

**28:2** *There was.* The sense is “Now there had been.” The parallel accounts (Mk 16:2-6; Lk 24:1-7; Jn 20:1) make it clear that the events of vv. 2-4 occurred before the women

actually arrived at the tomb. *violent earthquake.* Only Matthew mentions this earthquake and the one at Jesus’ death (27:51,54).

**28:6** *just as he said.* See 16:21 and note. *see the place where he lay.* See note on Jn 20:7.

**28:7** *going ahead of you into Galilee.* See 26:32 and note.

**28:10** *my brothers.* His “disciples” (v. 16).

**28:11-15** Only Matthew tells of the posting of the guard (27:62-66), and he follows up by telling about their report.

**28:11** *reported to the chief priests.* See note on 27:65.

## Views on Baptism

Mt 28:19



While there is general agreement among Christians about what baptism is, there is disagreement about how and to whom it should be administered. Virtually every branch of Christianity acknowledges that baptism (from the Greek *baptisma*) is one of the sacraments or ordinances of the church and marks the visible entrance of the baptized person into the believing community, which may be preceded by a public profession of faith. Baptism signifies the participants’ identification with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. The water signifies the washing away of sin by the blood of Christ and the raising to new life by the power of the Holy Spirit (Ro 6:3-4; Titus 3:5; 1Pe 3:18-22).

Disagreement exists, however, over how baptism should be performed and who can be baptized. Some hold that only those who profess their faith in Jesus Christ should be baptized (credobaptists), citing such passages as Ac 2:41; 8:12,36; 16:15,33; 18:8, where belief and baptism are mentioned together. Others, while welcoming to baptism those who profess their faith, also include children of believing parents as members of God’s covenant community (paedobaptists), finding a parallel between OT circumcision (Ge 17:7; Col 2:11-12), which was performed on a male child eight days after birth, and NT baptism. Those who hold this view cite such passages as Mk 10:16; Ac 2:39; 1Co 7:14, where children of believers are included in God’s blessings and promises.

There is also disagreement over how the baptism itself should or may be performed. Total or partial immersion in water, as well as pouring (affusion), and sprinkling (aspersion) have all been and continue to be practiced in the church. Though such differences regarding the methodology and recipients of baptism continue to beset the church, they should not be allowed to deflect attention from the union with Christ that such baptism signifies.

met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money,<sup>13</sup> telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away<sup>b</sup> while we were asleep.’<sup>14</sup> If this report gets to the governor,<sup>c</sup> we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.”<sup>15</sup> So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

### The Great Commission

<sup>16</sup>Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had

**28:13** <sup>b</sup> Mt 27:64  
**28:14** <sup>c</sup> S Mt 27:2

**28:16** <sup>d</sup> ver 7,10;

Mt 26:32

**28:18** <sup>e</sup> Da 7:13,

14; Lk 10:22;

Jn 3:35; S 13:13;

17:2; 1Co 15:27;

Eph 1:20-22;

Php 2:9,10

**28:19** <sup>f</sup> Isa 49:6;

Mk 16:15;

16; Lk 24:47;

Ac 1:8; 14:21

9Ac 1:8; 2:38;

8:16; Ro 6:3,4;

Gal 3:27;

Col 2:12

told them to go.<sup>d</sup> <sup>17</sup>When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup>Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.<sup>e</sup> <sup>19</sup>Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,<sup>f</sup> baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>g</sup> <sup>20</sup>and teaching<sup>h</sup> them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you<sup>i</sup> always, to the very end of the age.”<sup>j</sup>

**28:20** <sup>h</sup> Jn 14:26; Ac 2:42 <sup>i</sup> Dt 31:6; 1Kl 8:57; Hag 1:13; Mt 18:20; Ac 18:10  
<sup>j</sup> Mt 13:39; 24:3

**28:13** *His disciples ... stole him away.* One of many human attempts to explain away Christ's resurrection. *while we were asleep.* It is more likely that Jewish temple police would be willing to admit to such dereliction of duty than Roman soldiers would.

**28:14** See note on 27:65.

**28:16–20** Christ's Great Commission for his church (cf. also Mk 16:15–18; Lk 24:46–48; Jn 17:18; 20:21; Ac 1:8 and relevant notes).

**28:16** *eleven.* Judas had committed suicide (see 27:5 and note). *mountain.* Cf. note on 5:1. *had told them.* See v. 10.

**28:17** *some.* Probably of the 11 disciples. *doubted.* Belief in the resurrection was not instantaneous for them. After the traumatic experience of the crucifixion, it took time for the disciples to come to full faith (Lk 24:10–11, 25–26, 36–47).

**28:18** *authority.* See 10:1; see also 7:29; 16:28; Jn 17:2 and notes. *in heaven and on earth.* The scope of Christ's authority is the entire universe.



**28:19–20** Christ's program of missions: “go and make disciples of all nations.” It is accomplished by “baptizing them” and “teaching them to obey everything” Christ has commanded. As much as Jesus has pointed his followers toward obedience to the law in Matthew, now it is what Jesus has taught that forms the center of discipleship loyalty.



**28:19** *disciples.* See 5:1 and note. *all nations.* Contrast 10:5–6 and see note on 10:5; cf. Rev 5:9. *baptizing them.* As a sign of their union with and commitment to Christ (see notes on Ac 2:38; Ro 6:3–4). *Father ... Son ... Holy Spirit.* The doctrine of the Trinity means that there is one true God, existing eternally as three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (see 3:16–17 and note; 1Co 12:4–6; 2Co 13:14 and note; Eph 1:2–13; 4:4–6; 2Th 2:13 and note; Titus 3:4–6; 1Pe 1:2 and note; 1Jn 4:13–14; Rev 1:4–6 and NIV text note on 1:4).



**28:20** *with you.* Matthew ends with the reassuring and empowering words of him who came to earth to be “God with us” (1:23; cf. 18:20). See note on 2Co 13:14.