

**This book is the Gospel that  
Matthew wrote. We call this  
book  
Matthew**

*The genealogy of Jesus, with the names listed  
in three groups of 14 generations each.*

*Matthew 1:1-17*

<sup>1</sup> This is the record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, the descendant of *King David* and of Abraham, *from whom all we Jews have descended.*

<sup>2</sup> Abraham was the father of Isaac. Isaac was the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Judah and Judah's *older and younger* brothers.

<sup>3</sup> Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah, *and their mother* was Tamar. Perez was the father of Hezron. Hezron was the father of Ram.

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

<sup>5</sup> Salmon and his wife Rahab, *a non-Jewish woman*, were the parents of Boaz. Boaz was the father of Obed. *Obed's mother* was Ruth, *another non-Jewish woman*. Obed was the father of Jesse.

<sup>6</sup> Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon. *Solomon's mother* was *previously married to* Uriah.

<sup>7</sup> Solomon was the father of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was the father of Abijah. Abijah was the father of Asaph.

<sup>8</sup> Asaph was the father of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat was the father of Jehoram. Jehoram was an ancestor of Uzziah.

<sup>9</sup> Uzziah was the father of Jotham. Jotham was the father of Ahaz. Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah.

<sup>10</sup> Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh. Manasseh was the father of Amon. Amon was the father of Josiah.

<sup>11</sup> Josiah was the grandfather of Jeconiah and Jeconiah's brothers. *They lived* at the time when the *Babylonian army* took the Israelites as captives to the *country of Babylon*.

<sup>12</sup> After the Babylonians took the Israelites to Babylon, Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel. Shealtiel was the grandfather of Zerubbabel.

<sup>13</sup> Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud. Abiud was the father of Eliakim.

<sup>14</sup> Eliakim was the father of Azor. Azor was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Akim.

<sup>15</sup> Akim was the father of Eliud. Eliud was the father of Eleazar. Eleazar was the father of Matthan. Matthan was the father of Jacob.

<sup>16</sup> Jacob was the father of Joseph. Joseph was Mary's husband, and Mary was Jesus' mother. Jesus is the one who is called {whom we call} the Messiah.

<sup>17</sup> *As you can calculate, I have grouped Jesus' ancestors as follows: There was a succession of 14 of them from the time when Abraham lived to the time when King David lived. There was a succession of 14 of them from the time when David lived to the time when the Israelites were taken {the Babylonian army took the Israelites} away to Babylon. There was a succession of 14*

of them from *the time when the Israelites were taken {the Babylonian army took the Israelites}* away to Babylon until *the time when the Messiah was born*.

*When Joseph learned that Mary was pregnant, he decided to divorce her; but an angel told him to take her as his wife because it was the power of the Holy Spirit that had enabled her to be pregnant*  
*Matthew 1:18-25*

<sup>18</sup> This is *the account of what happened just before* Jesus Christ was born. Mary, his mother, {had publicly promised Joseph that she would marry him} had been publicly promised to marry Joseph. Before they began to sleep together, *Mary realized that she was pregnant. It was the power of the Holy Spirit that had caused her to become pregnant.*

<sup>19</sup> Joseph, her *future* husband, was a man who obeyed God's commands. *One of those commands was that men must divorce women who had acted immorally. So when Joseph learned that Mary was pregnant, he assumed that she was pregnant as a result of her acting immorally.* So he decided to break the engagement. But because he did not want to shame her publicly, he decided to do it privately.

<sup>20</sup> While he was seriously considering this, much to his surprise, in a dream he saw an angel whom the Lord *had sent*. The angel said, "Joseph, descendant of King David, do not be afraid that *you(sg) would be doing wrong if you(sg) would marry Mary*. Instead, *begin to treat her as your*

wife, because the Holy Spirit, *not a man*, has caused her to be pregnant.

<sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son. Since it is he who will cause that his people will be saved from *the guilt of* their having sinned, name *the baby* Jesus, *which means 'the Lord saves people'.*"

<sup>22</sup> All this happened as a result of what the Lord told the prophet *Isaiah to write long ago about what was going to happen*. This is what Isaiah wrote:

<sup>23</sup> "Listen, a virgin will become pregnant and will give birth to a son. They will call him Emmanuel." Emmanuel means 'God is with us'.

<sup>24</sup> When Joseph got up from sleep, he did what the angel whom the Lord *had sent* commanded him to do. He took *Mary* home to be his wife.

<sup>25</sup> But he did not have sexual relations with her until she had given birth to a son. And *Joseph* named him Jesus.

## 2

*After some astrologers saw an unusual star, they traveled westwards to find the place where the infant Jesus was. King Herod helped direct them, but then an angel told them not to go back to King Herod.*

*Matthew 2:1-12*

<sup>1</sup> Jesus was born in Bethlehem town in Judea province during the time [MTY] that King Herod the Great ruled there. Some time after Jesus was born, some men who studied the stars and who lived in a country east of Judea came to Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> They asked *people*, "Where is the one who has been born *in order that he might be* the king of you Jews? *We believe that your new king* has been born, because we have seen the star *that we believe indicated that* he has been born. *We saw it while we were in our country east of here.* So we have come to worship him."

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard *what those men were asking*, he became worried *that someone else might be proclaimed {people might proclaim someone else} king of the Jews to replace him.* Many of the people of Jerusalem [MTY, HYP] also became worried *because they were afraid of what King Herod might do.*

<sup>4</sup> Then Herod gathered together all the ruling priests and men who taught the people the *Jewish* laws and he asked them where *the prophets had predicted that* the Messiah was to be born.

<sup>5</sup> They said to him, "*He will be born* in Bethlehem, *here* in Judea *province*, because it was written by the prophet *Micah* {the prophet *Micah* wrote} *long ago what God said:*

<sup>6</sup> 'You who live in Bethlehem [APO], in Judea *province*, your town is certainly very important [LIT], because a man from your *town* will become a ruler. He will guide my people who live in Israel.' "

<sup>7</sup> Then *King* Herod secretly summoned those men who studied the stars. He asked them exactly when the star *first* appeared. *By what they told him, he was able to know the approximate age of the baby.*

<sup>8</sup> Then he *concealed what he really planned*

*to do and* said to them, “Go to Bethlehem and inquire thoroughly *where* the infant is. When you have found him, *come back and* report to me so that I, myself, can go *there and* worship him, too.”

<sup>9</sup> After the men heard what the king *told them*, they went *toward Bethlehem*. To their surprise, the star that they had seen while they were in the eastern *country* went ahead of them *again* until it stood above *the house* where the child was.

<sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced greatly *and followed it*.

<sup>11</sup> They *found* the house and entered it and saw the child and his mother, Mary. They bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasure *boxes* [MTY] and they gave gold, costly frankincense, and myrrh to him.

<sup>12</sup> *Because* God *knew that King Herod planned to kill Jesus*, in a dream the men who studied the stars were warned {he warned the men who studied the stars} that they should not return to King Herod. So they returned to their country, *but instead of traveling back on the same road, they went on a different road*.

*Following an angel's instructions, Joseph took his family to the country of Egypt to escape from Herod.*

*Matthew 2:13-21*

<sup>13</sup> After the men who studied the stars left *Bethlehem*, an angel *from* the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. He said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you (*sg*) *that you should leave*,

because *King Herod* is about *to send soldiers* to look for the child so that they can kill him.”

<sup>14</sup> So Joseph got up, he took the child and his mother *that* night, and they fled to Egypt.

<sup>15</sup> They stayed there until *King Herod* died, *and then they left Egypt*. By doing that, it was {they} fulfilled what the prophet *Hosea* wrote, which had been said by the Lord {which the Lord had said},

I have told my son to come out of Egypt.

<sup>16</sup> *While King Herod was still living*, because he realized that he had been tricked by the men who studied the stars {the men who studied the stars had tricked him}, he became furious. Then, *assuming that Jesus was still in Bethlehem or the surrounding regions*, Herod sent *soldiers there* to kill all the boy babies two years old and younger. *Herod calculated how old the baby was*, according to what the men who studied the stars told him *about when the star first appeared*.

<sup>17</sup> *Because Bethlehem and Ramah towns were in the area where the descendants of Jacob's wife Rachel lived, when soldiers killed the infant boys*, they fulfilled what Jeremiah the prophet wrote,

<sup>18</sup> *Women in Ramah were weeping and wailing loudly. Women who were the descendants of Rachel, the ancestor of the women there [SYN], were grieving for what happened to their children. Even though people tried to comfort them, they would not be comforted {stop mourning}, because their children were dead.*

<sup>19</sup> After Herod died *and while Joseph and his*

*family were still in Egypt*, an angel that the Lord *had sent* appeared to Joseph in Egypt in a dream.

<sup>20</sup> He said to Joseph, "Take the child and his mother and go back to Israel *to live*, because the people who were looking for the child *in order to kill him* have died."

<sup>21</sup> So Joseph took the child and his mother, and they went back to Israel.

*Following an angel's warning, Joseph and his family returned to Nazareth, and thus a prophecy about the Messiah was fulfilled.*

*Matthew 2:22-23*

<sup>22</sup> When Joseph heard that Archelaus now ruled in Judea *district* instead of his father, *King Herod the Great*, he was afraid to go there. Because he was warned {God warned Joseph} in a dream *that it was still dangerous for them to live in Judea*, he and Mary and Jesus went to Galilee *District*

<sup>23</sup> *to Nazareth to live there*. The result was that what had been said by the ancient prophets {what the ancient prophets had said} *about the Messiah*, that he would be called {people would call him} a Nazareth-man, was fulfilled {came true}.

### 3

*John the Baptizer announced the coming of Jesus, and he baptized many people who heard his message.*

*Matthew 3:1-6*

<sup>1</sup> While *Jesus was still in Nazareth town*, John, *whom the people called the Baptizer*, went to a desolate place in Judea district.

<sup>2</sup> He was preaching to the people who came there. He kept saying, “You need to turn away from your sinful behavior, because God [MET] will soon begin to rule over people, and he will reject you if you do not turn away from your sinful life.”

<sup>3</sup> John was the person who fulfilled what was said by Isaiah the prophet {what Isaiah the prophet predicted when he said}, long ago:

In a desolate area ◀people will hear someone/ someone will be heard▶ shouting to the people who pass by,

Prepare yourselves to receive the Lord when he comes!

Make yourselves ready so that you will be prepared when he comes [MET, DOU], just like people improve and straighten out the road for an important official!

<sup>4</sup> John wore coarse clothing made from camel’s hair. And as the prophet Elijah did long ago, he wore a leather belt around his waist. His food was only grasshoppers and honey that he found in that desolate area.

<sup>5</sup> People who lived in Jerusalem city [MTY], many [HYP] people who lived in other places in Judea district [MTY], and many [HYP] people who lived in the area around the Jordan River [MTY] came to John to hear him preach.

<sup>6</sup> After they heard him tell them to turn away from their sinful behavior, they openly confessed

their sins, and as a result they were baptized by John {John baptized them} in the Jordan River.

*John told the Pharisees and Sadducees that they needed to repent before he would baptize them.*

*Matthew 3:7-10*

<sup>7</sup> After John noted that many men of the Pharisee *religious group* and of the Sadducee *religious group* were coming to him to be baptized {in order that he would baptize them}, he said to them, "You people are *evil like poisonous snakes* [MET]! I warn you that God will some day punish [MTY] everyone who sins. ◀And do not think that you can escape from his punishing you [MTY] *if you do not turn from your sinful behavior!*/Did someone tell you that you can escape from his punishing you [MTY] *if you do not turn from your sinful behavior?*▶ [RHQ]

<sup>8</sup> Do what is appropriate [IDM] for people who have truly turned away from their sinful behavior *before you come to me in order to be baptized* {that I baptize you}.

<sup>9</sup> God promised to give Abraham many descendants. In order to fulfill that promise, God does not need you! I tell you that he can change these stones to make them descendants of Abraham. So do not start to say to yourselves, 'Since we are descendants of our ancestor Abraham, God will not punish us even though we have sinned.'

<sup>10</sup> God is ready to punish you if you do not turn away from your sinful behavior; just like a man who lays his axe at the roots of a fruit tree in

*order to chop it down and throw it into the fire if it does not produce good fruit [MET]."*

*John said that someone greater than him would soon come who would enable some of the people to change their lives and who would severely punish the others.*

*Matthew 3:11-12*

<sup>11</sup> *"As for me, I am not very important, because I baptize you only with water. I baptize you because of your feeling sorry that you have sinned. But someone else will come soon who is very great; he will do powerful deeds (OR, act powerfully). Because he is superior to me, I am not worthy even to do a menial task for him, such as to carry his sandals.*

*He will put his Holy Spirit within you to truly change the way you live [MET], and he will judge others of you and punish you in the fire in hell.*

<sup>12</sup> *He is like a farmer who wants to clear away the grain that is on the ground where it has been threshed {they have threshed it}. That farmer uses a huge fork to throw the grain into the air to separate the wheat from the chaff [MET], and then he cleans up the threshing area. Similarly, God will separate righteous people from the evil people like a farmer who gathers the wheat into his storage area, and then God will burn the people who are like chaff with a fire that will never be put out [MET]."*

*When John baptized Jesus, God showed that Jesus was his Son by sending the Holy Spirit upon*

him.

*Matthew 3:13-17*

<sup>13</sup> During that time, Jesus went from Galilee District to the Jordan River, where John was. *He did that* in order to be baptized by John {in order to ask that John would baptize him}.

<sup>14</sup> *When Jesus asked John to baptize him*, John objected, saying, “I need to be baptized by **you** {**you** to baptize **me**} *because you are superior to me. Since you are not a sinner, ◀you(sg) should not come to me to be baptized by me {to ask that I baptize you(sg)}!/why do you come to me to be baptized by me {ask that I baptize you(sg)} [RHQ]?▶*”

<sup>15</sup> But Jesus said to him, “Baptize me at this time, because in this way we *two* will do *everything that God* requires.” Then John consented to baptize him.

<sup>16</sup> After he was baptized {John baptized Jesus}, Jesus immediately came up out of the water. Just then, *it was as though* the sky was opened {split apart}. Then *Jesus* saw God’s Spirit coming down upon him. He came in the form of a dove.

<sup>17</sup> Then *God* [SYN] spoke from heaven, saying, “This is my Son. I love him. I am very pleased with him.”

## 4

*After Jesus fasted 40 days, Satan tempted him in various ways.*

*Matthew 4:1-11*

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led by the Spirit {*God’s Spirit* led Jesus} into a desolate area to be tempted by

the devil {in order that the devil would tempt him}.

<sup>2</sup> After he did not eat food for 40 days, and 40 nights. he was hungry.

<sup>3</sup> *Satan*, the tempter, came to him and said, "Because you *claim that you have a relationship with God as a son has with his father* [MET], *prove it by commanding these stones to become bread so that you can eat them!*"

<sup>4</sup> But Jesus said to him, "*No! I will not change stones into bread, because it is written in the Scriptures {in the Scriptures Moses wrote}, 'Eating food [SYN] sustains people physically, but it does not sustain them spiritually [SYN]. Instead, paying attention to everything that God has spoken to them is what sustains people spiritually.'*"

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took Jesus to *Jerusalem*, the city that is dedicated to God. He set him on the highest part of the Temple,

<sup>6</sup> and said to him, "Because you *claim that you have a relationship with God as a son has with his father, prove it by jumping down to the ground. You will not be hurt*, because it is written in the Scriptures, '*God will command his angels to protect you. They will lift you up in their hands when you are falling, in order that you will not get hurt. You will not even strike your foot on a stone.*' "

<sup>7</sup> But Jesus said, "*No! I will not jump down, because in another place in the Scriptures it is written {there are these words that Moses wrote}: 'Do not try to test the Lord your God*

*to see if he will prevent something bad from happening to you when you do something foolish!" "*

<sup>8</sup> Then the devil took him on *top of* a very high mountain. There he showed him all the nations in the world and the magnificent things in those nations.

<sup>9</sup> And then he said to him, "I will *let you rule all these nations and* give you the magnificent things in them if you bow down and worship me."

<sup>10</sup> But Jesus said to him, "*No, I will not worship you, Satan, so go away!* It is written in the Scriptures, 'It is the Lord your God whom you (*pl*) must worship, and you (*pl*) must serve only him!'" "

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil went away, and right away, angels came to Jesus and took care of him.

*Jesus went to Galilee and preached that people needed to repent to belong to the group whom God would consider his people.*

*Matthew 4:12-17*

<sup>12</sup> While Jesus was in Judea, John the Baptizer's disciples told him that John had been put in prison and kept there {that *Herod Antipas* had put John the Baptizer in prison and kept him there}. So Jesus returned to Galilee District. While he was in Galilee, he first went to Nazareth town.

<sup>13</sup> Then he left Nazareth and went to Capernaum city in order to live there. Capernaum is located beside Galilee Lake in the region which was formerly the regions of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali.

<sup>14</sup> *One reason that he went there was so that these words that were written by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled {so that he might fulfill these words that the prophet Isaiah wrote}:*

<sup>15</sup> *“Zebulun region and Naphtali region are on the road which is near Galilee Lake and on the eastern side of the Jordan River. They are the regions in Galilee District where many non-Jews are living.*

<sup>16</sup> *Although the people there will be like people who sit in a dark place [MET], they will suddenly perceive clearly a new teaching, as people who have seen a big light shining on them [MET] perceive everything clearly. The people who are located in a dangerous [MET] region will suddenly perceive clearly what God teaches, as people on whom a light shines perceive things clearly [MET, DOU].*

<sup>17</sup> *From that time, while Jesus was in Capernaum city, he began to preach this to people: “God [MTY/EUP] will very soon begin to rule, and he will judge you when he rules. So you (pl) need to turn from your sinful ways so that God will not punish you.”*

*Jesus summoned four fishermen, who immediately left their work and went with him.*

*Matthew 4:18-23*

<sup>18</sup> *One day while Jesus was walking by Galilee Lake, he saw two men, Simon, who was later called Peter, and Andrew, his younger brother. They were casting their fishing net into the lake because they earned money by catching and selling fish.*

<sup>19</sup> He said to them, “*Just like you have been gathering fish, come with me and I will teach you how to gather people to become my disciples.*” [MET]

<sup>20</sup> They immediately left *the work that they were doing with their fishing nets*, and they went with him.

<sup>21</sup> As *the three of them* walked on from there, Jesus saw two other men, James, and John, the *younger brother of James*. *They were in their boat with Zebedee, their father, mending their fishing nets*. Jesus told them that *they should leave their work and go with him*.

<sup>22</sup> They immediately left their fishing boat and their father, and they went with Jesus.

*Jesus taught and healed many people when he was in Galilee District.*

*Matthew 4:23-25*

<sup>23</sup> Jesus went *with those four men* throughout all of Galilee District. He was teaching *the people* in the buildings where we Jews worship God. He was preaching the good message that tells how to become members of the group of people whose lives God rules over. He was also healing all *the Galileans* who had diseases or who were sick.

<sup>24</sup> When people who lived in other parts of Syria District heard [PRS] what he was doing, they brought to him people who suffered from illnesses, people who suffered from many kinds of diseases, people who *suffered from* severe pains, people who were controlled by demons {whom demons controlled}, people who were

epileptics, and people who were paralyzed. And Jesus healed them all.

<sup>25</sup> Then crowds started to go with him. *They were people from Galilee District, ◀from the Decapolis/ from the Ten Towns area▶, from Jerusalem city, from other parts of Judea district, and from areas east of the Jordan River.*

## 5

*On a hillside, Jesus taught his disciples and others what kind of people God esteems.*

*Matthew 5:1-12*

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a hillside. He sat down *in order to teach* his disciples. They came near to him *to listen to him*.

<sup>2</sup> Then he began to teach them by saying,

<sup>3</sup> *God is pleased with people who recognize that they have a spiritual need;*  
he will allow them to be the people whose lives he rules over.

<sup>4</sup> *God is pleased with people who mourn because they have sinned;*  
they will be encouraged {he will encourage them.}

<sup>5</sup> *God is pleased with people who are meek;*  
they will inherit the earth *that God will recreate*.

<sup>6</sup> *God is pleased with people who sincerely desire to live righteously just like they desire to eat and drink [MET];*  
they will be enabled {he will enable them} to do all that he desires [MET].

<sup>7</sup> *God is pleased with people who act mercifully;*  
he will act mercifully to them.

8 *God* is pleased with people who think only about that which pleases him;  
*some day* they will *be where* God is and will see him.

9 *God* is pleased with people who help other people to live peacefully;  
they will be considered to be {he will consider that they are} his children [MET].

10 *God is pleased with* people to whom evil things are done {to whom *other people* do evil things} because they *conducted themselves* righteously;

he will allow them to be where he rules over people.

11 *God is pleased with* you when *other* people insult you, when *other people* do evil things to you and when *other people* say falsely that you are evil because *you believe in* me.

12 *When that happens*, rejoice and be glad [DOU], because *God will give* you a great reward in heaven. *God will think highly of* you, just like *he thought highly of* the prophets whom your ancestors persecuted long ago.

*Jesus taught that we should live in such a way that other people will see how we live and will praise God.*

*Matthew 5:13-16*

13 “**You** are able to influence evil people [MTY] and improve the way they live in order that they do not become more evil, just like salt is able to improve the flavor of food and to preserve it [MET] from spoiling. Salt that no longer tastes salty cannot become salty again [RHQ]. As a result,

that salt becomes useless. It is rejected by people, thrown on the ground, and walked on {People reject it, throw it on the ground and walk on it} [MET]. *Similarly, if the way you live no longer influences people to live in a godly manner, God will reject you.*

<sup>14</sup> **You** enable evil people [MTY] to perceive God's truth as a light enables people to perceive what is around them. Just like everyone can see [LIT] the lights of a city on a hill [MET], other people can see what you do.

<sup>15</sup> After people light a lamp, they never put it under a basket. Instead, *they put it* on a lampstand in their houses in order that it can shine on everyone there.

<sup>16</sup> *Similarly, you need to do what is right* [MET] in such a manner that other people can see the good deeds that you do, and as a result they will praise your Father *who is in heaven.*"

*Jesus taught that it is important to obey all of God's commandments.*

*Matthew 5:17-20*

<sup>17</sup> "I came to earth, not to annul the laws that God gave Moses or what the prophets [MTY] wrote. Instead, *I came* to cause to happen what the authors of those books predicted would happen. So do not think any longer that I have come to earth in order that I might annul what they wrote.

<sup>18</sup> Keep this in mind: Every point of those laws, including those points that seem least important, and even the smallest details of the laws [MTY] will surely be in effect [HYP, LIT] until the

heavens and the earth disappear and until all *that God told their authors to write* happens.

<sup>19</sup> Since *all God's laws are important*, if anyone disobeys any of those commandments, *even if it would be one of the least important ones*, and if that person teaches people *to disobey any of those commandments*, it will be said {God will say} that that person is the least *important* of those in the place where [EUP] God rules. But those who obey *those commandments* and teach *other people to obey them*, it will be said {God will say} that they are very important among those that God rules.

<sup>20</sup> Keep this in mind: *You assume that* the Pharisees and the men who teach our laws *faithfully obey* what God commands. But if you do not obey those laws better than they obey them, you will by no means enter the place where God rules."

*Jesus taught that we should not be angry, and that we should quickly settle accounts with those whom we have wronged.*

*Matthew 5:21-26*

<sup>21</sup> "You have heard *your religious teachers* say that it was said {that Moses said} to your ancestors, 'Do not murder *anyone*.' *This implied that* if someone murders *another person*, the judge will condemn that person *and* sentence him to be *executed* {say that someone must execute him}.

<sup>22</sup> But what I say to you is this: *If you are angry* with someone, *God will judge you*. If you say to someone, '*You are worthless*,' the Jewish Council will judge you. If you *hate someone*, and say to

them 'You fool!' you. yourself, will be in danger of being thrown into the fires in hell.

<sup>23</sup> So, when you take your gift *for God* to the altar, if you remember that you have offended someone,

<sup>24</sup> leave your gift by the altar, and first go *to the person you have offended*. Tell that person that you are sorry for what you have done, and ask that person to forgive you. Then go back and offer your gift *to God*.

<sup>25</sup> Also, when a fellow citizen *takes you to court in order to* accuse you, settle accounts with that person quickly while you are walking with that person *to court*. Do that *while there still is time to do so* in order that he will not take you to the judge, *because if the judge favors the person who is accusing you, he will declare that you are guilty and send you to the prison guard, and the prison guard will put you in prison.*

<sup>26</sup> Keep this in mind: *If you go to prison, you will never get out because you will never be able to pay all that the judge says that you owe [MET]. And remember also that you ought to settle accounts with God before you die, too."*

*Jesus taught about the way to refuse to sin when we are tempted to do something wrong.*

*Matthew 5:27-30*

<sup>27</sup> "You have heard God's commandment, 'Do not commit adultery.'

<sup>28</sup> But what I say to you is this: If a man only looks at a woman desiring to have sex with her, *God considers that his doing that [MET] is sin.*

<sup>29</sup> If because of what you see [MTY] you *are tempted to sin, stop looking at those things! Even if you have to gouge out one of your eyes and throw it away [HYP] to avoid sinning, do it!* It is good that you not sin and as a result go to heaven, even though while you are still here on earth you lack one or both of your eyes. But it is not good that you continue to have two eyes and sin and, as a result, God sends your whole body to hell.

<sup>30</sup> If you are *tempted to use one of your hands to sin [MTY], stop using your hand. Even if you have to cut your hand off and throw it away to avoid sinning, do it [HYP]!* It is good that you do not sin and as a result you go to heaven, even though while you are still here on earth you lack one or both of your hands. But it is not good that you sin and, as a result, God sends your whole body to hell."

*Jesus taught that people should not divorce their spouses.*

*Matthew 5:31-32*

<sup>31</sup> "It is written {Moses wrote}, 'If a man is divorcing his wife, he should write a document on which he states that he is divorcing her.'

<sup>32</sup> But now listen to what I say to you: A man may divorce his wife only if she has committed adultery, and not for any other reason. If a man divorces his wife for any other reason, and he has sex with another woman, he makes his wife become one against whom he has committed adultery, because in God's estimation she still is his wife. Also, if a man marries a woman

who is divorced {whose husband has divorced her}, *God considers him guilty of committing adultery.*"

*Jesus taught that people should not add anything to make their words more credible when they promise to do something.*

*Matthew 5:33-37*

<sup>33</sup> "You have also heard *your religious teachers* say that it was written {that *Moses wrote*} to your ancestors, 'Make sure that you do what you promised the Lord that you would do!' [DOU]

<sup>34</sup> But now listen to what I say to you: Never promise to do anything and then ask a superior being to affirm *that what you are saying will happen*. For example, do not promise that you will give something and then ask spiritual beings in heaven [MTY] to affirm that you will do it, because heaven is where God sits on his throne [MTY] to rule over people.

<sup>35</sup> Also, do not promise that you will give something and then ask spiritual beings on earth [MTY] to affirm that you will do it, because the earth is where God rests his feet [MET]. Also, do not promise that you will do something and ask religious authorities in Jerusalem to affirm that you will do it, because Jerusalem is the city where God, the great King rules.

<sup>36</sup> Also, do not promise that you will do something and then say that your head should be cut off {someone should cut off your head} if you do not do it. You are not even able to change the

*color of the hair of your head by making one black hair white or one white hair black.*

<sup>37</sup> *If you talk about doing something, just say 'Yes, I will do it,' or 'No, I will not do it.' If you say anything more than that, it is from Satan, the Evil One."*

*Jesus taught that everyone should be kind to all people, even to people who mistreat us.*

*Matthew 5:38-42*

<sup>38</sup> *"You have heard your religious teachers say that it is written {Moses wrote}, 'Retaliate like this: If someone damages one of your eyes, someone should damage one of that person's eyes. If someone damages one of your teeth, someone should damage one of that person's teeth.'*

<sup>39</sup> *But now listen to what I say to you: Do not take revenge for evil deeds done {that other people do} to you. Instead, if someone insults you by striking you on one cheek, turn your other cheek toward that person in order that he can strike it also.*

<sup>40</sup> *If someone wants to sue you and take your ◀inner garment/shirt▶, give him your ◀outer garment/coat▶ also.*

<sup>41</sup> *If a military authority compels you to go with him one mile and carry his gear, go with him two miles and carry his gear.*

<sup>42</sup> *Also, if someone asks you for something, give him what he is asking for. If someone requests you to lend him something, do not refuse to lend it to him."*

*Jesus taught that we should love the people whom we would not normally love.*

*Matthew 5:43-48*

<sup>43</sup> “You have heard your religious teachers say that it is written that Moses wrote, ‘Love the citizens of your country and hate your enemies.’

<sup>44</sup> But now listen to what I say to you: Love your enemies as well as your friends, and pray for those who cause you to suffer.

<sup>45</sup> Do that in order to imitate what God, your Father who is in heaven, does. He desires that you [MET] do like he does. He acts kindly to all people. For example, he causes the sun to shine equally on wicked people and on good people, and he sends rain both on righteous people and on unrighteous people.

<sup>46</sup> If you love only the people who love you, ◀do not expect God to reward you in heaven!/will God reward you in heaven?▶ [RHQ] This is based on the fact that everyone, even the tax collectors, who you think are very great sinners, love [RHQ] those who love them. If you act like them, ◀you are not any different from tax collectors!/in what way are you different from tax collectors?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>47</sup> If you want God to bless only your friends, ◀you are not acting any better than other people!/are you acting any better than other people?▶ [RHQ] Even the non-Jews, who you think sin very much (OR, you think are unacceptable to God), want God to bless their friends [RHQ], but God does not reward them for that.

<sup>48</sup> You need to love those who do not love you, and in that way become perfect as God your

Father, *who* is in heaven, is perfect.”

## 6

*Jesus taught how we should give to needy people. He also taught his disciples how to pray.*

*Matthew 6:1-13*

<sup>1</sup> “When you do your good deeds, make certain that you do not do them when other people are watching so that they may see you *and think highly of you*. If you do good deeds merely in order that other people may think highly of you, God, your Father who is in heaven, will not give you any reward.

<sup>2</sup> So, whenever you give something to the poor, do not *announce it as people announce something that they want other people to know about* by playing a *fanfare* on a trumpet [MET]. That is what the hypocrites do ◀in the synagogues/in the Jewish meeting places▶ and on the main roads in order that people might see *what they do and* praise them. Keep this in mind: *People praise those hypocrites, but* that is the *only* reward they will receive!

<sup>3</sup> Instead *of doing as they do*, when you give something to the poor, do not let other people know that you are doing that [MET].

<sup>4</sup> In that way, you will be giving to the poor secretly. *As a result God*, your Father who observes you while no one else sees you, will reward you.

<sup>5</sup> Also when you pray, do not do what the hypocrites do. They like to stand in the Jewish meeting places and on the corners of the main

streets to pray, in order that other people will see them *and think highly of them*. Keep this in mind: *People praise them, but* that is the *only* reward they will get.

<sup>6</sup> But as for you, when you pray, go into your private room and close the door in order to pray to *God*, your Father, whom no one can see. He observes you where no one else observes you, and he will reward you.

<sup>7</sup> When you pray, do not repeat words many times as the people who do not know God do *when they pray*. *They repeat meaningless words* because they think that if they use many words, their gods will listen to them and give them *what they ask for*.

<sup>8</sup> Do not *repeat words* as they do, because *God* your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

<sup>9</sup> So pray *things* like this: Father, *you who are* in heaven, we (exc) desire that you be honored/revered {that people honor/revere you}.

<sup>10</sup> We (exc) desire that people let you rule *over their lives*. We(exc) want *people who live* on the earth to do what you desire, as those who live in heaven *do what you want them to do*.

<sup>11</sup> Give us (exc) each day the food [SYN] that we (exc) *need for* that day.

<sup>12</sup> Forgive our sins just like we (exc) have forgiven the people who sin against us (exc).

<sup>13</sup> Do not let us(exc) do wrong things when we(exc) are tempted {someone or something tempts us}, and rescue us (exc) when **Satan** the

evil one tempts us to do evil things.\*”

*Jesus taught more about forgiving others.*

*Matthew 6:14-15*

<sup>14</sup> “Forgive the people who sin against you, because, if you forgive other people, God, your Father who is in heaven, will forgive your sins.

<sup>15</sup> But if you do not forgive other people, neither will God forgive your sins.”

*Jesus taught about abstaining from food.*

*Matthew 6:16-18*

<sup>16</sup> “When you abstain from eating food *in order to please God*, do not look sad as the hypocrites look. They make their faces appear sad in order that people will see that they are abstaining from food *and will think highly of them*. Keep this in mind: *People will think highly of those people for that*, but *that is the only* reward those people will get!

<sup>17</sup> Instead, *each of you*, when you abstain from food, should comb your hair and wash your face *as usual*,

<sup>18</sup> in order that other people will not notice that you are fasting *because you will look as you always do*. But God, your Father, whom no one can see, *will observe that you are abstaining from food*. God your Father sees you even though no one else sees you, and he will reward you.”

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\* **6:13** *people should praise you forever.*

*Jesus taught that we should do deeds that please God. That will be like putting treasures in heaven.*

*Matthew 6:19-21*

<sup>19</sup> “Do not *selfishly* accumulate large quantities of money and material goods for yourselves on *this earth*, because *the earth is where everything is destroyed*. For example, on earth termites ruin things, and things rust, and thieves enter buildings and steal things.

<sup>20</sup> Instead, do *deeds that will please God*. Your *doing such deeds will be like storing treasures in heaven [MET]*. *Nothing perishes in heaven*. In heaven no termites ruin *things*, nothing rusts, and thieves do not enter buildings and steal.

<sup>21</sup> Remember that the things that you think are the most valuable are *the things that you will be constantly concerned about [MET]*. So if you want to be storing treasures in heaven, you need to be constantly thinking about God and heaven, instead of your earthly possessions.”

*Jesus taught that we should be generous with what we possess.*

*Matthew 6:22-23*

<sup>22</sup> “Your eyes are like a lamp [MET] for your body, because they enable you to see things. So if your eyes are healthy, you are able to see everything well [MET]. Similarly, if you are generous with your money and other possessions, you will be able to know much of what God wants you to know [MET].

<sup>23</sup> But if your eyes are bad, you are not able to see things well. And if that continues, the

time will come when you will not be able to see at all. You will be in complete darkness [MET]. *Similarly, if you continue to be greedy, you will be in spiritual darkness. If all that your eyes can see and your mind can think about involves your greedily desiring material possessions, all that you do will be evil [MET].*"

*Jesus taught that we should not try to serve God and accumulate money at the same time.*

*Matthew 6:24*

<sup>24</sup> "No one is able to serve two *different* bosses at the same time. If he tried to do that, he would dislike one of them and love the other one, or he would be loyal to one of them and despise the other one [DOU]. *Similarly, you cannot devote your life to worshipping God and worshipping money and material goods at the same time.*"

*Jesus taught that we should not worry about having enough food and clothes.*

*Matthew 6:25-34*

<sup>25</sup> "Because you should be concerned about what God thinks is important and not about material goods, I tell you that you should not worry about things that you need in order to live. Do not worry about whether you will have enough food to eat, and something to drink, or enough clothes to wear. It is important to have sufficient food and drink and clothing, but the way you conduct your lives is much more important [RHQ].

<sup>26</sup> Look at the birds. They do not plant seeds, and they do not harvest crops and gather them

into barns. *But they always have food to eat because God, your Father who is in heaven, provides food for them. And you are certainly worth a lot more than birds [RHQ]! So you can be assured that God will supply what you need!*

<sup>27</sup> ◀None of you can, just by worrying, *add time to your life.*/Can any of you, just by worrying, *add time to your life?*▶ [RHQ] *You cannot add even one minute to your life! So you should not worry about things such as food and clothing!*

<sup>28</sup> You should also not worry about *whether you will have enough clothes to wear* [RHQ]. Think about the way flowers grow in the fields. They do not work to *earn money*, and they do not make their own clothes.

<sup>29</sup> But I tell you that even though *King Solomon, who lived long ago, wore very beautiful clothes*, his clothes were not as beautiful as one of those flowers.

<sup>30</sup> God makes the wild plants very beautiful, *but they grow in the field for only a short time.* One day they grow, and the next day they are thrown into an oven {someone cuts them and throws them into an oven} *to be burned to make heat for baking bread. But you are more important to God than wild plants are, and you live much longer.* So ◀God will certainly provide clothes for you who *live a long time* but trust him so little!/will not God surely very adequately clothe you, who *live a long time* but trust him so little?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>31</sup> Because of God's caring for you, do not worry and say, 'Will we have anything to eat?'

or ‘Will we have anything to drink?’ or ‘Will we have clothes to wear?’ [RHQ]

<sup>32</sup> Those who do not know God are always worrying about things like that. But God, your Father who is in heaven, knows that you need all those things, *so you should not worry about them.*

<sup>33</sup> Instead, the most important thing you should be concerned about is to let *God* completely direct your life, and to strive *to live* righteously. *If you do that*, all the things that you *need* will be given to you {God will give you all the things *that you need*}.

<sup>34</sup> So *each day* do not be worried about what will happen to you the next day, because *when* that day [PRS] comes, *you* will be concerned about *what happens during* that day. You will have enough to be concerned about each day. *So do not worry ahead of time.*”

## 7

*Jesus taught that we should not condemn others for their faults since we have faults ourselves.*

*Matthew 7:1-5*

<sup>1</sup> “Do not talk about how sinfully others have acted, in order that God will not say how sinfully you have acted.

<sup>2</sup> If you condemn *other people*, *God* will condemn you. To the same extent that you condemn others, you will be condemned {*God* will condemn you}.

<sup>3</sup> ◀None of you should be concerned *about* *someone else’s small faults* [MET]!/Why should

any of you be concerned *about someone else's small faults?*► [MET, RHQ] *That would be like noticing a speck in that person's eye. But you should be concerned about your own big faults. They are like [MET] planks in your own eye, which you do not notice.*

<sup>4</sup> ◀You should not say to other people *about their minor faults*, 'Let me remove the specks from your eyes!'/Why do you say to other people *about their minor faults*, 'Let me remove the specks from your eyes?'► [RHQ] *You should not say that if a plank is still in your own eye [MET].*

<sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, *stop committing your own sins! That will be like removing the plank from your own eye [MET]. Then, as a result, you will be able to perceive things spiritually so that you can help other people get rid of the faults [MET] that are like specks in their eyes."*

*Jesus taught that we should not teach spiritual truth to those who will not appreciate it.*

*Matthew 7:6*

<sup>6</sup> "You do not give holy things to dogs that would ignore those things and attack you [CHI]. You do not throw pearls in front of hogs, *because they would just ignore them and trample them. Similarly, do not give precious spiritual truth to people you know will not value it but instead will do evil things to you."*

*Jesus taught that God is ready to give good things to us if we persist in prayer.*

*Matthew 7:7-11*

<sup>7</sup> “Keep asking *God for what you need*. If you do that, *he* will give it to you. Confidently keep *expecting God to give you the things that you need, and he will give them to you*. It will be like [MET] looking for what you need and finding it. Keep on *praying persistently to God*. Then God will answer you. It will be like [MET] knocking on a door in order to enter a room. And the way will be opened {*God will open the way*} for you to get *what you pray for*.

<sup>8</sup> Remember that *God* will give things to everyone who continues to ask *him for them*. *He* will give things to whoever confidently keeps asking. *He* will open *the way* for people to get *the things that they keep persistently praying for*.

<sup>9</sup> ◀No man among you would give a stone to his son if his son were to ask for bread./Would anyone among you give a stone to his son if his son were to ask for bread?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>10</sup> Likewise, ◀no man would give a *poisonous* snake to his son if his son would ask for a fish./would anyone give a *poisonous* snake to his son if his son would ask for a fish?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>11</sup> You, who are evil, know how to give good things to your children. So *God*, your Father who is in heaven, will certainly give good things to the people who ask him.”

*Jesus taught that we should treat others as we would like them to treat us.*

*Matthew 7:12*

<sup>12</sup> “So in whatever way you want others to act toward you (*pl*), that is the way you (*pl*) should act toward them, because that *sums up what*

*Moses wrote in the laws that God gave him and also what the prophets wrote long ago."*

*Jesus taught that we should try to walk on the narrow road that leads to heaven.*

*Matthew 7:13-14*

<sup>13-14</sup> "Going to where people live eternally with God in heaven is difficult. *It is like going along a narrow road [PRS, MET] that leads to a narrow gate. Not many people find that way. The way that most people take is easy, but it results in their being punished {God punishing them} in hell. That way is like a wide road that people walk on [PRS, MET] until they reach the wide gate, but that road and that gate lead to where they will be destroyed {God will destroy them}. Many people enter that gate. So I am telling you to leave the wide road and enter the narrow gate to heaven."*

*Jesus taught about how to recognize false prophets.*

*Matthew 7:15-20*

<sup>15</sup> "Beware of people who come to you and say falsely that they are telling you *what God has said. They seem to be harmless, but they are extremely harmful. They are like wolves that have covered themselves with sheepskins to make people believe that they are sheep [MET], but they actually are wolves that attack people [MET].*

<sup>16</sup> *So how will you know that they are false? Well, by seeing what plants produce, you know what kind of plants they are [MET]. For example, thornbushes cannot produce grapes, so ◀no one*

can pick grapes from thornbushes./can anyone pick grapes from thornbushes?► [RHQ] And *thistles cannot produce figs*, so ◀no one can pick figs from thistles./can anyone pick figs from thistles?► [RHQ]

<sup>17</sup> *Here is another example:* All good fruit trees produce good fruit, but all unhealthy trees produce worthless fruit.

<sup>18</sup> No good fruit tree is able to produce worthless fruit, and no unhealthy tree is able to produce good fruit.

<sup>19</sup> *And all the trees that do not produce good fruit are chopped down and burned in a fire {people chop them down and burn them in a fire} to get rid of them. Similarly, those who falsely claim to be prophets will be thrown {God will throw false prophets} into the fires of hell.*

<sup>20</sup> *By seeing what plants produce, you know what kind of plants they are. Similarly, when you see what the people who come to you do, you will know if they are false prophets."*

*Jesus warned that he will reject those who do not do what God desires.*

*Matthew 7:21-23*

<sup>21</sup> *"Even though many people habitually call me 'Lord', pretending that they have my authority, some of them will not go to heaven where God rules, because they do not do what he desires. Only those people who do what my Father, who is in heaven, desires will go there.*

<sup>22</sup> *On the day [MTY] that God judges everyone, many people, trying to tell me that they deserve*

to go to heaven, will say to me, 'Lord, we(exc) spoke God's message as your representatives [MTY, RHQ]! As your representatives we(exc) expelled demons from *people* [RHQ]! And as your representatives, many times we(exc) performed miracles [RHQ]!'

<sup>23</sup> Then I will declare to them, 'I have never said that you belonged to me. Go away from me, you who do what is evil!' "

*Jesus warned that undesirable things would happen to those who did not obey his teaching.*

*Matthew 7:24-27*

<sup>24</sup> "So then, anyone who hears what I say and does what I command, will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.

<sup>25</sup> *Even though* the rain came down and the river flooded, and the winds blew and beat against that house, it did not fall down because it had been built {he built it} on a solid foundation.

<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, anyone who hears what I say but does not obey what I say will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.

<sup>27</sup> When the rain fell and the rivers flooded, and the winds blew and beat against that house, it crashed down and broke completely apart, *because it was built on the sand. So it is important for you to obey what I teach you.*"

*The crowds were amazed at Jesus, because he taught with his own authority.*

*Matthew 7:28-29*

<sup>28</sup> When Jesus finished saying all those things, the crowds *who had been listening to him were*

amazed at the *new* teaching that he had taught them.

<sup>29</sup> The reason they were amazed was that he was teaching as a person does who has authority. He was not teaching like the men who taught the *Jewish* laws, *who just repeated what other people had taught them.*

## 8

*Jesus healed a leper and made it possible for him to associate with people again.*

*Matthew 8:1-4*

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus went down from the hillside, large crowds followed him.

<sup>2</sup> *After he left the crowds*, a man who had the *skin disease called leprosy* unexpectedly came and knelt before him. He said to Jesus, “Lord/Sir, *please heal me, because I know you are able to heal me if you are willing to.*”

<sup>3</sup> Then Jesus, *disregarding the religious law that forbade people to come close to lepers*, stretched out his hand and touched the man. He said to him, “I am willing to *heal you*, and I heal you now!” Immediately the man was healed from his leprosy {he was no longer a leper}.

<sup>4</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Go and show yourself to a *nearby* priest so that he can examine you and verify that you no longer have leprosy. Then, after he tells the local people, they will know that you no longer have leprosy, and you will be able to associate with them again. Make sure that now you do not report about my healing you to anyone other than the priest. Then go to

*the Temple in Jerusalem and give the priest the offering that Moses commanded that people who have been healed from leprosy should offer as a sacrifice to God."*

*Jesus healed from a distance a Roman officer's servant because the officer trusted in him.*

*Matthew 8:5-13*

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus went to Capernaum city, a Roman officer who commanded 100 soldiers came to him. He begged Jesus *to help him*.

<sup>6</sup> He said *to him*, "Sir, my servant is lying in bed at home and is paralyzed, and he has severe pain."

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said *to him*, "I will go to your house and heal him."

<sup>8</sup> But the officer said *to him*, "Lord/Sir, *do not bother to go. I am a non-Jew*, so I am not worthy for you, *a Jew*, to come into my house [MTY] *and associate with me*. Instead, *just command that my servant be healed*, and he will be healed.

<sup>9</sup> *I believe this* because, as for me, I am a man under the authority of others, and I also have soldiers under my authority. When I say to one of them 'Go!' he goes. When I say to another 'Come!' he comes. When I say to my slave, 'Do this!' he does it. *And I believe that you speak with a similar kind of authority."*

<sup>10</sup> When Jesus heard this, he marveled. He said to the crowd that was walking with him, "Listen to this: I have never before found anyone who has as firm a faith *in me as this non-Jewish man has*. Not even in Israel, *where I would expect*

*people to believe in me, have I found anyone who has the kind of faith in me that he has!*

<sup>11</sup> I tell you truly that many *other non-Jewish people* who will believe in me like this Roman officer will come from *distant countries*, including those *far* to the east and far to the west [SYN], and they will sit down to eat with [MTY] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in heaven, where God rules.

<sup>12</sup> But *the Jews* [IDM] *who should have allowed* God to rule over them will be sent to *hell*, where *there is* total darkness. And as a result, they will weep *because of their suffering* and will grind their teeth *because they will have severe pain* [MTY].”

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus said to the officer, “Go home. What you believed *would happen*, that I would *heal your servant from a distance*, will happen.” Then the officer went home and found out that his servant became well at the exact time *that Jesus told him that he would heal him*.

*Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law.*

*Matthew 8:14-15*

<sup>14</sup> When Jesus *and some of his disciples* went to the home of Peter, Jesus saw Peter's mother-in-law. She was lying on a bed because she had a fever.

<sup>15</sup> He touched her hand, and as a result, *immediately* she no longer had a fever [PRS]. Then she got up and served them *some food*.

*Jesus healed many sick people and expelled demons from other people.*

*Matthew 8:16-17*

<sup>16</sup> That evening *when ◀the Sabbath/the Jewish rest day▶ ended and restrictions about traveling ended*, many people who were controlled by demons {whom demons controlled} *and people who were sick* [MTY] *were brought to Jesus. He caused the demons to leave just by speaking to them, and he healed all the people who were sick.*

<sup>17</sup> By doing this he fulfilled the words that had been said by the prophet Isaiah {that the prophet Isaiah had said} *about the Messiah: "He healed people who had sicknesses and he cured them of their diseases."* [DOU]

*Jesus told a man what to expect if he went with Jesus. He told another man to follow Jesus immediately, not to wait until later.*

*Matthew 8:18-22*

<sup>18</sup> Jesus saw the crowd around him, but *he needed to rest. So he told his disciples to take him by boat to the other side of the lake.*

<sup>19</sup> *As they were walking toward the boat, a man who taught the Jewish laws came to him and said, "Teacher, I will go with you wherever you go."*

<sup>20</sup> *In order that the man might know what he could expect if he went with him, Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes in the ground in which to live, and birds have nests, but even though I am the one who came from heaven, I do not have a home where I can sleep [MTY]."*

<sup>21</sup> Another man who was one of Jesus' disciples said to him, "Sir/Lord, permit me first to go *home*. *After my father dies I will bury him, and then I will come with you.*"

<sup>22</sup> But Jesus said to him, “Come with me *now*. *God considers that people who do not have eternal life are dead [MET]. Let those people do the work of burying people who die.*”

*The disciples were amazed when Jesus calmed a storm on the lake.*

*Matthew 8:23-27*

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus got into the boat. The disciples also got in, *and they started sailing close to the shoreline around Lake Galilee.*

<sup>24</sup> Suddenly strong winds blew on the lake, and very high waves were splashing into the boat and filling it. But Jesus was sleeping.

<sup>25</sup> They went and woke him up, and said to him, “Sir/Lord, rescue us! We are about to drown!”

<sup>26</sup> He said to them, “◀You should not be terrified! /Why are you terrified?▶ [RHQ] *I am disappointed that in spite of all you have seen me do, ◀you do not believe very much that I can rescue you./do you not believe that I can rescue you?▶ [RHQ]*” Then he got up and rebuked the wind and told the waves to calm down. And *the wind stopped blowing and the lake became calm.*

<sup>27</sup> As a result, they were amazed, and they said to one another, “This man is certainly an extraordinary person [RHQ]! *All things are under his control!* Even the winds and the waves obey him [PRS]!”

*Jesus expelled some demons from two men.*

*Matthew 8:28-34*

<sup>28</sup> When they came to the *east side of the lake*, they arrived in the region where the Gadarenes lived. *Jesus got out of the boat and began walking*

*on the road. Then two men who were controlled by demons {whom demons controlled} came out of the burial caves where they were living. Because they were extremely violent and attacked people, no one dared to travel on the road near where they were living.*

<sup>29</sup> Suddenly they shouted *to Jesus*, “You are the Son of God! *Because* you have nothing in common with us [IDM, RHQ], *leave us alone* Have you come here [RHQ] to torture us before the time [MTY] *God has appointed to punish us?*”

<sup>30</sup> There was a large herd of pigs not far away, digging for food with their noses.

<sup>31</sup> So the demons begged Jesus, saying, “You are going to cast us out of the men, so send us into the herd of pigs!”

<sup>32</sup> Jesus said *to them*, “*If that is what you want, go!*” So the demons left *the men* and entered the pigs. Suddenly the whole herd *of pigs* rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

<sup>33</sup> The men who were tending the pigs *became afraid and* ran into the town and reported everything *that had happened*, including what had happened to the two men who had been controlled by demons {whom demons had controlled}.

<sup>34</sup> Then *it seemed as if all the people* [HYP] *who lived in that town* [MTY] went to meet Jesus. When they saw him *and the two men who had been controlled by the demons*, they begged Jesus to leave their region *because they thought that he would destroy more things than just the pigs* (OR, *because they realized he must be very powerful*).

## 9

*Jesus showed that he had power to forgive sins as well as to heal a paralyzed man.*

*Matthew 9:1-8*

<sup>1</sup> Jesus and his disciples got into the boat. They skirted around *the lake* and went to *Capernaum, the city where he was living.*

<sup>2</sup> *Some men* brought to him a man who was paralyzed and who was lying on a sleeping pad. When Jesus perceived that they believed *that he could heal the paralyzed man*, he said to him, “Young man, be encouraged! I forgive your sins.”

<sup>3</sup> Some of the men who taught the *Jewish* laws said among themselves, “*He claims that he can forgive sins! That means that he claims to be equal with God* He is insulting God!”

<sup>4</sup> Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said, “◀You should not think evil thoughts, accusing me because I claim that I am God!/Why do you think evil thoughts, saying that it is wrong for me to claim that I am God?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>5</sup> It would not be risky for someone to say to this man, ‘I forgive your sins’, because no one could see whether or not it really happened. But no one, without having the power to heal, would say to him, ‘Get up and walk!’, because people could easily see whether it happened or not! [RHQ]

<sup>6</sup> So I am going to do something in order that you may know that God has authorized me, the one who came from heaven, to forgive the sins of people while I am on the earth, as well as to heal

*people.*" Then he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, pick up your sleeping pad, and go home!"

<sup>7</sup> And *immediately* the man got up, *picked up his sleeping pad*, and went home!

<sup>8</sup> When the crowds saw this, they were awestruck. They praised God for giving authority to a human being *to do such things*.

*Jesus invited Matthew to go with him, and he told the Pharisees that they needed to repent.*

*Matthew 9:9-13*

<sup>9</sup> As Jesus was going away from there, he saw me, a man named Matthew. I was sitting at a table where I collected taxes *for the Roman government*. He said to me, "Come with me *and become my disciple!*" So I got up and went with him.

<sup>10</sup> *Then I invited* Jesus and his disciples to my home for a meal. While *they* were sitting and eating in my home, many tax collectors and *other people who were* {whom *the Pharisees*} *considered to be habitual* sinners came unexpectedly to eat with us.

<sup>11</sup> When the Pharisees saw *that*, *they came* to us disciples and said, "◀*It is disgusting that your teacher, who claims to be righteous, eats and associates with tax collectors and other sinners! Why is it that your teacher, who claims to be righteous, eats and associates with tax collectors and other sinners?*▶" [RHQ]

<sup>12</sup> Jesus heard what *they said*, so he told them *this parable*: "*It is people who are sick who need a doctor* [MET], not people who are well." *What he meant by that was that it was people who knew*

*that they were sinners who were coming to him in order to be helped spiritually.*

<sup>13</sup> He continued by saying, "You need to learn what these words that *God said* mean: 'I want you to *act* mercifully to people and not *just* to offer sacrifices.' Keep in mind that I came *from heaven*, not to invite *people who think [IRO] that they are righteous to turn away from their sinful lives and come to me*, but to invite *people who know they are sinners to turn from their sins and come to me.*"

*Jesus illustrated why it was not appropriate for his disciples to fast, and that living according to his new message was better than following the old traditions like fasting.*

*Matthew 9:14-17*

<sup>14</sup> Later, the disciples of John the Baptizer came to Jesus and asked him, "We (*exc*) and the Pharisees *often* abstain from food to show that we want to please God, but your disciples do not do that. Why do they not?"

<sup>15</sup> Jesus wanted to show them and the Pharisees that it was not appropriate for his disciples to abstain from food and mourn while he was still with them. So he gave them this illustration: "When a bridegroom is with his friends at the time of the wedding, ◀his friends certainly do not mourn, do they?/do his friends mourn?▶ [RHQ] No, they do not mourn, because they are not sad at that time. But when the bridegroom is taken {someone takes the bridegroom/his enemies take the bridegroom} from them, they will abstain from food, because then they will be sad."

<sup>16</sup> *Jesus wanted to show them that people who desire to live in accordance with his new message should not try to continue to obey the old religious traditions like ◀abstaining from food/fasting▶ [MET]. So he said to them, "People do not sew a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment to mend a hole. If they did that, when they washed the garment, the patch would shrink and tear the garment, and the hole would become bigger.*

<sup>17</sup> *Neither does anyone pour freshly-squeezed grape juice into old skin bags to store it. If anyone did that, those skin bags would tear because they would not stretch when the grape juice ferments and expands. They would be ruined, and the wine would be spilled {spill} on the ground. Instead, people put new wine into new skin bags, and the bags will stretch when the wine ferments. As a result, both the wine and the bags are preserved."*

*Jesus healed a woman who had constant hemorrhaging. He also caused a young girl to become alive again.*

*Matthew 9:18-26*

<sup>18</sup> While Jesus was saying that, a leader of the Jewish meeting place came and bowed down before him *to show respect*. Then he said, "My daughter just died! But if you come and lay your hand on her, she will live *again!*"

<sup>19</sup> So Jesus got up, and he and *we* disciples went with the man.

<sup>20-21</sup> Then a woman who *had been suffering constant vaginal bleeding* for twelve years came

near Jesus. She was saying to herself, *"I want Jesus to heal me without anyone finding out that I have this problem of bleeding. So if I touch him or even if I just touch his garment, I will be healed without anyone finding out about it."* So she came behind him and touched the tassel of his garment.

<sup>22</sup> Then Jesus turned around *to see who had touched him*. And when he saw the woman, he said to her, "Be encouraged, dear woman. Because you believed [PRS] *that I could heal you, I have healed you.*" The woman was healed at that very moment.

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus *and some of us disciples* came to the Jewish leader's house. Jesus heard the flute players *playing funeral music* and the crowd *that had gathered wailing loudly because the girl had died.*

<sup>24</sup> Knowing that he would cause her to live again, he said to them, "Go away and stop the funeral music and wailing, because the girl is not dead! She is just sleeping!" *The people laughed at him, because they knew that she was dead.*

<sup>25</sup> But Jesus told them to get out of the house. Then he went into *the room where the girl was lying*. He took hold of her hand and she *became alive again and got up.*

<sup>26</sup> And the *people of that whole region* heard [PRS] about it.

*Jesus healed two blind men.*

*Matthew 9:27-31*

<sup>27</sup> As Jesus went away from there, two blind men followed him and shouted, "Have mercy on

us and heal our eyes, you who are the Messiah, the Descendant of King David!"

<sup>28</sup> Jesus went into the house, where he was staying, and then the blind men went in, too. Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to heal your eyes?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord!"

<sup>29</sup> Then he touched their eyes and he said to them, "Because you believe that I can heal your eyes, I am healing them right now!"

<sup>30</sup> And they were able to see [IDM]! Then Jesus told them sternly, "Be sure [IDM] that you do not tell anybody what I did for you!"

<sup>31</sup> But they went out and reported it throughout that whole region.

*Jesus expelled a demon, but the Pharisees accused him of doing such things by Satan's power.*

*Matthew 9:32-34*

<sup>32</sup> When Jesus and we disciples left the house, some people brought to Jesus a man who was unable to speak because he was controlled by a demon {a demon controlled him}.

<sup>33</sup> After Jesus had expelled the demon, the man who had been unable to speak began to speak! The crowd who saw this marveled. They said, "Never before have we seen anything as marvelous as this happen in Israel!"

<sup>34</sup> But the Pharisees said, "It is Satan, who rules the demons, who enables this man to expel demons from people."

*Jesus told his disciples to pray that God would send more workers to tell his message to those who were ready to respond.*

*Matthew 9:35-38*

<sup>35</sup> Then we went with Jesus through many of [HYP] the cities and towns in Galilee district. He was teaching ◀in the synagogues/in the Jewish meeting places▶, and preaching the good message about how God rules over people's lives. He also was healing the people who had various diseases and illnesses.

<sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowd of people, he pitied them because they were harassed and dejected. They were like sheep that do not have a shepherd [SIM].

<sup>37</sup> Then he gave this illustration to us disciples: "The people who are ready to receive my message are like a field that is ready to be harvested {for people to harvest}. But there are only a few of you who are teaching people my message.

<sup>38</sup> So pray and ask the Lord God to send more workers who will gather people together and teach them my message, just like a landowner sends workers into his field to gather the [MET] harvest."

## 10

*Jesus selected twelve apostles and instructed them before sending them out to various places.*

*Matthew 10:1-15*

<sup>1</sup> He told us twelve disciples to come to him. Then he gave us the power/authority to expel evil spirits that controlled people. He also enabled us

to heal all people who had diseases or who were sick.

<sup>2</sup> *Here is a list of us twelve disciples whom he called apostles (which means ‘messengers’): Simon, to whom he gave the new name Peter; Andrew, Peter’s younger brother; James, the son of Zebedee; John, the younger brother of James;*

<sup>3</sup> *Philip; Bartholomew; Thomas; me, Matthew, the tax collector; James, the son of Alphaeus; Thaddeus;*

<sup>4</sup> *Simon, a member of the party that wanted to overthrow the Roman government; and Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth Town), who later enabled the Jewish leaders to seize Jesus.*

<sup>5</sup> *When Jesus was about to send us twelve apostles to tell his message to people in various places, he gave us these instructions: “Do not go where the non-Jews live [MTY] or into the towns where the Samaritans live, because they hate you.*

<sup>6</sup> *Instead, go to the people of Israel [SYN] who have gone away from God like sheep that have gotten lost [MET].*

<sup>7</sup> *When you go to them, proclaim to them that God [EUP/MTY] will soon begin to rule over people.*

<sup>8</sup> *Heal sick people, cause dead people to become alive, heal people who have leprosy, and cause demons to leave people who are controlled by them {whom demons control}. Do not charge money for helping people, because God did not charge you anything for helping you.*

<sup>9-10</sup> *Do not take any money with you [MTY],*

nor a knapsack. Do not take an extra shirt, nor sandals *in addition to what you are wearing*, nor a walking stick. Every worker deserves to get pay *from the people for whom he works*, so you *deserve to receive food and a place to stay from the people to whom you go*.

<sup>11-12</sup> In whatever town or village you enter, find out which person is worthy *that you should stay in his home*. And as you go into that house, *ask God to bless the people who live there* [MTY]. Stay in that home until you leave *that town or village*.

<sup>13</sup> If the people who live in [MTY] that house are worthy *of being blessed* {*God blessing them*}, God will bless them. If the people who live in that house are not worthy *of being blessed* {*of God blessing them*}, God will bless you *instead of blessing them*.

<sup>14</sup> If the people *who live in any house or town* do not welcome you *to their home or town*, nor listen to your message, leave that house or town. And as you leave, shake off the dust from your feet. *By doing that, you will warn them that God will punish them for rejecting your message*.

<sup>15</sup> Note this carefully: *At the time when God judges all people, he will punish the people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah* [MTY], *the ancient cities which God destroyed because their people were extremely wicked*. But in any town where the people [MTY] refuse to hear your message, God will punish them even more severely."

*Jesus instructed his disciples to be wary of their religious leaders, and to endure when they are*

*persecuted by people who refuse to accept the new message.*

*Matthew 10:16-25*

<sup>16</sup> “Take note: After I send you out, *you will be as defenseless as sheep [MET] in the midst of people who are as dangerous as wolves. So you should wisely stay away from such people, like you stay away from poisonous snakes [SIM]. You should be as harmless as doves are [SIM].*

<sup>17</sup> Also, be on guard against *our religious leaders*. They will arrest you and take you to the members of the religious councils *to put you on trial and punish you because you are my disciples*. You will be whipped {The local leaders will whip you} *in their meeting places.*

<sup>18</sup> And because *you teach* about me, you will be taken {*the religious leaders will take you*} to governors and kings *in order that they may put you on trial and punish you*. As a result, you will testify to those rulers and to *other non-Jews about what I have done.*

<sup>19</sup> When *the religious leaders* arrest you, do not be worried about what you will say *to them*, because at that very time *the Holy Spirit* will tell you the words that you should say.

<sup>20</sup> It is not that you *will decide what to say*. Instead, you will say what the Spirit of your heavenly Father tells you *to say.*

<sup>21</sup> *You will be taken* {*People who do not believe in me will take you*} to the authorities to be killed *because you believe in me. For example, people will betray their brothers, and fathers will betray their children. Children will rebel against their*

parents and cause *them* to be killed.

<sup>22</sup> Many people will hate you *because you believe in me*. Nevertheless, *many people* will keep on believing in me until they die. They are the people whom God will take to live with him.

<sup>23</sup> When people in one town cause you to suffer, escape to another town *and tell the people there about me*. Note this: *I*, the one who came down from heaven, will certainly return to *earth* before you have finished going from one town to another town throughout Israel *and telling people about me*.

<sup>24</sup> A disciple should not *expect to be* greater than his teacher, and servants *are not* superior to their master.

<sup>25</sup> You do not *expect that* people will treat a disciple better than *they treat* his teacher, or that *they will treat* a servant better than *they treat* his master. Similarly, *because I am your teacher and master, you can expect that people will mistreat you, because they have mistreated me*. The most you can expect is that people *will treat you like they treat me*. *I am like* the ruler of a household [MET]. But people *have insulted me by calling me Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons*. So they will certainly *insult you more, you who are only like members of my household* [MET]!"

*Jesus instructed his disciples that they should not fear those who persecute them.*

*Matthew 10:26-33*

<sup>26</sup> "Do not be afraid of *people who insult you and do evil things to you*. God wants everything that is unknown now to be revealed {*God wants*

*you to reveal everything that is unknown now}. He does not want his truth to remain hidden [MET] and kept secret [DOU].*

<sup>27</sup> *So, instead of being afraid, what I say to you secretly as people do at night [MTY], tell publicly as people do during the daytime [MTY]. What I say to you privately as people do when they whisper to you [MTY], proclaim publicly [MTY, DOU].*

<sup>28</sup> *Do not be afraid of people who are able to kill your body [SYN] but are not able to destroy your soul. Instead, fear God because he is able to destroy both a person's body and a person's soul in hell.*

<sup>29</sup> *Think about the sparrows. They have so little value that you can buy cares two of them for only one small coin [RHQ]. But when any sparrow falls to the ground and dies [LIT], God, your heavenly Father, knows it, because he cares about everything.*

<sup>30</sup> *He cares about you, too. He even knows how many hairs you have on your head!*

<sup>31</sup> *God values you much more than he values sparrows [LIT]. So, do not be afraid of people who threaten to kill you*

<sup>32</sup> *If people, without being afraid, are willing to tell others that they are my disciples, I will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven that they are my disciples.*

<sup>33</sup> *But if they are afraid to say in front of others that they are my disciples, I will tell my Father, who is in heaven, that they are not my disciples."*

*Jesus instructed his disciples that they should be willing to suffer because of their faith in him.*

*Matthew 10:34-39*

<sup>34</sup> "Do not think that I came to earth to cause people to live together harmoniously. The result of my coming is that *some of those who follow me* [MTY] will be killed.

<sup>35</sup> Because I came to earth, people who do not believe in me will oppose those who do believe in me. For example, some sons will oppose their fathers, some daughters will oppose their mothers, and some daughters-in-law will oppose their mothers-in-law.

<sup>36</sup> This shows that sometimes a person's enemies will be members of his own household.

<sup>37</sup> People who love their fathers or mothers more than *they love me* are not worthy to have a relationship with me. And people who love their sons or daughters more than *they love me* are not worthy to belong to me.

<sup>38</sup> People who are ready to execute a prisoner force him to carry a cross to the place where they will nail him to it [MET]. Those who are not willing to allow other people to hurt and disgrace them like that because of being my disciples are not worthy to belong to me.

<sup>39</sup> People who deny that they believe in me in order to escape being killed will not live with God eternally [MET], but people who confess that they believe in me and, as a result are killed, will live with God eternally [MET]."

*Jesus instructed his apostles about the people whom God rewards, and then he sent them to*

*various towns.*

*Matthew 10:40-42*

<sup>40</sup> *"God considers that everyone who welcomes you, welcomes me [SIM], and he considers that everyone who welcomes me welcomes him, the one who sent me [SIM].*

<sup>41</sup> *Those who welcome someone because [MTY] they know that person is a prophet they will receive the same reward that prophets receive from God. Likewise, those who welcome a person because [MTY] they know that person is righteous will receive the reward righteous people receive from God.*

<sup>42</sup> *Note this: Suppose people see that you are thirsty [MTY] and give you a drink of cold water because they know that [MTY] you are one of my disciples. God will certainly reward people who do that. They might consider that what they did is insignificant, but God will consider it very significant" [LIT].*

## 11

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus had finished instructing us twelve disciples about what we should do, he sent us to various Israelite towns. Then he went to teach and preach in other Israelite towns in that area.

*Jesus showed the messengers from John the Baptizer that he was the Messiah, and he told the people that John was the man like Elijah who was to prepare the way for the Messiah.*

*Matthew 11:2-15*

<sup>2</sup> While John the Baptizer was in prison, he heard what Jesus, the man whom he thought was

the Messiah, was doing. So he sent *some of* his disciples *to him* in order

<sup>3</sup> to ask him, “Are you the *Messiah* who *the prophets prophesied* would come, or is it someone else that we should expect *to come*?”

<sup>4</sup> *After they asked* Jesus *that question*, he answered them, “Go back and report to John what you hear *me telling people* and what you see *me doing*.”

<sup>5</sup> *I am enabling* blind people to see and lame people to walk. *I am* healing *people* who have leprosy. *I am enabling* deaf people to hear and dead people to become alive again. *I am* telling poor people *God’s* good message.

<sup>6</sup> *Also tell John that God* is pleased with people who do not stop believing in me *because what I do is not what they expected the Messiah to do.*”

<sup>7</sup> When John’s disciples had gone away, Jesus began to talk to the crowd of people about John. He said to them, “*Think about* what sort of person you went to see in the desolate area *when you went there to see John*. ◀*You did not go there to listen to a man who constantly changed his message, like a reed that is blown {blows} back and forth in the wind [MET]!/Did you go there to listen to a man whose message changes continually like long grass that is blown {blows} back and forth in the wind changes its direction?*▶ [MET, RHQ]

<sup>8</sup> Then what *kind of* person did you go *there* to see [RHQ]? ◀*You did not go there to see a man who was wearing expensive clothes./Did you go there to see a man who was wearing expensive*

clothes?► [RHQ] *No! You know very well that people who wear beautiful clothes reside in kings' palaces and not in desolate areas.*

<sup>9</sup> Then what kind of person did you go to see [RHQ]? *Did you go there [RHQ] to see John because he was ◀a prophet/a person who speaks what God tells him to say►? Yes! But I will tell you that John is more important than an ordinary prophet.*

<sup>10</sup> He is the one to whom God was referring when he said to the Messiah these words that are written {about whom the prophet Malachi wrote} in the Scriptures:

Listen! I am going to send my messenger to go before you [SYN] to prepare the people [MET] for your coming.

<sup>11</sup> Note this: Of all the people who have ever lived, *God does not consider* that any of them are greater than John the Baptizer. However, *God considers that all* those people who have let God rule their lives are greater than John, even if they are insignificant people.

<sup>12</sup> From the time that John the Baptizer preached until now, other people have violently attacked the people who have allowed God [MTY/EUP] to rule their lives, and they have suffered (OR, people have very eagerly been asking God to take control of their lives, OR, Israelite people who have thought that I would become their king have been extremely eager to be included in my kingdom) (OR, have been violently attacked and made to suffer).

<sup>13</sup> *All this that I am saying about John is confirmed by the fact that all the men who wrote the Scriptures [MTY, SYN] foretold about God ruling people's lives, until John the Baptizer came.*

<sup>14</sup> *Even though most of you are unwilling to believe what I am saying, I will tell this truth to anyone who is willing to believe it: John is the man who is like Elijah [MET]. He is the one who one of the prophets said would come in order to prepare the people to welcome the Messiah.*

<sup>15</sup> *If you want to understand this, you must think carefully [MTY] about what I have just said [MTY]."*

*Jesus rebuked the people who refused to believe both him and John the Baptizer.*

*Matthew 11:16-19*

<sup>16</sup> "◀I will illustrate what you people who have heard what John the Baptizer and I have taught are like./Do you know what you people who have heard what John and I have taught are like?▶ [RHQ] You are like children who are *playing games* in an open area. *Some of the children* are calling to the others, saying,

<sup>17</sup> 'We played *happy music* on the flute for you, but you did not dance! Then we sang sad funeral songs for you, but you did not cry [MET]!'

<sup>18</sup> *Similarly, you are dissatisfied with both John and me! When John came and preached to you, he did not eat good food and did not drink wine, like most people do. But you rejected him saying, 'A demon is controlling him!'*

<sup>19</sup> *In contrast, I, the one who came from heaven, eat the same food and drink wine as other people do. But you reject me, saying, 'Look! This man eats too much food and drinks too much wine, and he associates with tax collectors and other sinners!' But people who really think about what John and I have done will realize that what we do is truly wise [MET, PRS]."*

*Jesus explained why the people of Corazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum would be punished more severely than the people of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom.*

*Matthew 11:20-24*

<sup>20</sup> *The people who lived in the towns [MTY] in the area where Jesus was saw him perform many miracles. But they did not turn away from their sinful behavior. So Jesus began to reproach them by saying to them,*

<sup>21</sup> *"You people who live in Chorazin city [MTY] and you people who live in Bethsaida city [MTY] will suffer terribly in hell! I did great miracles in your cities, but you did not turn from your sinful behavior. If the miracles that I performed in your cities had been done in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon, the wicked people who lived there long ago would have sat in ashes, wearing coarse cloth to show that they were sorry for their sins.*

<sup>22</sup> *So note this: God will punish the wicked people who lived in the cities of Tyre and Sidon [MTY], but he will punish you even more severely on the final day when he judges all people.*

<sup>23</sup> *also have something to say to you people who live in Capernaum city [MTY]. ◀Do not think that you will be honored {that God will honor you} in heaven!/Do you think that you will be honored {that God will honor you} in heaven?▶ [RHQ] That will not happen! On the contrary, after you die, you will be sent {God will send you} down into the place where sinful people will be punished {he will punish sinful people} forever. God destroyed the ancient city of Sodom because the people who lived in that city were extremely wicked. If I had performed in Sodom the miracles that I performed in your city, the people there would have turned away from their wicked behavior and their city [MET] would still exist now [MTY]. But you, although I did miracles in your city, you did not turn from your wicked behavior.*

<sup>24</sup> *So note this: God will punish the people who lived in Sodom city [MTY], but he will punish you even more severely on the final day when he judges all people."*

*Jesus thanked God for revealing his truth to uneducated people, and he urged the people to come to him to get rid of the burden of trying to obey religious laws.*

*Matthew 11:25-30*

<sup>25</sup> *At that time Jesus prayed, "Father, you rule over everything in heaven and on the earth. I thank you that you have prevented people who think that they are wise [IRO] because they are well-educated, from knowing these things.*

*Instead, you have revealed them to people who accept your truth as readily as little children [MET] do.*

<sup>26</sup> Yes, Father, you have done that because it seemed good to you to do so.”

<sup>27</sup> Then Jesus said to the people there who wanted him to teach them, “God, my Father, has revealed to me all the things that I need to know in order to do my work. Only my Father knows who I really am. Furthermore, only I and those people to whom I wish to reveal him know what God my Father is like.

<sup>28</sup> Come to me, all you people who are very weary of trying to obey all the many laws that your religious teachers tell you to obey [MET]. I will enable you to quit trying to obey all those laws.

<sup>29-30</sup> Let me help you carry those loads, just like two oxen who have a yoke on their necks [MET, DOU] help each other pull a heavy load. It will not be difficult for you to do the things that I ask you to do for me [DOU]. Because I am gentle and humble [DOU], accept what I teach about what God wants you to do. And as a result, you will quit worrying about obeying all the religious laws, and your spirits will be at peace.”

## 12

*Jesus showed the religious leaders that the Scriptures indicated that God permitted some people to disobey religious laws when they needed food. He also showed them that he had the*

*authority from God to tell people what was right to do on the Sabbath.*

*Matthew 12:1-8*

<sup>1</sup> During that period of time, on a ◀Sabbath/Jewish day of rest▶, Jesus *and* we disciples were walking through some grain fields. And because we were hungry, we began to pick some of the heads of grain and eat them. *The laws of Moses permitted people to do that if they were hungry.*

<sup>2</sup> Some Pharisees saw us *do what they considered to be work*. So they said to Jesus, *accusing him*, “Look! Your disciples are doing *work* that is not permitted *in our laws* [PRS] *for us* to do on our day of rest!”

<sup>3</sup> *Jesus wanted to show them that the record in the Scriptures indicated that God permitted people to disobey certain religious laws when they needed food.* So he said to them, “It is written {Someone wrote} *in the Scriptures* [RHQ] *what our revered ancestor King David did when he and the men with him were hungry. You have read about that, ◀but you do not think about what it implies!/  
so why do you not think about what it implies?▶* [RHQ]

<sup>4</sup> David entered the big tent *where they worshipped God and asked for some food.* The high priest gave him the bread that had been {they had} presented to God. According to the laws of Moses, only priests were permitted to eat that bread, but David and the men who were with him ate it. And *God did not consider that what they did was wrong*

<sup>5</sup> Also, think about the laws that *Moses wrote*

[RHQ]. He said that *even though* the priests, *by working* in the Temple on our Jewish day of rest, are not obeying the Jewish day of rest *laws*, they are not guilty. You have surely read that, *but you do not understand what it means*.

<sup>6</sup> Note this: *God allows men to work in the Temple on our rest day because that work must be done. But in addition, I tell you that I have more authority than the authority of the Temple*. So, it is more important for you to obey my teachings than to obey your traditions about our rest day.

<sup>7</sup> *You should think about these words of God in the Scriptures: 'I want you to act mercifully toward people, and not just offer sacrifices.'* If you understood what that means, you would not condemn *my disciples*, who have done no wrong.

<sup>8</sup> *And I want you to know that I, the one who came from heaven, have the authority to determine what is right for my disciples to do on the days of rest."*

*Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath. At the same time, he told the Pharisees that they were mistaken in thinking that it was wrong to heal a person on the Sabbath.*

*Matthew 12:9-14*

<sup>9</sup> After Jesus left there *that day*, he went into a building where we Jews worship God.

<sup>10</sup> *He saw a man with a shriveled hand there. The Pharisees thought that Jesus would be disobeying the tradition about not working on the day of rest if he healed the man, so one of them asked him, "Does God permit us to heal people on our day of rest?" They asked that question so*

that they might accuse him *if he healed someone* ◀on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day▶.

<sup>11</sup> He replied to them, "Would anyone among you who has *only* one sheep that falls into a hole ◀on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day▶ *just leave it there* [RHQ]? *Certainly not!* You would take hold of it and lift it out right away, *and that would be acceptable work on our day of rest, too*

<sup>12</sup> *Because* sheep are valuable, *their owners may work on our day of rest in order to rescue them. So, because* people are more valuable than sheep, it is certainly right for us to do something good *by healing another person any day, including our day of rest!"*

<sup>13</sup> Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your *withered* hand!" The man stretched it out, and it became normal like the other hand!

<sup>14</sup> Then the Pharisees left *the meeting house. They were worried that the people would reject their traditions and would accept Jesus' teaching instead. So they met together to plan how they could kill him.*

*Jesus explained that his acting humbly when he healed people was a fulfillment of prophecy.*

*Matthew 12:15-21*

<sup>15</sup> *Because* Jesus knew *that the Pharisees were plotting to kill him, he took us disciples and went away from there. Crowds, including many sick people, followed him, wanting him to heal them, and he healed them all.*

<sup>16</sup> But he told them firmly that they should not tell *other people* yet who he was.

<sup>17</sup> *By acting humbly like that he fulfilled what was written by Isaiah the prophet {what Isaiah the prophet wrote} long ago about the Messiah. Isaiah wrote that God said:*

<sup>18</sup> Take note of my servant whom I have chosen, the one whom I love and with whom I am pleased. I will put my Spirit in him, and he will proclaim that *God* will judge the non-Jews justly.

<sup>19</sup> He will not quarrel *with people*, neither will he shout. He will not *teach with* a loud voice in the *main* streets.

<sup>20</sup> Until he has justly judged *the people who trust in him* and has declared them not guilty, he will not destroy *anyone who is weak like a smashed stalk [MET]*, nor will he silence *anyone who is as helpless as a smoldering linen wick [MET, DOU]*.

<sup>21</sup> As a result, the non-Jews will confidently expect *that he will do great things for them*.

*Jesus refuted the argument that he was expelling demons by Satan's power, and he warned that making such statements is an unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit.*

*Matthew 12:22-32*

<sup>22</sup> One day when Jesus was at home, *some men* brought to Jesus a man *who, because of being controlled by a demon {a demon controlled him}, was blind and unable to speak. Jesus healed him by expelling the demon.* As a result, the man *began to talk and was able to see.*

<sup>23</sup> All the crowd *who saw it* marveled. They began asking *each other*, "Could this man be the

*Messiah, the descendant of King David, whom we have been expecting?"*

<sup>24</sup> Because the Pharisees and the men who taught the Jewish laws heard that the people thought that Jesus might be the Messiah because he had expelled the demon, they said, "It is not God, but Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons, who enables *this man* to expel demons from people!"

<sup>25</sup> But Jesus knew what the Pharisees were thinking and saying. So, in order to show them that what they said did not make sense, he said to them, "If the people in [MTY] one nation fight against each other, they will destroy their nation {their nation will be destroyed}. If people who live in the same city or house fight each other, they will certainly not remain as one group or family.

<sup>26</sup> Similarly, if Satan were expelling his own demons [MTY], it would be as though he was fighting against himself. ◀His kingdom would not continue!/How could his kingdom continue?▶ [RHQ] His rule over them would certainly not last!

<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, if it is true that Satan enables me to expel demons, is it also true that your disciples who expel demons do so by Satan's power [RHQ]? No So they will show you that you are not thinking logically.

<sup>28</sup> But because it is God's Spirit who enables me to expel demons, that proves that the power of God to rule people's lives has come to you.

<sup>29</sup> I will illustrate why I am able to expel demons. ◀A person cannot go into the house of a strong

man► [RHQ] *But if he ties up the strong man, then he will be able to steal the things in that man's house.*

<sup>30</sup> *No one can be neutral. Those who do not acknowledge that the Holy Spirit enables me to expel demons are opposing me, and those who do not gather people to become my disciples are causing those people to [DOU] go away from me.*

<sup>31</sup> *You are saying that it is not the Holy Spirit who is enabling me to expel demons. So I will say this to you: If those who offend and slander other people in any way are then sorry and ask God to forgive them, God will forgive them. But people who discredit what the Holy Spirit does will not be forgiven {God will not forgive people who discredit what the Holy Spirit does}.*

<sup>32</sup> *God is willing to forgive people who criticize me, the One who came from heaven. But I warn you that those who say evil things about what the Holy Spirit does will not be forgiven {God will not forgive people who speak evil words about what the Holy Spirit does}. They will not be forgiven {He will not forgive them} now, and they will never be forgiven {he will never forgive them}."*

*Jesus said that we can judge what people are like by seeing what they do.*

*Matthew 12:33-37*

<sup>33</sup> *"Think about this: You can know whether a person is good and what that person says is good, in the same way that you can know whether a tree [MET] and the fruit it produces [MET] are good. You can also know whether a person and what that person says is evil in the same way that*

*you can know* whether a tree [MET] and its fruit [MET] are blighted. You can know whether a tree is good by *seeing* its fruit, and similarly *people can know the evil character of you Pharisees by listening to your accusations against me.*

<sup>34</sup> *What you teach harms people spiritually like poisonous snakes harm them physically* [MET]! You are not able to speak good things because you are evil [RHQ]. Evil people [SYN] *like you speak what comes from all that is in their* ◀inner beings/hearts▶.

<sup>35</sup> *Good people speak good things. That is like taking good things out of buildings where they are stored. But evil people speak evil things. That is like taking evil things out of buildings where they are stored.*

<sup>36</sup> I tell you that on the day when God judges [MTY], he will make people recall every useless word they have spoken, *and he will judge them accordingly.*

<sup>37</sup> Based on the words that you have spoken, *God will either declare that you are righteous based on the words that you have spoken, or else he will condemn you."*

*Jesus told the Jewish leaders that the only miracle that they would see him do would be one like God did for Jonah.*

*Matthew 12:38-42*

<sup>38</sup> Then some of the Pharisees and men who taught the *Jewish laws responded to what Jesus was teaching* by saying to him, "Teacher, we want

to see you *perform* a miracle *that would prove to us that God sent you.*"

<sup>39</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "*You people have already seen me perform miracles, but you are evil, and you do not faithfully worship God [MET]! You want me to perform a miracle that would prove to you that God sent me, but God will enable you to see only one miracle. It will be like what happened to Jonah the prophet [MET].*

<sup>40</sup> *Jonah was in the stomach of a huge fish for three days and nights before God caused him to live again. Similarly, for three days and nights I, the one who came from heaven, will be in a place where dead people are, and then God will cause me to live again.*

<sup>41</sup> *When God judges all people, the people who lived in Nineveh will stand in front of him with you people who have seen me perform miracles. The people of Nineveh turned from their sinful ways as a result of hearing what Jonah preached. Jonah was important, but I, who am more important than Jonah, have come and preached to you, but you have not turned from your sinful ways. So when God judges all people, he will condemn you.*

<sup>42</sup> *The queen from Sheba, South of Israel, who lived long ago, came from a distant region in order to listen to King Solomon teach many wise things. But now I, a man who is much greater and wiser than Solomon, am here, but you have not listened to what I have told you. So at the time when God judges all people, the queen from Sheba will stand in front of him, along with you people, and will*

condemn you.”

*Jesus taught that those who have had evil spirits expelled from them need to have their lives controlled by the Holy Spirit.*

*Matthew 12:43-45*

<sup>43</sup> “Sometimes when an evil spirit leaves a person, it wanders around in desolate areas, seeking *someone in whom it can rest*. If it does not find anyone,

<sup>44</sup> it says *to itself*, ‘I will return to the person [MET] in whom I used to live.’ So it goes back *and finds that the Spirit of God is not in control of that person’s life. The person’s life is like a house that has been swept clean and everything put in order [MET], but it is empty.*

<sup>45</sup> Then *this evil spirit* goes and gets seven other spirits that are *even more evil*, and they *all enter that person and begin living there*. So, *although that person’s condition was bad before*, it becomes much worse. That is what *you wicked people who have heard me teach* will experience.”

*Jesus said that those who do God’s will are as important to Jesus as his own relatives are.*

*Matthew 12:46-50*

<sup>46</sup> While Jesus was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his *younger brothers arrived*. They stood outside *the house*, wanting to speak with him.

<sup>47</sup> Someone said to him, “Your mother and your *younger brothers* are standing outside *the house*, wanting to talk to you.”

<sup>48</sup> Then Jesus said to the person who told him that, “*◀I will tell you something about my mother and brothers [MET]./Do you know who I consider to be like my mother and my brothers?▶*” [MET, RHQ]

<sup>49</sup> He then pointed toward us disciples and said, “These are ones *whom I love as much as I love my mother and my brothers [MET]*.”

<sup>50</sup> Those who do what *God my Father who is in heaven wants, are as dear to me [MET] as my brother, my sister, or my mother.*”

## 13

*Jesus taught a parable about different kinds of soil.*

*Matthew 13:1-10*

<sup>1</sup> That same day Jesus, *along with us* disciples, left the house *where he was teaching and went to Galilee lake*. He sat down there,

<sup>2</sup> and a very large crowd gathered around him to *listen to his teaching*. So, *in order that they would not jostle him (OR, to speak to the people better)*, he got into a boat and sat down *to teach them*. The crowd stood on the shore *and was listening*.

<sup>3</sup> He was telling them many parables. *One of the parables* that he told them was this: “Listen! A man went out *to his field* to sow some seeds.

<sup>4</sup> As he was scattering *them over the soil*, some of the seeds fell on the path. Then some birds came and ate those seeds.

<sup>5</sup> Other *seeds* fell on ground where there was not much soil *on top of the rock*. Those seeds

sprouted very soon, *because the sun quickly warmed the shallow soil.*

<sup>6</sup> But when *the young plants came up*, they were scorched by the sun, and they withered because they did not have *deep roots*.

<sup>7</sup> Other seeds fell on *ground that contained roots of thorny weeds*. The thorny weeds grew *together with the young plants*, and they crowded out *the plants*.

<sup>8</sup> But other seeds fell on good soil, and *the plants grew and produced a lot of grain*. Some *plants produced 100 times as many seeds as were planted*. Some *plants produced 60 times as much*. Some *plants produced 30 times as much*.

<sup>9</sup> If you want to understand this [MTY], you should consider *carefully what I have just said.*"

*Jesus told the disciples why he taught them using parables.*

*Matthew 13:10-17*

<sup>10</sup> We disciples approached Jesus and asked him, "Why do you use parables when you speak to the crowd?"

<sup>11</sup> He answered us saying, "God [EUP/MTY] is revealing to you what he did not reveal before, about *how he wants to rule over people's lives*. But he has not revealed it to others.

<sup>12</sup> Those who *think about what I say and understand it*, God will enable them to understand more. But those who do not *think carefully about what I say* will forget even what they already know.

<sup>13</sup> That is why I use parables when I speak to people, because although they see *what I do*, they

do not perceive *what it means*, and although they hear *what I say*, they do not really understand *what it means*.

<sup>14</sup> What these people do completely fulfills what *God told* the prophet Isaiah *to say long ago to the people who did not try to understand what he said*,

You will hear *what I say*, but you will not understand it. You will keep seeing *what I do*, but you will not understand *what it means* [DOU].

<sup>15</sup> *God also said to Isaiah,*

These people have become unresponsive [MTY] *to what they see me do and to what they hear me say*. They listen unwillingly [MTY] *to what I say*, and they do not pay attention to [MTY] *what I do*. If it were not so, they would perceive [MTY] *what I am doing*, they would understand [MTY] *what I say to them*, and they would turn *away from their sinful lives* and turn *to me*, and I would save them *from being punished for their sins* [MET].

<sup>16</sup> But as for you, God is pleased with you because you [SYN] have seen *what I have done* and because you [SYN] understand *what I say* [DOU].

<sup>17</sup> Note this: Many prophets and righteous people *who lived long ago* longed to see what you are seeing *me do*, but they did not see it. They longed to hear the things that you have been hearing *me say*, but they did not hear *what you hear me say*." [DOU]

*Jesus explained that the parable about the kinds of soil illustrates four different ways people respond to his teaching.*

*Matthew 13:18-23*

<sup>18</sup> *“Since God wants you to understand what I am teaching you, listen as I explain the parable about the man who sowed seeds in various kinds of soil.*

<sup>19</sup> *The people who hear about how God rules over people’s lives and do not understand what they have heard are like the path where some of the seeds fell. Satan, the Evil One, comes and causes these people to forget [MET] what they have heard [MET].*

<sup>20</sup> *Some people are like the shallow soil on top of rock. When they hear God’s message, they immediately accept it joyfully.*

<sup>21</sup> *But because it does not penetrate deeply into their inner beings, they believe it for only a short time. They are like the plants that did not have deep roots. When they are treated badly and caused to suffer because they believe God’s message, they soon stop believing it.*

<sup>22</sup> *Some people are like the soil that had the roots of thorny weeds in it. They hear God’s message, but they desire to be rich, so they worry only about [MTY, PRS] material things. As a result, they [PRS] forget God’s message, and they do not do [IDM] the things that God wants them to do.*

<sup>23</sup> *But some people are like the good soil where some of the seeds fell. Just like the plants that grew in this soil produced a lot of grain, these*

*people hear my message and understand it. Some of them do many things [IDM] that please God, some do even more things that please God, and some do very many things that please God."*

*Jesus told a parable about wheat and weeds.  
Matthew 13:24-30*

<sup>24</sup> Jesus also told the crowd another parable, *by which he tried to explain that although God [MTY/EUP] is a king, he will not immediately judge and punish all the wicked people.* Jesus said, "God is like a landowner who sent his servants to sow good wheat seed in his field.

<sup>25</sup> While those servants were sleeping *and not watching the field*, an enemy of the landowner came and scattered weed seeds in the midst of the wheat. Then he left.

<sup>26</sup> After *the seeds* sprouted and the green plants grew, the heads of grain began to form. But the weeds also grew.

<sup>27</sup> So the servants of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, you [RHQ] gave us good seeds and those are the ones we [RHQ] planted in your field. So where did the weeds come from?'

<sup>28</sup> The landowner said to them, 'My enemy did this.' His servants said to him, 'So, do you want us to pull up *the weeds and* put them in a pile?'

<sup>29</sup> He said to them, 'No, *do not do that, because* you might pull up *some of* the wheat at the same time.

<sup>30</sup> Let the wheat and the weeds grow together until harvest *time.*' At that time I will say to the reapers, 'First gather the weeds, tie them into

bundles to be burned. Then gather the wheat and put it into my barns.' "

*Jesus illustrated the effects of people letting God rule their lives.*

*Matthew 13:31-33*

<sup>31</sup> Jesus also told this parable: "The number of (OR, God's influence in the lives of) people whose lives God rules over will continue to grow. It is very much like mustard seeds grow after a man plants them in his field.

<sup>32</sup> Although mustard seeds are among the smallest of all the seeds that people plant, here in Israel they become large plants. When the plants have fully grown, they are larger than the other garden plants. They become shrubs that are large enough for birds to build nests in their branches."

<sup>33</sup> Jesus also told this parable: "The way people who let God [MTY/EUP] rule their lives [MET] can influence the world is like yeast that a woman mixed with about 50 pounds of flour. That small amount of yeast made the whole batch of dough swell up."

*Jesus' use of parables fulfilled a prophecy in Scripture.*

*Matthew 13:34-35*

<sup>34</sup> Jesus told the crowd parables to teach them all these things. When he spoke [HYP] to them, he habitually used such illustrations.

<sup>35</sup> By doing that, he fulfilled what God told one of the prophets to write long ago:

I will speak [MTY] in parables; I will tell *parables to teach* what I have kept secret since I created the world.

*Jesus explained the parable about wheat and weeds. The wheat represents those who obey God, and the weeds represents those who disobey God. The reaping represents judgment.*

*Matthew 13:36-43*

<sup>36</sup> After Jesus dismissed the crowds, he went inside. Then *we* disciples approached him and said, "Explain to us the parable about the weeds *that grew* in the *wheat* field."

<sup>37</sup> He answered, "The one who sows the good seed represents *me*, the one who came from heaven.

<sup>38</sup> The field represents this world [MTY], *where people live*. The seeds *that grew* well represent the people who let God rule their lives [MET]. The weeds represent the people who do what *the devil*, the Evil One, *tells them to do*.

<sup>39</sup> The enemy who sowed the weed seeds represents the devil. The *time when the reapers will harvest the grain* represents the time when the world will end. The reapers represent the angels.

<sup>40</sup> The weeds are gathered and burned. {The reapers gather the weeds. Then they burn them.} That represents *the judging of people, which God will do* when the world will end. *It will be like this:*

<sup>41</sup> I, the one who came from heaven, will send my angels, and they will gather *from everywhere the people* who cause others to quit believing

in me [MET] and all those who disobey God's commands.

<sup>42</sup> They will throw those people into the fires of *hell*. There those people will weep and grind their teeth *because of the great pain that they are suffering*.

<sup>43</sup> God's brightness will shine *on* the people who have lived as he wants them to. It will shine *on them as brightly* as the sun *shines*. It will shine on them in the place where God, their Father, rules over them. If you want to understand this [MTY], you should think *carefully* about what I have just said."

*Jesus illustrated the value of letting God rule our lives.*

*Matthew 13:44-50*

<sup>44</sup> "What people do who begin to allow God [MTY/EUP] to rule their lives is like *what a certain man did to acquire a treasure*. A treasure was hidden in a field by someone {Someone hid a treasure in a field *and never dug it up again*}. When *another* man found it, he hid it *by burying it again in order that no one else would find it*. Being very happy *that he had found something very valuable*, he went and sold all his possessions *to obtain money to buy the field the treasure was in*. He then went and bought the field, *and so he was able to acquire that treasure*.

<sup>45</sup> Also, what people do who begin to allow God [MTY/EUP] to rule their lives is like *what a merchant did who was looking for good quality pearls to buy*.

<sup>46</sup> When he found one very costly pearl *that was for sale*, he sold all his possessions *to acquire enough money to buy that pearl*. Then he went and bought it.

<sup>47</sup> What God [MTY/EUP] *will do to people who falsely say that they are letting him rule their lives* is like what certain fishermen did *with the fish they caught* in a lake, using a large net. They caught all classes *of fish, both useful and worthless fish*.

<sup>48</sup> When the net was full, the *fishermen* pulled it up onto the shore. Then they sat there and put the useful *fish* into buckets, and threw the worthless ones away.

<sup>49</sup> *What they did in separating the good fish from the bad ones* is like *what will happen to people* when the world ends. The angels will come *to where God is judging people*, and will separate the wicked *people* from the righteous *ones*.

<sup>50</sup> They will throw the wicked people into the fire *in hell*. And those wicked people will weep and gnash their teeth *because of the intense pain they are suffering*."

*Jesus illustrated the value of understanding his parables.*

*Matthew 13:51-52*

<sup>51</sup> Then Jesus asked us, "Do you understand all these *parables I have told you?*" We said to him,

<sup>52</sup> "Yes, *we understand them*." Then he said to us, "Because you *understand all these parables*, you will understand the following parable: You, along with all others, will teach people what you

*heard me say about God ruling people's lives. You will add that to what you formerly learned. You will be like a manager of a household who takes both new things and old things out of his storage room."*

*Jesus did not do many miracles in Nazareth because people there rejected him as the Messiah. Matthew 13:53-58*

<sup>53</sup> When Jesus had finished *telling* these parables, he took *us* and left that *area*.

<sup>54</sup> We went to *Nazareth, his hometown*. ◀*On the Sabbath/On the Jewish rest day*▶ he began to teach the people in the Jewish worship house. The result was that the people there were astonished. But *some* said, "*This man is just an ordinary person like us. So how is it that he knows so much and understands so much [RHQ]? And how is it that he is able to do such miracles [RHQ]?*"

<sup>55</sup> ◀*He is just the son of the carpenter!/Isn't he just the son of the carpenter that lived here?*▶ [RHQ] His mother is Mary, and his younger brothers are James, Joseph, Simon and Judas [RHQ]!

<sup>56</sup> ◀*And his sisters also live here in our town./Do not his sisters live in our town?*▶ [RHQ] So how is he able to do all these *miracles*?"

<sup>57</sup> The people were unable to accept *that* he was the Messiah. So Jesus said to them, "*People honor me and other prophets everywhere else we go, but in our hometowns we are not honored, and even our own families do not honor us!*"

<sup>58</sup> Jesus did not perform many miracles there because the people did not believe *that he was the Messiah*.

## 14

*Herod had John the Baptizer imprisoned and then killed because John criticized Herod for marrying his brother's wife.*

*Matthew 14:1-13*

<sup>1</sup> During that time Herod Antipas, the ruler, heard reports about Jesus *performing miracles*.

<sup>2</sup> He said to his servants: "That must be John the Baptizer. He must have risen from the dead, and that is why he has power to perform miracles."

<sup>3-4</sup> The reason *Herod thought that was this: Herod had married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, while Philip was still living. So John had been saying to him, "What you did by marrying your brother's wife while your brother is still alive is against God's law!"* Then, to please Herodias, Herod *told his soldiers to arrest John. They bound him with chains and put him in prison.*

<sup>5</sup> Herod wanted to have John executed, but he was afraid that the people *who had accepted what John taught would riot if he did that, because they believed that John was a prophet.*

<sup>6</sup> But when Herod *gave a party to celebrate his birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced for his guests. This pleased Herod.*

<sup>7</sup> So he promised to give her whatever she asked, and he asked God to punish him if he did not do what he had promised.

<sup>8</sup> *So Herodias' daughter went and asked her mother what to ask for.* Her mother told her to ask for John the Baptizer's head. *So her daughter went back and said to Herod: "Cut off the head of John the Baptizer and please bring it here on a platter so that my mother can know for sure that he is dead!"*

<sup>9</sup> The king was distressed because he now knew he should not have made that promise to her. *But because he had made an oath in front of his guests when he made that promise, and he did not want them to think that he would not do what he had promised, he commanded that the girl be given what she requested.*

<sup>10</sup> He sent *the executioner to go to the prison and to cut off John's head.*

<sup>11</sup> *The executioner did that, and put John's head on a platter and gave it to the girl. Then the girl took it to her mother.*

<sup>12</sup> John's disciples then went *to the prison*, took John's body and buried it, and they reported to Jesus *what had happened.*

<sup>13</sup> After Jesus heard that, he took *just us disciples with him and we went by boat on Galilee Lake to an uninhabited place.*

*Jesus miraculously fed more than 5,000 people.  
Matthew 14:13-21*

After the crowds heard *that we had gone to an uninhabited place*, they left their towns and followed Jesus, walking along the shore.

<sup>14</sup> When Jesus came *to the shore*, he saw a large crowd of people *who had gathered there, waiting for him*. He felt sorry for them, and he healed those *among them who were sick*.

<sup>15</sup> When it was *nearly* evening, we disciples came to him and said, "This is a place where nobody lives, and it is very late. Dismiss the crowds so that they can go into the *nearby* towns. *Have them do that so that they can buy food for themselves.*"

<sup>16</sup> But Jesus said to us, "They do not need to leave *to get food*. *Instead*, you *yourselves* give them something to eat!"

<sup>17</sup> We said to him, "But we have only five loaves of bread and two *cooked* fish here!"

<sup>18</sup> He said *to us*, "Bring them to me!"

<sup>19</sup> He told the people *who had gathered there* to sit on the grass. Then he took the five flat loaves and the two fish. He looked up toward heaven, thanked *God for them*, and broke *them into pieces*. Then he gave them to us disciples, and we distributed them to the crowd.

<sup>20</sup> *All the people in the crowd* ate until they had enough to eat. Then we *disciples* gathered the pieces that were left over, *and we* filled twelve baskets with them.

<sup>21</sup> Those who ate were about 5,000 men. *We did not count the women and children!*

*Jesus walked on Galilee lake, and then Peter tried to do the same.*

*Matthew 14:22-33*

<sup>22</sup> Right after that happened, Jesus told us disciples to get in the boat and to go ahead of

him further around *the lake* while he dismissed the crowds.

<sup>23</sup> After he dismissed them, he went up into the hills to pray by himself. When it was evening, he was *still* there alone.

<sup>24</sup> *By this time* we were already many hundred meters from the shore. The boat was being severely tossed around by the waves {The waves were severely tossing the boat} because the wind was *blowing* against it.

<sup>25</sup> *Then Jesus came down from the hills to the lake.* Some time between three and six o'clock in the morning he walked on the water toward our *boat*.

<sup>26</sup> When we disciples saw someone walking on the water, we thought that *we must be seeing* a ghost. We were terrified, and we screamed out because we were afraid.

<sup>27</sup> Immediately Jesus said to us, "Cheer up! It is I. Do not be afraid!"

<sup>28</sup> Peter said to him, "Lord, if it is you, tell me to walk on the water to you!"

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus said, "Come!" So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus.

<sup>30</sup> But when Peter looked at the *tossing waves which* the strong wind *caused*, he became afraid. He began to sink, and cried out, "Lord, save me!"

<sup>31</sup> Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and grabbed him. He said to Peter, "You only trust a little bit *in my power* ◀Why did you doubt *that I could keep you from sinking?*/You should not have doubted *that I could keep you from sinking!*▶ [RHQ]"

<sup>32</sup> Then Jesus and Peter got in the boat, and the

wind *immediately* stopped blowing.

<sup>33</sup> All of us disciples who were in the boat worshipped Jesus and said, "Truly you are the ◀Son of/man two is also▶ God!"

*Jesus healed many sick people in the Gennesaret region.*

*Matthew 14:34-36*

<sup>34</sup> When we had gone further around *the lake in the boat*, we came ashore at Gennesaret town.

<sup>35</sup> The men of that area recognized Jesus. So they sent *people to inform those who lived* in that whole surrounding region [MTY] *that Jesus was in their area. So the people brought to Jesus all the sick people who lived in that region.*

<sup>36</sup> *The sick people* kept begging him to allow them to touch *him* or just to touch the edge of his robe *so that they would be healed*. And all who touched *him or his robe* were healed {he healed all who touched *him or his clothing*}.

## 15

*Jesus rebuked the religious leaders for ignoring God's commands in order to uphold their own religious traditions.*

*Matthew 15:1-9*

<sup>1</sup> Then some Pharisees and men who taught the Jewish laws came from Jerusalem *to talk to Jesus*. They said,

<sup>2</sup> "◀We think it is disgusting that your disciples disobey the traditions of our ancestors!/Why do your disciples disobey *what our ancestors wrote down and our elders taught us?*▶ [RHQ] They do

not perform the proper ritual of washing their hands before they eat!"

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered them, "◀What is really disgusting is that **you** refuse to obey God's commands *just* so that you can follow what your ancestors taught you!/Why do you refuse to obey what God commanded *people to do, just* so that you can follow your own traditions?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>4</sup> God gave these *two* commands: 'Honor your father and your mother,' and 'People who speak evil about their father or mother must be executed.'

<sup>5</sup> But you tell people, 'You can say to your father or mother, "What I was going to give to you *to help provide for you, I have now promised to give to God.*" '

<sup>6</sup> And if you do that, you think that you do not need to give anything to help your parents. In *that way, by teaching people* your traditions, you disregard what God commanded.

<sup>7</sup> You only pretend to be good! Isaiah prophesied accurately about you *also when he quoted what God said about your ancestors. God said,*

<sup>8</sup> 'These people talk *as if they* honor me [MTY], but they do not think about honoring me at all [MET].

<sup>9</sup> It is useless for them to worship me, because they teach what people thought up *as if I myself had commanded it.*' "

*Jesus said that people are defiled by the words that come out of their mouths, rather than by any*

*kind of food that they eat.*

*Matthew 15:10-11*

<sup>10</sup> Then Jesus *again* summoned the crowd to come *nearer* to him. Then he said to them, "Listen to *what I am about to tell you*, and *try to understand it*."

<sup>11</sup> Nothing that a person puts into his mouth *to eat* causes *God to consider* that person to be unacceptable. Instead, it is *the words* that come out of people's mouths [SYN] that cause *God to reject them*."

*Jesus explained that people's inner thoughts are what make them unacceptable to God.*

*Matthew 15:12-20*

<sup>12</sup> Later we disciples went to Jesus and said, "Do you know that the Pharisees heard what you said, and as a result they felt offended [RHQ]?"

<sup>13</sup> Then, *to teach us what God would do to the Pharisees*, Jesus told us *this parable*: "My Father in heaven *will get rid of all those who teach things that are contrary to his truth, just like a farmer gets rid of plants that he did not plant, by pulling them up along with their roots* [MET].

<sup>14</sup> Do not pay any attention to *the Pharisees*. They *do not help people who do not know God's truth to understand it, just like blind guides do not help blind people to perceive where they should go* [MET]. If a blind person *tries to lead another blind person*, they will both fall into a big hole [MET]. *Similarly, both the Pharisees and their disciples will end up in hell*."

<sup>15</sup> Peter said to Jesus, "Explain to us the parable *about what a person eats*."

<sup>16</sup> He replied *to them*, “◀I am disappointed that even you, *who should understand what I teach*, still do not understand!/Why is it that even you *who should understand what I teach*, still do not understand?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>17</sup> ▶You ought to understand that all *food that people* eat enters their stomachs, and later the refuse passes out of their *bodies*./Cannot you understand that all *food that people* eat enters their stomachs and later the refuse passes out of *their bodies*?▶ [RHQ] *Because food does not alter what we think and desire, what we eat does not cause God to consider that we are unacceptable to him.*

<sup>18</sup> *You should know that what comes out of people's mouths, meaning everything that they say [SYN], comes from their inner beings/hearts. Many of the things that they say cause God to consider them to be unacceptable to him.*

<sup>19</sup> It is people's innermost beings that *cause them* to think things that are evil, to murder people, to *commit* adultery, to commit other sexual sins, to steal things, to testify falsely, and to speak evil about *others*.

<sup>20</sup> It is these actions that *cause God to consider* people to be unacceptable *to him*. To eat with unwashed hands does not *cause God to consider* people unacceptable *to him*.”

*Jesus healed a non-Jewish woman's daughter after testing the mother's faith in him.*

*Matthew 15:21-28*

<sup>21</sup> After Jesus *took us and left Galilee district*, we went into the region *where the cities of Tyre and Sidon are located*.

<sup>22</sup> A woman *from the group of people called Canaanites who live in that region* came *to the place where Jesus was staying*. She kept shouting *to him*, "Lord, you are the descendant of King David, *you are the Messiah!* Have pity on me *and my daughter!* She is suffering very much because a demon controls her."

<sup>23</sup> But Jesus did not answer her at all. We disciples came to him, and *knowing that the woman was not a Jew*, we said to him, "Tell her to leave, because she keeps *bothering us* by yelling behind us!"

<sup>24</sup> But Jesus said *to her*, "I have been sent {God has sent me} *to help only the Israelite people at this time* [SYN]. *They are like sheep that have gotten lost* [MET] *because they do not know the way to heaven.*"

<sup>25</sup> But she came *closer* to Jesus and knelt down in front of him *to worship him*. She pled, "Lord/Sir, help me!"

<sup>26</sup> Then, *to suggest to her that he needed to help the Jews first and not the non-Jews, whom the Jews called dogs*, he told her, "It is not good *for someone to take food that has been prepared for the children and throw it to the little dogs.*"

<sup>27</sup> *But to show that she believed that non-Jews could also receive help from God*, the woman said *to Jesus*, "Lord/Sir, what you say is correct, but even the *little dogs* eat the crumbs that fall to the floor *when their masters sit at their tables*

*and eat!"*

<sup>28</sup> Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, *because you believe firmly in me, I will heal your daughter as you desire!*" At that moment *the demon left her daughter, and she became well.*

*Jesus healed many people on a hillside near Galilee lake.*

*Matthew 15:29-31*

<sup>29</sup> After Jesus, *along with us disciples*, departed from that area, we went *back* to Galilee Lake *and walked along it*. Then Jesus climbed the hill *near there* and sat down *to teach the people*.

<sup>30</sup> Crowds kept coming to him for the next two days and brought lame, crippled, and blind people, those who were unable to talk, and many others *who had various sicknesses*. They laid them in front of Jesus *so that he would heal them* [SYN]. And he healed them.

<sup>31</sup> The crowd saw *him heal* people who could not talk, crippled people, lame people, and blind people, and they were amazed. They said, "Praise God *who rules over us who live in Israel!*"

*Jesus miraculously fed over 4,000 people.*

*Matthew 15:32-39*

<sup>32</sup> Then Jesus called us disciples to him and said *to us*, "This crowd *of people* has been with me for three days and have nothing *left* to eat. I feel sorry for them. I do not want to send them away *while they are still hungry, because if I did that, they might faint on the way home.*"

<sup>33</sup> We disciples said to him, "In this place where nobody lives, *we cannot possibly obtain enough food to feed such a large crowd!/how can*

we obtain a large enough amount of food to feed such a large crowd?► [RHQ]”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus asked us, “How many small loaves do you have?” We said to him, “*We have seven small loaves and a few cooked fish.*”

<sup>35</sup> He told the people to sit on the ground.

<sup>36</sup> Then he took the seven small loaves and the fish. After he thanked *God for them*, he broke them *into pieces*, and he kept giving *them* to us. Then we *kept distributing* them to the crowd.

<sup>37-38</sup> *Because Jesus made the food multiply miraculously, all those people ate and had plenty to satisfy them.* There were 4,000 men *who ate*, but no *one counted* the women and the children *who also ate*. Then we *disciples* collected the pieces of food that were left over, and we filled seven large baskets *with them*.

<sup>39</sup> After Jesus dismissed the crowd, he, *along with us*, got in the boat, and we sailed *around the lake* to the region called Magadan.

## 16

*Jesus again told the religious leaders that the only miracle that he would do for them was one like God did for Jonah.*

*Matthew 16:1-4*

<sup>1</sup> Some Pharisees and Sadducees came to *Jesus* and asked him *to perform* a miracle that would prove *that God had sent him*.

<sup>2</sup> He answered them, “*In this country, in the evening you say, ‘It will be good weather tomorrow, because the sky is red.’*”

<sup>3</sup> *Early in the morning you say, 'It will be stormy weather today, because the sky is red, and dark clouds have formed.' You understand how to predict the weather by looking at the sky, but you cannot seem to look at what is happening now, and by that understand what God is doing.*

<sup>4</sup> *You evil people have seen me perform miracles but you do not faithfully worship God [MET]. You want to see me perform a miracle that would prove that God has sent me. But God will enable you to see only one miracle. It will be like what happened [MET] to Jonah, the prophet, who was inside a huge fish for three days and then came out of it to live again."* Then Jesus left them and sailed away, along with us disciples.

*Jesus rebuked the disciples for worrying about not having enough food.*

*Matthew 16:5-12*

<sup>5</sup> *We forgot to take bread when we sailed to another edge of the lake.*

<sup>6</sup> *Then Jesus said to us, "Beware that you do not accept the yeast [MET] that the Pharisees and Sadducees distribute."*

<sup>7</sup> *Then, not realizing that he was speaking figuratively, we said to one another, "He must have said that because we forgot to bring any bread!"*

<sup>8</sup> *Because Jesus knew what we were saying, he said to us, "◀I am disappointed that you are discussing among yourselves, thinking that it was because you did not bring any bread that I talked about the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees./Why are you discussing among*

yourselves thinking that it was because you did not bring any bread *that I talked about the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees?*► [RHQ] You believe only a little *what I am able to do for you.*

<sup>9</sup> ◀You should understand *that I can continue to do miracles to provide for what you need./Do you not yet understand that I can provide miraculously for you if you need food?*► [RHQ] Do you not remember that 5,000 people ate when I multiplied the five small loaves and the two fish? And after everyone had enough to eat, you collected twelve baskets of left-over pieces [RHQ]!

<sup>10</sup> Do you not remember [RHQ] that 4,000 people ate when I multiplied the seven small loaves and a few fish? And after everyone had enough to eat, you collected seven large baskets of left-over pieces

<sup>11</sup> ◀You should have understood that I was not speaking about *real bread that contains yeast./* Why have you not understood that I was not speaking about *real bread that contains yeast?*► [RHQ] What I was saying was that you should not accept what the Pharisees and Sadducees say, because it would affect you like yeast affects [MET] dough.”

<sup>12</sup> Then we understood that he was not talking about the yeast that is in bread. Instead, he was talking about the wrong teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

*Jesus commented on the implications of Peter's recognition of Jesus being the Messiah.*

*Matthew 16:13-20*

<sup>13</sup> When Jesus came with *us* disciples to the region near Caesarea Philippi *town*, he asked us, "Who do people say that I, the one who came from heaven, *really* am?"

<sup>14</sup> We answered, "*Some people say that you are John the Baptizer, who has come back to life again. Others say that you are the prophet Elijah, who has returned from heaven as God promised. Still others say that you are the prophet Jeremiah or one of the other prophets who lived long ago, who has come back to life again.*"

<sup>15</sup> Jesus said to us, "*What about you? Who do you say that I am?*"

<sup>16</sup> Simon Peter said to him, "You are the Messiah! You are the Son of the all-powerful God."

<sup>17</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Simon, son of Jonah, *God* is pleased with you. What you just said was not [SYN] revealed to you by any human. Instead, *it was my Father who lives in heaven who revealed this to you.*

<sup>18</sup> I will also tell you this: You are Peter, *which means rock. You are like a rock. What you and your fellow apostles teach (OR, what you do) will be like a foundation on which I will create congregations of people who believe in me. And the demons [PRS], who live where the dead people who lived evil lives are, will not be able to come and prevent [MET] me from doing that.*"

<sup>19</sup> *Then, speaking to all of us, he said, "I will enable you (pl) to have authority [MTY] over the groups of people over whose lives God rules. Whatever you forbid regarding those*

people [MTY], it will have been forbidden by God. Whatever you permit [MET] regarding them, it will have been permitted by God."

<sup>20</sup> Then Jesus warned *us* disciples strongly not to tell anyone *at that time* that he is the Messiah.

*Jesus began to teach the disciples about his coming death and resurrection.*

*Matthew 16:21-23*

<sup>21</sup> From that time Jesus began to teach *us* disciples that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem *city*. There the ruling elders, the chief priests, and the men who taught the *Jewish* laws would cause him to suffer and ◀be killed/die▶. Then on the third day *after that*, he would become alive again.

<sup>22</sup> *Because Peter assumed that the Messiah would not suffer and die*, he took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him *for talking about suffering and dying*. He said, "Lord, may God never permit that to happen to you! That must certainly not happen!"

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus turned *to look at* Peter, and he said to him, "Stop talking to me *like that* [MTY]! Stop saying what Satan [MET] would say, and stop trying to prevent *from happening what God has planned*! You are a hindrance to me, because you are not thinking like God thinks. Instead, *you are thinking like people think*!"

*Jesus taught the disciples more about what they would face as his disciples, and about his coming again.*

*Matthew 16:24-28*

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to *us* disciples, “If any one of you wants to be my disciple, you must not do *only* what you yourself want to do. You must be willing to *let people hurt you and disgrace you. That is like what they do to criminals whom they force to carry a cross [MET] to the place where the criminals will be executed. That is what anyone who wants to be my disciple must do.*

<sup>25</sup> You must do that, because those who try to save their lives *by denying that they belong to me when people want to kill them for believing in me* will not live *eternally*, but those who are killed *because of being my disciples* will live with God *eternally*.

<sup>26</sup> People *might* get everything *they want* in this world, but *◀if they do not become my disciples, they would really be gaining nothing because they would not get eternal life! / what would they gain if they do not become my disciples and thus do not get eternal life?▶* [RHQ] *◀There is absolutely nothing that people can give to God that would enable them to gain eternal life. / What can people give to God that could enable them to gain eternal life?▶* [MTY, RHQ]

<sup>27</sup> Listen carefully: *I, the one who came from heaven, will leave this earth, but I will return, and the angels of heaven will accompany me. At that time I will have the glorious radiance that my Father has, and I will reward everyone according to what they did when they were living on earth.*

<sup>28</sup> Listen carefully! Some of you who are here now will see *me*, the one who came from heaven, when I return to rule. You will see this before

you die!”

## 17

*Jesus' appearance changed while Moses and Elijah talked with him on a mountain.*

*Matthew 17:1-8*

<sup>1</sup> A week after Jesus said that, he took Peter, James, and John, the younger brother of James, and led them up a high mountain where they were away from other people.

<sup>2</sup> While they were there, the three disciples saw that Jesus' appearance was changed. His face shone like the sun, and his clothing shone and became as brilliant as light.

<sup>3</sup> Suddenly Moses and Elijah, who were important prophets many years ago, appeared and started talking with him.

<sup>4</sup> Peter saw them and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is wonderful for us to be here! If you want me to, I will make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

<sup>5</sup> While Peter was speaking, a bright cloud appeared and covered them. They heard God speaking about Jesus from inside the cloud. He said to them, “This is my Son. I love him. He pleases me very much. So you must listen to him!”

<sup>6</sup> When the three disciples heard God speaking, they were terrified. As a result, they fell prostrate on the ground.

<sup>7</sup> But Jesus went to them and touched them and said to them, “Stand up! Do not be afraid any more!”

<sup>8</sup> And when they looked up [MTY], they saw that Jesus was the only one *who was still there*.

*Jesus explained that John the Baptizer fulfilled the prophecy about Elijah returning.*

*Matthew 17:9-13*

<sup>9</sup> When they were walking down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Do not tell anyone what you saw *on the mountain top* until *God has caused me*, the one who has come from heaven, to become alive again after I die."

<sup>10</sup> *Those three disciples had just seen Elijah and he did not do anything to prepare people for the coming of the Messiah*, so they asked Jesus, "If *what you say is true*, why do the men who teach the Jewish laws say that it is necessary for Elijah to come *back to earth* before *the Messiah comes*?"

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered *them*, "It is true that *God promised that Elijah would come to prepare many [HYP] people for the Messiah's coming*.

<sup>12</sup> But note this: *Elijah's representative* has already come, *and our leaders have seen him*, but they did not recognize him *as the one who would come before the Messiah*. Instead, they treated him *badly*, just like they desired. And those same rulers will soon treat *me*, the one who came from heaven, in the same manner."

<sup>13</sup> Then the three disciples understood that *when he was talking about Elijah*, he was referring to John the Baptizer.

*Jesus healed an epileptic boy, and he rebuked his disciples for not having enough faith to do*

*miracles.*

*Matthew 17:14-21*

<sup>14</sup> When *Jesus and the three disciples* returned to the *rest of us disciples* and to the crowd *that had gathered*, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him.

<sup>15</sup> He said to him, “Sir/Lord, have mercy on my son and *heal him!* He has epilepsy and suffers very much. *Because of this illness*, he has fallen in the fire and in the water many times.

<sup>16</sup> I brought him to your disciples *in order that they might heal him*, but they were not able to heal him.”

<sup>17</sup> Jesus responded by saying to everyone who had gathered there, “You who have seen how I help people do not believe that you can do anything! Your minds are distorted! How long do I have to be with you *before you are able to do what I do* [RHQ]? How long do I have to endure your *not believing* [RHQ]? Bring the boy here to me!”

<sup>18</sup> When *they brought the boy to Jesus*, Jesus rebuked the demon *that was causing the epilepsy*. As a result, the demon came out of the boy, and right then the boy was healed.

<sup>19</sup> Later, some of us disciples approached Jesus. We asked him privately, “Why were **we** (exc) not able to expel the demon?”

<sup>20-21</sup> He answered us, “It is because you did not believe very much *in God’s power*. Think about this: Mustard seeds are very small, but in this area they grow and produce large [MET] plants. Similarly, if your faith grows until you

truly believe *that God will do what you ask him to*, you will be able to do anything [LIT]! You *could even say to this hill, 'Move from here to there!'* and it would go *where you told it to go.*"

*Jesus again predicted his death and resurrection.*

*Matthew 17:22-23*

<sup>22</sup> When we *disciples* had gathered together in Galilee *district*, Jesus said to us, "I, the one who came from heaven, will soon be handed over {Someone will soon hand me, the one who came from heaven, over} to the authorities [SYN].

<sup>23</sup> They will kill me. But *God* will cause me to become alive again on the third day *after I am killed.*" When we heard that, we became very sad.

*Jesus arranged for a miracle so that Peter could pay the Temple tax.*

*Matthew 17:24-27*

<sup>24</sup> When we came to Capernaum *city*, the men who collect taxes *for the Temple* approached Peter and said to him, "Your teacher pays the Temple tax, does he not?"

<sup>25</sup> He answered *them*, "Yes, *he does pay it.*" When we came into the house *where Jesus was saying, before Peter began to talk about paying taxes*, Jesus said to him, "Simon, from whom do you think rulers collect revenue or taxes? *Do they collect taxes* from the citizens of their own country, or from citizens of countries *they have conquered?*"

<sup>26</sup> Peter answered *him*, “From *citizens of other countries*.” Then Jesus said to him, “So citizens of their own *country* do not need to *pay taxes*.”

<sup>27</sup> But even *though the Temple is mine, pay the tax for us so that the Temple tax collectors will not become angry with us. In order to get the money to pay it, go to the lake. Cast your fish line and hook, and take the first fish that you catch. When you open its mouth, you will find a silver coin that is worth enough to pay the tax for you and me. Take that coin and give it to the Temple tax collectors.*”

## 18

*Jesus showed that being great in God's sight means being as humble as a child.*

*Matthew 18:1-5*

<sup>1</sup> About that time we disciples approached Jesus and said, “Who *among us will be* the most important when God [MTY/EUP] *makes you king?*”

<sup>2</sup> Jesus called a child to come, and he placed that child in our midst.

<sup>3</sup> He said, “Think about this: If you (*pl*) do not change *the way you(pl) think* and become as *humble* as little children, you (*pl*) will surely not go to the place where God [MTY/EUP] rules.

<sup>4</sup> The people who become as humble as this child *or any child* is, will be the most important people among those over whom God rules.

<sup>5</sup> Also, when those who, *because they love me, welcome a child like this one, God considers* that they are welcoming me.”

*Jesus taught that we need to take severe measures to keep us from sinning when we are tempted.*

*Matthew 18:6-9*

<sup>6</sup> “If you cause someone who believes in me to sin, *even if it is someone who is socially unimportant like this little child, God will severely punish you.* If a heavy stone were fastened around your neck and you were thrown into the deep waters of the sea, *people would consider that you had been severely punished. But God will punish you more severely than that if you cause someone to sin*

<sup>7</sup> It will be terrible for those [MTY] who cause others to stop believing in me. *God will punish them eternally.* It is inevitable that there will be *those who* cause others to stop believing in me. But it will be horrible for everyone who does that.

<sup>8</sup> So, if you *are wanting to use* one of your hands or feet to sin, *stop using that hand or foot! Even if you have to cut it off to avoid sinning, do it [MET]!* It is good *that you not sin and go where you will live with God eternally, even though while you are still here on earth you are maimed or lame and do not have a hand or a foot.* But it is not good that you continue to have your two hands and two feet *and do [MTY] the sinful things you want to, and as a result, you are thrown into hell, where there is eternal fire burning.*

<sup>9</sup> If what you see *you makes you want to sin, stop looking at those things! Even if you have to gouge out one of your eyes and throw it away to*

*avoid sinning, do it [HYP]! It is good that you not sin and go where you will live with God eternally, even though while you are still here on earth you have only one eye. But it is not good that you continue to have your two eyes and do the sinful things you want to, and as a result, you are thrown {God throws you} into hell where there is eternal fire burning."*

*Jesus taught that God is deeply concerned if even one person goes astray from him.*

*Matthew 18:10-14*

<sup>10-11</sup> "Make an effort that you (*pl*) do not despise even one of these children. I tell you (*pl*) truly that since the angels live in heaven in the presence of my Father, they will report to him if you mistreat the children.\*

<sup>12</sup> What do you (*pl*) think you would do in the following situation? If you had 100 sheep and one of them got lost, you would surely leave the 99 sheep that are on the hill and go and search for the lost one [RHQ], would you not?

<sup>13</sup> If you found it, I affirm to you (*pl*) that you would rejoice very much. You would be happy that 99 sheep did not stray away, but you would rejoice even more because you had found the sheep that had strayed away.

<sup>14</sup> In the same way that shepherds do not want one of their sheep to stray away, so God, your Father in heaven, does not want even one of these children to go to hell."

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\* **18:10-11** Some Greek manuscripts add verse 11, 'For the Son of Man came to seek the lost'.

*Jesus taught about what we should do if someone sins against us and about agreeing when we pray.*

*Matthew 18:15-20*

<sup>15</sup> “If a fellow believer sins *against you*, go to him, and when you two are alone, reprove him for sinning against you. If that person listens to you *and feels sorry that he has sinned against you*, you will have restored your friendship with that person.

<sup>16</sup> If that person will not listen to you *nor feel sorry that he has sinned against you*, go get one or two other people *who will listen to what you both have to say*. Have them go with you so that what is written {Moses wrote} in the Scriptures might happen: ‘When one person accuses another in some matter, it should be confirmed by at least two or three people {at least two or three people should confirm it} before that person can be declared guilty {before they declare that person guilty}.’

<sup>17</sup> If the one who has sinned against you will not listen to them *or does not feel sorry that he has sinned against you*, tell that to the congregation so that they can rebuke him. If that person will not listen to the congregation *or feel sorry that he has sinned against you*, exclude him from being a member of your congregation, just like you would exclude pagans, tax collectors, and others who do not believe in God and sin greatly.

<sup>18</sup> Keep this in mind: Whatever you decide on earth about punishing or not punishing a member of your congregation is what has also

been decided by *God* in heaven {what *God* in heaven has also decided}.

<sup>19</sup> Also note this: If *at least* two of you *who live* here on earth agree together about something you ask *God* for [DOU], *God*, my Father *who is* in heaven, will give you what you ask for.

<sup>20</sup> *This is true*, because wherever *at least* two or three of you assemble because you believe in me [MTY], I am *spiritually* present with you. I *will hear what you ask for and I will ask God to do it for you.*"

*Jesus told a parable to illustrate the need for forgiving others.*

*Matthew 18:21-35*

<sup>21</sup> Then Peter approached *Jesus* and said to him, "How many times must I forgive a fellow believer who *keeps on* sinning against me? *If he keeps asking me to forgive him, must I forgive him as many as seven times?*"

<sup>22</sup> *Jesus* said to him, "I tell you *that the number of times you must forgive someone is* not just up to seven, but you *must* ◀*forgive him 77 times/never stop forgiving him*▶.

<sup>23</sup> *In order to illustrate why you should do this*, I will tell you a story in which *God* [MTY/EUP], who *cares for* the people whose lives he rules over, is compared {I compare *God*, who *cares for* the people whose lives he rules over} to a king *and his officials*. That king told *some of his servants that he wanted* his officials to pay what they owed him.

24 *So those officials were brought to the king to settle their accounts with him. One of the officials who were brought owed the king several million dollars.*

25 But because he did not have *enough money* to pay *what he owed*, the king demanded that he, his wife, his children and all he possessed be sold *to someone else, and that the king* be repaid with {receive} *the money that was paid for them.*

26 Then that official, *knowing that he did not have the money to pay that huge debt*, fell on his knees *in front of the king* and begged him saying, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you all of it, *eventually.*'

27 The king, *knowing that the official could never pay all that huge debt*, felt sorry for him. So he canceled his debt and released him.

28 Then this official went to another one of the king's officials who owed him a bit less than a year's wages. He grabbed him *by the throat*, started choking him, and said to him, 'Pay back what you owe *me!*'

29 That official fell on his knees and begged him saying, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you all of it, *eventually.*'

30 But this official kept refusing *to cancel that small debt that the man owed him*. Instead, he *caused that official to be put in prison and to stay there* until he could pay back all the money that he owed him.

31 When the other officials *of the king* learned that this had happened, they felt very distressed. So they went to the king and reported in detail

what had happened.

<sup>32</sup> Then the king summoned the official *who had owed him several million dollars*. He said to him, 'You wicked servant! I canceled that huge debt *that you owed me* because you begged me *to do so*

<sup>33</sup> You should have been merciful *and canceled your fellow official's debt*, just like I was merciful to you *and canceled your debt* [RHQ]!'

<sup>34</sup> The king was very angry. He handed this official over to some jailers who would torture him severely until he paid all of the debt that he owed."

<sup>35</sup> *Then Jesus continued by saying, "That is what my Father in heaven will do to you if you do not feel merciful and sincerely forgive a fellow believer who sins against you."*

## 19

*Jesus taught them God's view of divorce, and about abstaining from marriage to give more time to serve God.*

*Matthew 19:1-12*

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus had said that, he *took us* and left Galilee *district* and went to the part of Judea *district that is located* on the east side of the Jordan River.

<sup>2</sup> Large crowds followed him there, and he healed *the sick among* them.

<sup>3</sup> *Some Pharisees* approached Jesus and said to him, "Does *our Jewish* law permit a man to divorce his wife for any reason whatever?" *They*

*asked that in order to be able to criticize Jesus, whether he answered "Yes" or "No."*

<sup>4</sup> Jesus said to them, *"Because you have read [RHQ] the Scriptures, you should know that at the time God first created people, 'he made one man, and he made one woman to be that man's wife.'*

<sup>5</sup> That explains why God said, *'When a man and woman marry, they should no longer live with their fathers and mothers. Instead, the two of them shall live together, and they shall become so closely united that they are like one person [MET].'*

<sup>6</sup> Consequently, *although they functioned as two separate people before, they now become as if they were one person [MET].* Since that is true, a man must not separate *from his wife* whom God has joined to him, *because it is God's plan for them to remain together."*

<sup>7</sup> The Pharisees then said to him, *"If that is true, why did Moses command that a man who wanted to divorce his wife should give her a paper stating his reason for divorcing her, and then send her away?"*

<sup>8</sup> He said to them, *"It was because your ancestors stubbornly wanted their own way that Moses allowed them to divorce their wives, and you are no different from them. But when God first [MTY] created a man and a woman, he did not intend for them to separate.*

<sup>9</sup> I am telling you emphatically that *because God considers that a marriage lasts until either the husband or the wife dies, he considers that any man who divorces his wife and marries another*

woman is committing adultery, unless *his first wife* has committed adultery."

<sup>10</sup> We disciples said to him, "If that is true, it is better for men never to marry!"

<sup>11</sup> Then he said to us, "Not every man is able to accept this teaching. Only the men whom God enables *to accept it are able to do so*."

<sup>12</sup> There are men who *do not marry because they are not able to have sexual relations because they* have been sexually defective ever since they were born. There are other men *who do not marry because they are unable to have sexual relations* because they have been castrated {other men have made them that way}. There are other men *who decide not to marry* [MET] in order that they can serve God better *and spend more time telling people about how* God [MTY/EUP] wants to rule people's lives. You who are able to understand *what I have said about marriage* should accept it *and obey it*."

*Jesus rebuked the disciples for trying to prevent children from coming to him.*

*Matthew 19:13-15*

<sup>13</sup> Then some children were brought {some people brought their children} to Jesus in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray *for them*. But we disciples scolded the people *for bringing their children to Jesus because we thought that Jesus did not want to take the time to be with children*.

<sup>14</sup> But *when Jesus saw us scolding them*, he said to us, "Let the children come to me! Do not stop them! It is people who are *humble and trusting*

like they are, who can experience God's rule *in their lives.*"

<sup>15</sup> Jesus then laid his hands on the children *and asked God to bless them.* Then he left there.

*A rich young man went away sad because Jesus told him to sell all his possessions.*

*Matthew 19:16-22*

<sup>16</sup> As Jesus was walking along, a young man approached him and said to him, "Teacher, what good *deeds* must I do in order to live *with God eternally?*"

<sup>17</sup> Jesus said to him, "◀Consider *what you are implying about who I am* when you ask me about what is good./Do you realize *what you are implying about who I am* when you ask me about that which is good?▶ [RHQ] Only one being is good and *really knows what is good. That being is God. But in order to answer your question about desiring to live with God eternally, I will say to you, 'Keep the commandments that God gave Moses'.*"

<sup>18</sup> The man asked Jesus, "Which *commandments must I keep?*" Jesus answered him, "Do not murder *anyone*, do not commit adultery, do not steal things, do not testify falsely,

<sup>19</sup> honor your father and your mother, and love people you come in contact with as *much as you love yourself.*"

<sup>20</sup> Thinking that he might not be able to live with God eternally even though he had kept those commandments, the young man said to Jesus, "I have always obeyed all those commandments.

What else must I do *in order to live with God eternally?*”

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to him, “If you desire to be all that God intends you to be, go *home*, sell everything that you have and give *the money* to poor people. *The result will be that you will have spiritual riches in heaven.* Then come and be my disciple!”

<sup>22</sup> When the young man heard those words, he went away feeling sad, because he was very rich *and did not want to give away everything he owned.*

*Jesus taught how difficult it is for rich people to let God rule their lives, but there are rewards for those who leave family and possessions for his sake.*

*Matthew 19:23-30*

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to *us* disciples, “Keep this in mind: It is very difficult for rich people *to decide* to let God [MTY/EUP] rule their *lives*.”

<sup>24</sup> Note this also: It is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. It is *almost* as difficult [HYP] for rich people *to decide* to let God rule their *lives*.”

<sup>25</sup> When *we* disciples heard this, we were astounded. *We thought that rich people were the ones whom God blesses the most. So we said to him, “◀If that is so, it does not seem likely that anyone will be saved!/Who then will God will save?▶”* [RHQ]

<sup>26</sup> *When Jesus heard us say that, he looked intently at us, and then he said to us, “Yes, it is impossible for people to save themselves. But*

*God can save them, because God is able to do anything!"*

<sup>27</sup> Then Peter said to him, "You know that we (exc) have left everything behind and we have become your disciples. So what benefit will we get *for doing that?*"

<sup>28</sup> Jesus said to us, "Keep this in mind: *You will get many benefits. When God makes the new earth and when I, the one who came from heaven, sit on my magnificent throne, those of you who have accompanied me will each sit on a throne, and you will judge the people of the twelve tribes of Israel.*

<sup>29</sup> *God will reward those who, because of being my disciples, have left behind a house or plot of ground, their brothers, their sisters, their father, their mother, their children, or any other family [MTY] members. God will give them 100 times as many benefits as they have given up. And they will live with God eternally.*

<sup>30</sup> But many *people who consider themselves to be important now will be unimportant at that future time, and many people who consider themselves to be unimportant now will be important at that future time.*"

## 20

*Jesus told a parable to illustrate how God will reward those who serve him.*

*Matthew 20:1-16*

<sup>1</sup> "In order to illustrate how God rewards people, I will compare the way God [MTY/EUP] rules his people with what the owner of an estate

*did.* Early in the morning the owner of the estate went to *the market* where *people who wanted work gathered.* He went there to hire laborers to work in his vineyard.

<sup>2</sup> He promised the men whom he hired that he would pay them the standard wage *for working* one day. Then he sent them to his vineyards.

<sup>3</sup> At nine o'clock *that same morning* he went back to *the market.* There he saw more men who did not have work.

<sup>4</sup> He said to them, 'Go to my vineyard as other men have done, *and work there.* I will pay you whatever is a just wage.' So they also went to his vineyard and began to work.

<sup>5</sup> At noon and at three o'clock he again went to *the market* and found *other laborers whom he promised to pay a fair wage.*

<sup>6</sup> At five o'clock he went to *the market again* and saw other *men standing there who were not working.* He said to them, 'Why are you standing here all day and not working?'

<sup>7</sup> They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, '*I will hire you.* Go to my vineyard as other men have done, *and work there.*' So they went.

<sup>8</sup> When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Tell the men to come so that you can give them their wages. First, pay the men who started working last, and pay the men last who started working first.'

<sup>9</sup> The *manager* paid the standard daily wage to each of the men who did not start working until five o'clock *in the afternoon.*

<sup>10</sup> When the men who had begun working early *in the morning* went to get *their wages*, they thought that they would receive more than the standard wage. But they also received only the standard wage.

<sup>11</sup> So they complained to the owner of the vineyard *because they thought their payment was unfair*.

<sup>12</sup> They said to him, '*You are not being fair! The men who started working after all of the rest of us started* worked for *only one hour!* You have *paid* them the same wage as you paid us! But we worked hard *all day* [IDM], *including working in the hottest part of the day!*'

<sup>13</sup> The owner of the vineyard said to one of those *who complained*, 'Friend, I did not treat you unfairly. You agreed with me *to work the whole day* for the standard wage [RHQ].

<sup>14</sup> *Stop complaining to me!* Take your wage and go! I desire to give the same wage that I gave you to the men who began working after all of you *had begun working*.

<sup>15</sup> I certainly have a right to *spend my money* as I desire [RHQ], *including paying those laborers what I desire to pay them*. ◀You should not be envious about my being generous! / Are you angry [MET] because I am generous?▶ [RHQ]' "

<sup>16</sup> *Then Jesus said to us, "Similarly, God will reward well some people who seem to be less important now, and he will not reward some people who seem to be more important now."*

*For the third time Jesus predicted his death and*

*resurrection.*

*Matthew 20:17-19*

<sup>17</sup> When Jesus was walking *on the road* up to Jerusalem, *along with us twelve disciples*, he took us to a place by ourselves *in order that he could talk to us privately*. Then he said to us,

<sup>18</sup> “Listen carefully! We are *now* going up to Jerusalem. *While we are there*, someone will enable the chief priests and the men who teach the *Jewish* laws to seize *me*, the one who came from heaven, *and they will put me on trial*. They will condemn me *and say* that I should be killed {the authorities should kill me}.

<sup>19</sup> *Then they will put me in the hands of non-Jews so that they can make fun of me, whip me, and kill me by nailing me to a cross. But on the third day after that, God will cause me to live again.*”

*Jesus taught that greatness in God’s sight means humbly serving others as Jesus did.*

*Matthew 20:20-28*

<sup>20</sup> Then the mother of James and John brought her two sons to Jesus. She bowed down before Jesus and asked him to do her a favor.

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, “What do you want *me to do for you?*” She said to him, “Permit these two sons of mine to sit next to you (OR, Permit these two sons of mine to sit next to you at your right side and at your left side) *and rule with you* [MTY] when you become king.”

<sup>22</sup> Jesus said to *her and her sons*, “You do not understand what you are asking for. Can you

suffer like I am about to suffer [IDM]?" *James and John* answered him, "Yes, we are able *to do that*."

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Yes, you will suffer as I will suffer [IDM]. But I am not the one who chooses the ones who *will* sit next to me *and rule with me*. God, my Father, will give those places [MTY] to the ones whom he appoints."

<sup>24</sup> When we ten *other disciples* heard what *James and John* had requested, we became angry with them *because we also wanted to rule with Jesus in the highest positions*.

<sup>25</sup> So Jesus called all of us together and said to us, "You know that those who rule the non-Jews *enjoy* showing them that they are powerful. Their chief rulers *enjoy* commanding the people under them.

<sup>26</sup> You *should* not be like them. On the contrary, everyone among you who wants God to consider him great must become *like* a servant for *the rest of you*.

<sup>27</sup> And everyone among you who wants God to consider him to be the most important must become *like* a slave for *the rest of you*.

<sup>28</sup> You *should imitate me*. Even though I am the one who came from heaven, I did not come to be served {in order that people would serve me}. On the contrary, I *came in order* to serve *others* and to [IDM] allow myself to be killed {other people to kill me}, so that *my dying would be like* a payment to rescue many people from being punished for their sins." [MTY]

*Jesus healed two blind men.*  
*Matthew 20:29-34*

<sup>29</sup> As we were leaving Jericho *city*, a large crowd of people followed us.

<sup>30</sup> As we *walked along*, we saw two blind men sitting alongside the road. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they yelled *to him*, "Lord, Descendant of *King David*, *you are the Messiah* Take pity on us!"

<sup>31</sup> *People in* the crowd scolded them *and* told them to be quiet. But the blind men yelled even louder, "Lord, Descendant of *King David*, *you are the Messiah* Have pity on us!"

<sup>32</sup> Jesus stopped and called them *to come to him*. Then he said *to them*, "What do you want me to do for you?"

<sup>33</sup> They said to him, "Lord, heal our eyes [IDM] *so that we can see!*"

<sup>34</sup> Jesus *felt sorry for them and* touched their eyes. Immediately they were able to see, and they went with Jesus.

## 21

*Jesus entered Jerusalem humbly on a donkey, but with great acclaim by the crowd.*

*Matthew 21:1-11*

<sup>1-2</sup> As we approached Jerusalem, we came near Bethphage *village*, near Olive *Tree* Hill. Jesus said to two *of his* disciples, "Go to the village just ahead of us. As soon as you enter *it*, you will see a donkey and her foal that are {someone has} tied up. Untie them and bring them *here* to me.

<sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you *about your doing that*, tell him, "The Lord needs them." He will *then allow you to* lead them away."

<sup>4-5</sup> When all this happened, what was written by a prophet {what a prophet wrote about} was fulfilled {happened}. The prophet wrote, "Tell the people who live in Jerusalem [SYN], 'Look! Your king is coming to you! He will come humbly. He *will show that he is humble, because he will be riding on a colt, the offspring of a donkey.*' "

<sup>6</sup> So the *two* disciples went and did what Jesus told them to do.

<sup>7</sup> They brought the donkey and its colt *to Jesus*. They placed their cloaks on them *to make something for him to sit on*. Then Jesus *mounted the colt* and sat on the cloaks.

<sup>8</sup> Then a large crowd spread *some of* their clothing on the road, and other *people* cut off branches from *palm* trees and spread them on the road. *They did those things to decorate the road in order to honor Jesus.*

<sup>9</sup> The crowds that walked in front of him and those who walked behind him were shouting things like, "Praise the *Messiah*, the descendant of *King David*!" "May the Lord God bless *this one* who comes as God's representative and with God's authority [MTY]." "Praise God, who is in the highest *heaven*!"

<sup>10</sup> As Jesus entered Jerusalem, a crowd of people [MTY] from all *over the city* became excited and were saying, "Why *are they honoring this man like that?*"

<sup>11</sup> The crowd *that was already following him* said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee!"

*Jesus chased buyers and sellers from the temple, and he rebuked the Jewish leaders for objecting to children praising him.*

*Matthew 21:12-17*

<sup>12</sup> Then Jesus went into the Temple courtyard and chased out all of those who were buying and selling things there. He also overturned the tables of those who were giving *Temple tax money in exchange for Roman coins*, and he overturned the seats of those who were selling pigeons *for sacrifices*.

<sup>13</sup> Then he said to them, "It is {◀*Jeremiah/A prophet*▶ has} written *in the Scriptures that God said, 'I want my house to be called a place where people pray'*, but you bandits have made it [MET] your hideout!"

<sup>14</sup> After that, *many blind people and lame people* came to Jesus in the temple *in order that he would heal them*, and he healed them.

<sup>15</sup> The high priests and the men who taught the people the *Jewish* laws saw the wonderful deeds that Jesus did. *They also saw and heard the children shouting in the Temple, "We praise the Messiah, the descendant of King David!"* The religious leaders were indignant *because they did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah*.

<sup>16</sup> *They thought that Jesus should not be allowing the children to say that*, so they asked him, "*How can you tolerate this [RHQ]? Do you hear what these children are shouting?*" Then Jesus said to them, "*Yes, I hear them, but if you remembered what you have read in the Scriptures about children praising me, you would know that*

*God is pleased [RHQ] with them. The psalmist wrote, saying to God, 'You have taught infants and other children to praise you perfectly.' "*

<sup>17</sup> Then Jesus left the city. We *disciples* went *with him* to Bethany town, and we slept there *that night*.

*Jesus taught the disciples a lesson from what happened to a fig tree.*

*Matthew 21:18-22*

<sup>18</sup> Early *the next morning*, when we were returning to the city, *Jesus* was hungry.

<sup>19</sup> He saw a fig tree near the road. *So he went over to it to pick some figs to eat.* But when he got close, he saw that there were no *figs on the tree*. There were only leaves on it. *So to illustrate how God would punish the nation of Israel*, he said to the fig tree, "May you never again produce figs!" As a result, the fig tree withered that night.

<sup>20</sup> *The next day* when we disciples saw *what had happened to the tree*, we marveled, and we said to *Jesus*, "◀It is astonishing that the fig tree withered so quickly!/How is it that the fig tree dried up so quickly?▶" [RHQ]

<sup>21</sup> *Jesus* said to us, "Think about this: If you believe *that God has power to do what you ask him to* and you do not doubt *that*, you will be able to do *things like what I have done* to this fig tree. You will even be able to do *marvelous deeds like saying to a nearby hill, 'Uproot yourself and throw yourself into the sea', and it will happen!*

<sup>22</sup> *In addition to that*, whenever you ask *God for something* when you pray to him, if you

believe *that he will give it to you*, you will receive *it from him.*"

*Jesus refused to state the basis for his authority, because the Jewish leaders refused to admit where John the Baptizer's authority came from.*

*Matthew 21:23-27*

<sup>23</sup> After that, Jesus went into the Temple courtyard. While he was teaching *the people*, the chief priests and the elders of the Jewish Council approached him. They asked, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who authorized you to do what you did *here yesterday* [DOU]?"

<sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, "I also will ask you a question, and if you answer me, I will tell you who authorized me to do these things.

<sup>25</sup> Where did John *the Baptizer* get *his authority* to baptize *those who came to him*? Did he get it from God or from people? [MTY/EUP]" The chief priests and elders debated among themselves *about what they should answer. They said to each other*, "If we say, '*It was* [MTY/EUP] from God', he will say to us, 'Then ◀you should have believed his *message!*/why did you not believe John's *message?*▶ [RHQ]'

<sup>26</sup> If we say, 'It was from people', we are afraid that the crowd *will react violently*, because all *the people* believe that John was a prophet *sent by God.*"

<sup>27</sup> So they answered Jesus, "We do not know *where John got his authority.*" Then he said to them, "*Because you did not answer my question,*

I will not tell you who authorized me to do the things I did *here yesterday*.”

*Jesus rebuked the religious leaders and said that it is more likely that God would accept notorious sinners than that he would accept them.*

*Matthew 21:28-32*

<sup>28</sup> Then Jesus said to the chief priests and elders, “Tell me [RHQ] what you think *about what I am about to tell you*. There was a man who had two sons. He went to his older son and said, ‘My son, go and work in my vineyard today!’

<sup>29</sup> But the son said *to his father*, ‘I do not want to *go and work in your vineyard today!*’ But later he changed his mind, and he went to the vineyard *and worked*.

<sup>30</sup> Then the father approached his younger son and said what he had said to his older son. That son said, ‘Sir, I will *go and work in the vineyard today*.’ But he did not go there.

<sup>31</sup> So which of the man’s two sons did what their father desired?” They answered, “The older son.” Jesus *explained to them what that parable meant* by saying, “Think about this: *It is more likely that other people, including tax collectors and prostitutes, whom you think are very sinful, will enter where God rules, than it is that you Jewish leaders will enter.*

<sup>32</sup> I say *this to you* because, even though John the Baptizer explained to you how to live righteously, you did not believe his message. But tax collectors and prostitutes believed his *message, and they turned away from their sinful behavior*. In contrast, you, even though you saw

what they did, refused to turn away from your sinful behavior, and you did not believe *John's message.*"

*Jesus told a parable about the Jewish religious leaders rejecting him as Messiah.*

*Matthew 21:33-46*

<sup>33</sup> "Listen to another parable *that I will tell you.* There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He built a fence around it. He dug a hole in the ground *inside the fence.* He placed *in the hole* a stone tank to *collect the juice that would be pressed out of the grapes.* He also built a tower *inside that fence that someone would sit in to guard that vineyard.* He arranged for some men *to care for the vineyard and to give him some of the grapes in return.* Then he went away to another country.

<sup>34</sup> When it was time to harvest the grapes, the landowner sent some of his servants to the men who were taking care of the vineyard to get his share of the grapes *that the vineyard had produced.*

<sup>35</sup> But the renters seized the servants. They beat one of them, they killed another one, and *killed another one of them by throwing stones at him.*

<sup>36</sup> *So the landowner sent more servants than he had sent the first time.* The renters treated those servants the same way that *they had treated the other servants.*

<sup>37</sup> Later, *knowing this, the landowner sent his son to the renters to get his share of the grapes.* When he sent him, he said *to himself, 'They will*

certainly respect my son *and give him some of the grapes.*'

<sup>38</sup> But when the renters saw his son *arriving*, they said to each other, 'This is the man who will inherit *this vineyard*! Let's kill him and divide the property *among ourselves.*'

<sup>39</sup> So they grabbed him, dragged him outside the vineyard, and killed him.

<sup>40</sup> *Now I ask you*, when the landowner returns to his vineyard, what *do you think* he will do to those renters?"

<sup>41</sup> *The chief priests and elders* replied, "He will thoroughly destroy those wicked *renters*! Then he will rent the vineyard to others. They will give him *his share* of the grapes when they are ripe."

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "*That is right, so you need to think carefully about these words which you have read [RHQ] in the Scriptures:*

The builders rejected a certain stone. *But others put that same stone in its proper place, and it has become the most important stone of the building [MET].* The Lord has done this, and we marvel as we look at it.

<sup>43</sup> So, *because you reject me*, I am going to tell you this: God will no longer let you *Jews* be the people over whom he rules. Instead, he will let *non-Jews* be the people over whom he rules, and they will do [IDM] what he asks them to do.

<sup>44</sup> *The important stone in the building represents me, the Messiah, and those who reject me are like people who fall on this stone.* Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken into pieces {This

cornerstone will break into pieces anyone who falls on it}, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

<sup>45</sup> When the chief priests and the *elders who were Pharisees* heard this parable, they realized that he was accusing them *because they did not believe that he was the Messiah*.

<sup>46</sup> They wanted to seize him, but *they did not do so* because they were afraid of what the crowds *would do if they did that*, because *the crowds* considered that Jesus was a prophet.

## 22

*Jesus told a parable about a wedding feast to illustrate what will happen to people who do not accept him as the Messiah.*

*Matthew 22:1-14*

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus told *the Jewish leaders* other parables *in order to illustrate what will happen to the people who do not accept him as the King God promised to send*. This is one of those parables:

<sup>2</sup> “God [MTY/EUP] is like a king [SIM] who told his servants that they should make a wedding feast for his son.

<sup>3</sup> When the feast was ready, the king sent his servants to tell the people who had been {whom he had} invited that it was time for them to come to the wedding feast. *The servants did that*. But the people who had been invited did not want to come.

<sup>4</sup> So he sent other servants to again tell the people whom he had invited that they should come to the feast. He said to those servants, ‘Say

to the people whom I invited *to come to the feast*, “The king says that he has prepared the food. The oxen and the fattened calves have been butchered *and cooked*. Everything is ready. It is time *now for you to come to the wedding feast!*’ ” ’

<sup>5</sup> *But when the servants told them that, they disregarded what the servants said. Some of them went to their own fields. Others went to their places of business.*

<sup>6</sup> The rest of them seized the king’s servants, mistreated them, and killed them.

<sup>7</sup> *When the king heard what had happened, he became furious. He commanded his soldiers to go and kill those murderers and burn their cities.*

<sup>8</sup> *After his soldiers had done that, the king said to his other servants, ‘I have prepared the wedding feast, but the people who were {whom I} invited do not deserve to come to it because they did not consider it an honor to have been invited.*

<sup>9</sup> *So, go to the intersections of the main streets. Tell whomever you find that they should come to the wedding feast.’*

<sup>10</sup> *So the servants went there, and they gathered everyone they saw who wanted to come to the feast. They gathered both people that were considered to be evil and those that were considered to be good. They brought them into the hall where the wedding feast took place. The hall was filled with people.*

<sup>11</sup> *But when the king went into the hall to see the guests who were there, he saw someone who was not wearing clothes that had been provided*

*for the guests to wear at a wedding feast.*

<sup>12</sup> The king said to him, 'Friend, ◀you should never have entered this hall, because you are not wearing the clothes *that guests wear at wedding feasts!*/how did you enter this hall, because you are not wearing the clothes *that are appropriate for guests to wear at a wedding feast?*▶ [RHQ]' The man did not say anything, *because he did not know what to say.*

<sup>13</sup> Then the king said to his attendants, 'Tie this person's feet and hands and throw him outside where there is total darkness. People who are there cry out *because they are suffering* and they gnash their teeth *because of their severe pain.*' "

<sup>14</sup> Then Jesus said, "*The point of this story is that God has invited many to come to him, but only a few people are the ones whom he has chosen to be there.*"

*Jesus taught his critics that they needed to give to God and to the government what they each required.*

*Matthew 22:15-22*

<sup>15</sup> After Jesus said that, the Pharisees met together in order to plan how they could cause him to say something that would enable them to accuse him.

<sup>16</sup> They sent to him some of their disciples, *who thought that the Israelites should pay only the tax that the Jewish authorities required them to pay.* They also sent some members of the party that supported Herod. *The members of that party thought that the Israelites should pay only the tax that the Roman government required them to*

*pay. Those who were sent came and said to Jesus, "Teacher, we know that you are truthful and that you teach the truth about what God wants us to do. We also know that you do not change what you teach because of what someone says about you, even if it is an important person who does not like what you [IDM] teach.*

<sup>17</sup> So tell us what you think [RHQ] *about this matter*: Is it right that we pay taxes to the Roman government [MTY], or not?"

<sup>18</sup> But Jesus knew that what they really wanted to do was evil. *They were wanting him to say something that would get him in trouble with either the Jewish authorities or the Roman authorities. So he said to them, "You are ◀hypocrites/pretending to ask a legitimate question▶, but you are just wanting [RHQ] me to say something for which you can accuse me.*

<sup>19</sup> Show me *one of the coins with which people pay the Roman tax.*" So they showed him *a coin called a denarius.*

<sup>20</sup> He said to them, "Whose picture is *on this coin*? And *whose name is on it*?"

<sup>21</sup> They answered, "*It has the picture and name of Caesar, the head of the Roman government.*" Then he said to them, "Okay, give to the government what they *require*, and give to God what he *requires.*"

<sup>22</sup> When those men heard Jesus say that, they marveled *that his answer did not enable anyone to accuse him.* Then they left Jesus.

*Jesus showed from the Scriptures that the*

*spirits of God's people are alive after death.*

*Matthew 22:23-33*

<sup>23</sup> During that same day, some Sadducees came to Jesus. *They are a Jewish sect who do not believe that people will become alive again after they die. They wanted to ask Jesus a question.*

<sup>24</sup> *In order to discredit the idea that dead people will live again, they said to him, "Teacher, Moses wrote in the Scriptures, 'If a man dies who did not have any children, his brother must marry the dead man's widow in order that she can have a child by him. The child will be considered the descendant of the man who died, and in that way the dead man will have descendants.'*

<sup>25</sup> Well, there were seven boys in a family living near us. The oldest one married someone. He and his wife did not have any children, and he died. So the second brother married the widow. But he also died without having a child.

<sup>26</sup> The same thing happened to the third brother, and also to the other four brothers, who one by one married this same woman.

<sup>27</sup> Last of all, the widow also died.

<sup>28</sup> So, at the time when people are raised from the dead, which of the seven brothers do you think will be her husband? Keep in mind that they had all been married to her."

<sup>29</sup> Jesus replied to them, "You are certainly wrong in what you are thinking. You do not know what is written in the Scriptures. You also do not know that God has the power to make people alive again.

<sup>30</sup> The fact is that the woman will not be the wife of any of them, because after God causes all

*dead people to live again, no one will be married. Instead, people will be like the angels in heaven. They do not marry.*

<sup>31</sup> But as for dead people becoming alive again, God said something about that. ◀I'm sure you have read it./Have you not read it?▶ [RHQ] *Long after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died, God said to Moses,*

<sup>32</sup> 'I am the God whom Abraham worships and the God whom Isaac worships and the God whom Jacob worships.' It is not dead people who worship God. It is living people who worship him. *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob died long before Moses lived, but God said that they were still worshipping him, so we know their spirits were still alive!"*

<sup>33</sup> When the crowds of people heard Jesus teach that, they were amazed.

*Jesus told his critics that the greatest commandments are to love God and to love others.*

*Matthew 22:34-40*

<sup>34</sup> But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had answered the Sadducees in such a way that the Sadducees could not *think of anything that they might say* to respond to him, the Pharisees gathered together to *plan what they would say to him. Then they approached him.*

<sup>35</sup> One of them was a man who had studied well the laws *that God gave Moses*. He wanted to see if Jesus *could answer his question well or if he would say something wrong*. He asked him,

<sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which commandment in the laws *that God gave Moses* is the most important?"

<sup>37</sup> Jesus *quoted the Scriptures as he replied*, “ ‘You must love the Lord your God with all [IDM] your ◀inner being/heart▶. *Show that you love him* in all that you desire, in all that you feel, and in all that you think.’

<sup>38</sup> That is the most important commandment in the laws that God gave Moses.

<sup>39</sup> The next most important commandment that everyone must surely obey is: ‘You must love the people you come in contact with as much as you love yourself.’

<sup>40</sup> These two commandments are the basis of every law that Moses wrote in the Scriptures and also of all that the prophets wrote.”

*Jesus showed that the Messiah must be greater than King David, and not just his descendant.*

*Matthew 22:41-46*

<sup>41</sup> While the Pharisees were still gathered together near Jesus, he asked them,

<sup>42</sup> “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose descendant is he?” They said to him, “He is the descendant of King David.”

<sup>43</sup> Jesus said to them, “*If the Messiah is King David’s descendant*, then ◀David should not have called him ‘Lord’ when David was saying *what the Holy Spirit prompted him to say*./Why did David call the Messiah ‘Lord’ when David was speaking *what the Holy Spirit prompted him to say*?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>44</sup> David wrote this in the Scriptures about the Messiah: ‘God said to my Lord, “Sit here beside me on my right, the place of greatest honor you

[MTY]. *Sit here* while I completely defeat your enemies [MTY].” ’

<sup>45</sup> So, since *King David* called *the Messiah* ‘my Lord’, ◀*the Messiah* cannot be *just someone* descended from David!/*how* can he be *only* the descendant of *King David*?▶ [RHQ] *He must be much greater than David!*”

<sup>46</sup> No one *who heard what Jesus said* was able to think of even one word to say to him *in response*. And after that, no one else ever dared to ask him another question *to try to trap him*.

## 23

*Jesus warned the people against the hypocritical behavior of the religious leaders.*

*Matthew 23:1-12*

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus said to the crowd and to us his disciples,

<sup>2</sup> “**Moses** was the *renowned* teacher who taught *the people the laws that God gave him* [MTY]. Now, the Pharisees and the men who teach our *Jewish* laws have made themselves the ones who interpret those laws [IDM].

<sup>3</sup> Consequently, you should do **whatever they tell you that you must do**. But do not do what they do, because they themselves do not do what they tell you *that you must do*.

<sup>4</sup> They *require you to obey many rules that are difficult to obey*. But **they themselves** do not *help anyone obey those rules*. It is as if they are tying up loads that are hard to carry and putting them on your shoulders [MET] *for you to carry*. But they **themselves** do not *desire to help anyone*

*obey those laws. They are like people who do not want to lift even the slightest load that they could lift* [MET]

<sup>5</sup> *with one finger. Whatever they do, they do it to be seen by other people {so that other people will see them doing that}. For example, they make extra wide the tiny boxes containing portions of Scripture that they wear on their arms. They enlarge the tassels on their robes, to make others think that they are pious.*

<sup>6</sup> *They want people to honor them. For example, at dinner parties they sit in the seats where the most important people sit. In the places of worship they want to sit in the seats where the most honored people sit.*

<sup>7</sup> *Also, they want people to greet them respectfully in the marketplaces and to honor them by calling them 'Teacher'.*

<sup>8</sup> *But you who are my disciples should not allow people to address you honorably as 'Rabbi', which means 'teacher'. I am the only one who is really your teacher, which means that you are all equal, like brothers and sisters, and none of you should act superior to another, as the Pharisees do.*

<sup>9</sup> *Do not honor anyone on earth by addressing him as 'Father', because God, your Father in heaven, is the only spiritual father of all of you.*

<sup>10</sup> *Do not allow people to call you 'Instructors', because I, the Messiah, am the one instructor who teaches all of you.*

<sup>11</sup> *In contrast, everyone among you who wants God to consider them to be important must serve*

others as servants do.

<sup>12</sup> God will humble those who exalt themselves. And he will exalt those who humble themselves.”

*Jesus warned the religious leaders about preventing people from letting God rule their lives.*

*Matthew 23:13-14*

<sup>13-14</sup> Then Jesus said to the religious leaders, “You men who teach the Jewish laws and you Pharisees are hypocrites! There will be terrible punishment for you, *because by teaching what is false, you prevent people [MTY/HYP] who are thinking about letting God rule their lives from doing that [MET].* What you are doing is like closing a gate [MET] so that people who are wanting to enter a city cannot go in. As for **you**, you do not let God rule your lives. Neither do you allow other people to let God rule their lives. What you do is like not going into a house yourselves, and not allowing others to enter it either [MET].”

*Jesus also warned the religious leaders about zealously encouraging others to believe what they teach.*

*Matthew 23:15*

<sup>15</sup> “You are hypocrites, you men who teach the Jewish laws and you Pharisees! Your punishment will be terrible, because you exert yourselves very much to get *even* one person to believe what you teach. For instance, you travel across seas and lands *to distant places* in order to do that. And *as a result*, when one person *believes what you teach*, you make that person much

more deserving to go to hell than you yourselves *deserve to.*"

*Jesus rebuked the religious leaders about their silly ideas about supporting their promises with oaths.*

*Matthew 23:16-22*

<sup>16</sup> "You Jewish leaders, your punishment will be terrible! You are *like people who are blind* [MET] who are trying to lead others. You say, '*In the case of those who promise to do something and then ask the Temple to affirm what they have promised, it means nothing if they do not do what they have promised. But if they ask the gold that is in the Temple to affirm what they have promised, they must do what they promised.*'

<sup>17</sup> You are fools, and you are *like people who are blind* [MET]! The gold *that is in the Temple* is important, but *the Temple* is even more important [RHQ], because it is the Temple that the gold is in that sets the gold apart for a special use for God.

<sup>18</sup> Also you say, '*In the case of those who promise to do something and then ask the altar to affirm what they have promised, it means nothing if they do not do what they have promised. But if they ask the gift that they have put on the altar to support what they have promised, they must do what they promised.*'

<sup>19</sup> You are *like people who are blind* [MET]. The gift *that is offered* on the altar is important, but the altar is even more important [RHQ] because it is the altar on which the offering is offered that sets it apart for a special use for God.

<sup>20</sup> So, those who promise to do something, and then ask the altar *to affirm what they have promised* are asking everything on the altar *to support what they promised*.

<sup>21</sup> Those who promise to do something, and then ask the Temple *to affirm what they promised*, are asking that God, to whom the Temple belongs, *will affirm what they have promised*.

<sup>22</sup> Those who promise to do something and then ask heaven *to affirm what they promised* are asking the throne of God and God, who sits on that throne, *to affirm what they promised*."

*Jesus also rebuked the religious leaders about paying attention to unimportant laws and at the same time ignoring important ones.*

*Matthew 23:23-24*

<sup>23</sup> "You men who teach the Jewish laws and you Pharisees, your punishment will be terrible! You are hypocrites because, *even though* you give to God a tenth of *the herbs you produce*, such as mint, dill, and cummin, you do not *obey God's laws* that are more important. *For example*, *you do not act* justly toward others, you do not act mercifully toward people, and you are not trustworthy. It is good to give *a tenth of your herbs* to God, but you should also *obey* these other *more important laws*.

<sup>24</sup> You leaders are like blind people who are trying to lead others. According to your laws you say that touching gnats and camels makes you unacceptable to God. What you are doing is like straining a gnat out of a jar of water so

*that you do not swallow it and thereby become unacceptable to God, and at the same time swallowing a camel with the water [MET]!"*

*Jesus also rebuked the religious leaders about being greedy and selfish.*

*Matthew 23:25-26*

<sup>25</sup> "You men who teach people the *Jewish* laws and you Pharisees, your punishment will be terrible! You are hypocrites! You are greedy and selfish, but you *make yourselves appear holy*. You are like cups and plates that have been cleaned on the outside, but on the inside *they are very filthy*.

<sup>26</sup> You blind Pharisees! First you must *stop being greedy and selfish*. Then you will be able to do what is righteous. That will be like cleaning the inside of a cup first. Then when you clean [MET] the outside of the cup, the cup will truly be clean."

*Jesus rebuked the religious leaders for being hypocrites and pretending to be righteous.*

*Matthew 23:27-28*

<sup>27</sup> "You men who teach the *Jewish* laws and you Pharisees, your punishment will be terrible! You are hypocrites! You are like tombs [SIM] that are painted white so that people can see them and avoid touching them. The outside surfaces are beautiful, but inside they are full of dead people's bones and filth.

<sup>28</sup> You are *like those tombs*. When people look at you, they think that you are righteous, but in

your ◀inner beings/hearts▶ you are hypocrites and you disobey God's commands."

*Jesus accused the religious leaders of being guilty of killing all the prophets.*

*Matthew 23:29-36*

<sup>29</sup> "You men who teach the *Jewish* laws and you Pharisees are hypocrites! Your punishment will be terrible! You rebuild the tombs of the *prophets whom others killed long ago*. You decorate the monuments *that honor* righteous people.

<sup>30</sup> You say, 'If we had *lived* when our ancestors [MET] *lived*, we would not have helped [MET] those who killed [MTY] the prophets.'

<sup>31</sup> Thus you recognize that you should honor the *prophets, but you disregard the word of God that other men whom God has sent teach you*. In that way you testify against yourselves that you are descendants and disciples [MET] of those who killed the prophets.

<sup>32</sup> **You** are as ready to murder people as [MET] your ancestors were!

<sup>33</sup> You people are so wicked You are as dangerous as poisonous snakes [DOU, MET]! ◀You foolishly think that you will escape being punished in hell!/Do you foolishly think that you will escape when God punishes wicked people in hell?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>34</sup> Take note that this is why I will send prophets, wise men, and other men who will teach you *my message*. You will kill some of them by nailing them to crosses, and you will kill some

in other ways. You will whip some of them in the places where you worship, and *you will* chase them from city to city.

<sup>35</sup> As a result, God will consider that you are guilty for killing [SYN] all the righteous *people*, including killing [MTY] *Adam's son* Abel, who was a righteous man [SYN], and Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, whom you *are guilty of* killing *in the holy place* between the Temple and the altar, and for killing *all the prophets* who lived between *the times that those two men lived*.

<sup>36</sup> Think about this: You people who have observed my ministry, it is you whom *God* will punish *for killing all those prophets!*"

*Jesus expressed his sorrow about what would happen to Jerusalem.*

*Matthew 23:37-39*

<sup>37</sup> "O *people of* Jerusalem [MTY, APO], you killed the prophets *who lived long ago*, and you killed others whom *God* sent to you. You killed them by throwing stones at them [DOU]! Many times I wanted to gather you together *to protect you*, like a hen gathers her young chicks under her wings [MET]. But you did not want *me to do that*.

<sup>38</sup> So listen to this: Your city [SYN] will soon become an uninhabited place.

<sup>39</sup> Keep this in mind: You will see me again only when I *return*, and you say *about me*, '*God is truly pleased with this man who comes with God's authority* [MTY].'

## 24

*Jesus told his disciples that Jerusalem would be destroyed.*

*Matthew 24:1-2*

<sup>1</sup> Jesus left the Temple courtyard. As he was walking along, we disciples came to him to ask him to note *how beautiful* the Temple buildings *were*.

<sup>2</sup> He said to us, “These buildings that you are looking at [RHQ] *are wonderful, but* I want to tell you *something about them. They will soon be completely destroyed* {Foreign invaders will completely destroy them}. Every stone in these buildings will be thrown down {they will throw down every stone in these buildings}. Not one stone will be left {They will not leave one stone} on top of another stone.”

*Jesus told his disciples about the distressing things that would happen before his return.*

*Matthew 24:3-14*

<sup>3</sup> Later, as Jesus was sitting alone on *the slope of Olive Tree Hill*, we disciples went to him and asked him, “When will this happen *to the buildings of the Temple?* Also, tell us *what will happen to indicate that you are about to come again, and to indicate that this world is ending?*”

<sup>4</sup> Jesus replied, “All that I will say is, be sure that no one deceives you *about what will happen*

<sup>5</sup> Many people will come and say ◀that I sent them/that they have my authority▶ [MTY]. They will say, ‘I am the Messiah’, and they will deceive many people.

<sup>6</sup> You will hear about wars *that are close* and wars that are far away, but do not let that trouble you. Keep in mind that *God has said that* those things must happen. But *when they happen*, it will not mean that the end *of the world* has come!

<sup>7</sup> *Groups in various* countries will fight each other, and *various* governments will *also fight* against each other. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.

<sup>8</sup> These things will happen first. Then there will be other things that *will happen before I return*. *What will happen will be like the first pains* of childbirth [MET].

<sup>9</sup> At that time *people who oppose you* will take you to *the authorities*, who will mistreat you and kill you. You will be hated by *people who live in* all nations [PRS] {*People who live in* all nations [PRS] will hate you} because *you believe in me* [MTY].

<sup>10</sup> Also, many *people* will stop believing *in me because of the way they will suffer*. They will betray each other and will hate each other.

<sup>11</sup> Many will come saying that they are prophets, but they will be lying, and they will deceive many people.

<sup>12</sup> Because there will be more and more *people* who will disobey *God's laws* [PRS], many *people* will no longer [MET] love *their fellow believers* [PRS].

<sup>13</sup> But *all* those who keep on *believing in me* to the end *of their lives* will be saved.

<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the good message about my ruling over people's lives will be preached in

every part of the world, in order that people of all ethnic groups may hear it. Then the end of the world will come.”

*Jesus told his disciples about the suffering that would come when Jerusalem was about to be destroyed.*

*Matthew 24:15-22*

<sup>15</sup> “But before the world ends, the disgusting person who will defile the holy Temple and cause people to abandon it will stand in the Temple. Daniel the prophet spoke and wrote about that long ago. May everyone who reads this pay attention to the following warning from me:

<sup>16</sup> When you see that happen in the Temple, those of you who are in Judea district must flee to the higher hills!

<sup>17</sup> Those who are outside their houses must not go back into their houses to get things before they flee.

<sup>18</sup> Those who are working in a field should not turn back to get their outer clothing before they flee.

<sup>19</sup> I feel very sorry for women who will be pregnant and women who will be nursing their babies in those days, because it will be very difficult for them to run away

<sup>20</sup> Pray that you will not have to flee ◀in the winter/in the rainy season▶ when it will be hard to travel. People who think that God never allows anyone to do any work on our day of rest will not help you as you flee, so pray also that you will not have to flee on such a day,

<sup>21</sup> because people will suffer very severely *when those things happen*. People have never suffered that severely since *God* created the world until now, and no one will ever *suffer like that again*.

<sup>22</sup> If *God* had not decided to shorten that time [MTY] *when people will suffer so much*, everyone [LIT] would die. But *he* has decided to shorten it because *he* is concerned about the people whom *he* has chosen."

*Jesus warned his disciples not to believe false reports about his return, because everyone will see him when he comes.*

*Matthew 24:23-28*

<sup>23-24</sup> "At that time people will appear *who will* falsely say that *they are* the Messiah or that *they are* prophets. They will perform many kinds ◀of miracles/of things that ordinary people cannot do▶, in order to deceive people. They will even try to see if it is possible to deceive *you people whom God has chosen*. So, at that time, if someone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or if someone says, 'Over there is the Messiah!' do not believe it!

<sup>25</sup> Do not forget that I have warned you about all this before *it happens*.

<sup>26</sup> So if someone says to you, 'Look, *the Messiah* is in the desolate area!' do not go there. *Likewise, if someone says to you, 'Look, he is in a secret room!'* do not believe *that person*,

<sup>27</sup> because just like lightning flashes from the east to the west *and people everywhere can see it*

[SIM], when *I*, the one who came from heaven, return again, *everyone will see me*.

<sup>28</sup> *When I return, it will be as obvious to everyone as the fact that* wherever you see vultures gathering, you know that there will be an animal carcass [MET] there. (OR, Just like the vultures gather together wherever there is an animal carcass, God will punish sinful people wherever they are.)"

*Jesus told his disciples what will happen at the time of his return.*

*Matthew 24:29-31*

<sup>29</sup> "Immediately after many people have suffered during those days, *the universe will become dark*. The sun will become dark. The moon will not shine. The stars will fall from the sky. And the powerful *objects* in the sky will be shaken. (OR, And the spiritual beings in space will be deposed.)

<sup>30</sup> After that, something *will be seen* {people will observe something} in the sky that indicates that *I*, the one who came from heaven, *am returning to the earth*. Then *unbelieving people* from all ethnic groups of the earth will *mourn because they will be afraid of God punishing them*. They will see *me*, the one who came from heaven, coming on the clouds with power and great glory *as I return to the earth*.

<sup>31</sup> I will send my angels *to the earth* from everywhere in the heavens. *They will be* blowing trumpets loudly. *Then* from throughout the whole earth [DOU] they will gather the people whom I have chosen."

*Jesus told his disciples how to know when the time of his return was near.*

*Matthew 24:32-35*

<sup>32</sup> “Now I want you to learn something from this parable about *how* fig trees grow. In this area, when the buds of a fig tree become tender and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near.

<sup>33</sup> Similarly, when you see all these things that I have just described happening, you will know that the time for me to return is very close [MET].

<sup>34</sup> Keep this in mind: All of these events will happen before all the people who have observed the things that I have done have died.

<sup>35</sup> You can be certain that these things that I have told you about will happen. You can be more certain of that than you can be certain that the earth and sky [LIT] will continue to exist.”

*Jesus told his disciples to be ready because they do not know the time of his return.*

*Matthew 24:36-44*

<sup>36</sup> “But neither I, nor any other person, nor any angel in heaven, knows either the day or the hour when the things that I have told you about will happen. Only God, my Father, knows.

<sup>37-39</sup> It will be like what happened when Noah lived. Until the flood came, the people did not know that anything bad would happen to them. Before the flood waters covered the earth, the people were eating and drinking as usual. Some men were marrying women and some parents were giving their daughters to men to marry them. They were doing all this until the day that

Noah *and his family* entered the big boat. And then the flood came and drowned all *those who were not in the boat*. Similarly, *the unbelieving people will not know when I, the one who came from heaven, will return, and they will not be expecting me*.

<sup>40</sup> When I return, I will not take all people up to heaven. I will take only those who trust in me. For example, two people will be in the fields. One of them will be taken {I will take one of them} up to heaven and the other person will be left {and I will leave the other person} here to be punished.

<sup>41</sup> Similarly, two women will be at the mill grinding grain. One of them will be taken up to heaven and the other will be left.

<sup>42</sup> So, because you do not know what day I, your Lord, will return to the earth, you need to be ready for me to return at any time.

<sup>43</sup> You know that if the owners of a house knew at what time in the night thieves would come, they would be awake and prevent the thieves from breaking into their houses. Similarly, I will come just like unexpectedly as a thief.

<sup>44</sup> So you need to be ready for my return, because I, the one who came from heaven, will return to the earth at a time when you do not expect me to come."

*Jesus told a parable to warn his disciples not to act wickedly, thinking that he would not return soon.*

*Matthew 24:45-51*

<sup>45</sup> "Think about what every faithful and wise servant is like [RHQ]. The house owner appoints

one servant to supervise the other servants. He tells him to give them food at the proper times. *Then he leaves on a long trip.*

<sup>46</sup> If that servant is doing that *work* when the house owner returns, *the house owner* will be very pleased with him.

<sup>47</sup> Think about this: The house owner will appoint *that one servant* to be the supervisor of all his possessions.

<sup>48</sup> But a wicked servant might say to himself, 'The owner *has been away* for a long time, *so he probably* will not return soon *and find out what I am doing.*'

<sup>49</sup> *So he* will begin to beat the other servants and eat and get drunk.

<sup>50</sup> *Then* the house owner will come back at a time when the servant does not expect him [DOU].

<sup>51</sup> He will punish that servant severely [HYP], (OR, cut that servant into two pieces) and he will put him where ◀the hypocrites/the ones who only pretended to be good▶ are put. In that place the people cry and grind their teeth *because they suffer very much.*"

## 25

*Jesus taught in a parable that his disciples should always be ready for his return.*

*Matthew 25:1-13*

<sup>1</sup> *Jesus continued by saying, "I will tell you something else about the time when I return from heaven as king [MET]. What will happen to many people who say that they know me will*

*be like what happened to ten virgins who took their lanterns and went to the place where they would meet a bridegroom and go to his wedding celebration.*

<sup>2</sup> Five of the virgins were foolish and five of them were wise.

<sup>3</sup> The *virgins* who were foolish took their lanterns, but they did not take any *extra olive oil for the lantern.*

<sup>4</sup> But the *virgins* who were wise took oil in their flasks as well as in their lanterns.

<sup>5</sup> The bridegroom was delayed, *and it became late at night.* So all the virgins became sleepy and fell asleep.

<sup>6</sup> In the middle of the night someone *woke them up by shouting, 'Hey! The bridegroom is arriving! Go outside and meet him!'*

<sup>7</sup> So all the virgins got up and trimmed their lantern wicks *so that they would burn properly.*

<sup>8</sup> The foolish virgins said to the wise ones, 'Give us some of your *olive oil*, because our lanterns are about to go out!'

<sup>9</sup> The wise virgins replied, '*No, because there might not be enough oil for our lanterns and for yours. Go to a store and buy some for yourselves!*'

<sup>10</sup> But while *the foolish virgins* were going to buy *some oil*, the bridegroom arrived. So the *wise virgins*, who were ready, went with the bridegroom to the wedding hall *where the bride was waiting.* Then the door was closed {someone closed the door *of that hall*}.

<sup>11</sup> Later, the rest of the virgins came *to the hall*

and they called *to the bridegroom*, 'Sir, open the door for us!'

<sup>12</sup> But he said *to them*, 'The truth is that I do not know you, so I *will not open the door for you!*' "

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus continued by saying, "So, in order that *this will not happen to you*, keep expecting that *I will return*, because you do not know when [MTY] *it will be.*"

*Jesus told a parable to teach his disciples about making good use of what God has given them.*

*Matthew 25:14-30*

<sup>14</sup> "When I return from heaven as king, I will deal with those who say that they have been serving me like a man who was about to go on a long journey dealt with his servants. He called them together and gave them each some of his wealth to invest and gain more money for him.

<sup>15</sup> He gave them money according to their ability to take care of it. For example, he gave one servant 5,000 dollars, he gave another servant 2,000 dollars, and he gave another servant 1,000 dollars. Then he left on his journey.

<sup>16</sup> The servant who had received 5,000 dollars went immediately and used that money to gain 5,000 dollars more.

<sup>17</sup> Similarly, the servant who had received 2,000 dollars gained two thousand dollars more.

<sup>18</sup> But the servant who had received one thousand dollars went and dug a hole in the ground and hid the money there to keep it safe.

<sup>19</sup> After a long time the servants' boss returned. He called them together to find out what they had done with his money.

<sup>20</sup> The servant who had received 5,000 dollars brought two *bags, each containing* 5,000 dollars. He said, 'Boss, you gave me 5,000 dollars to take care of. Look, I have gained 5,000 more!'

<sup>21</sup> His boss replied, '*You are a very good and faithful servant! You have done very well! You have faithfully handled a small amount of money,* so I will put you in charge of a lot of things. Come and be happy with me!'

<sup>22</sup> The servant who had *received* 2,000 dollars also came and said, 'Boss, you gave me 2,000 dollars to take care of. Look, I have gained 2,000 more!'

<sup>23</sup> His boss replied, '*You are a very good and faithful servant! You have done very well! You have faithfully handled a small amount of money,* so I will put you in charge of a lot of things. Come and be happy with me!'

<sup>24</sup> Then the servant who had received 1,000 dollars came. He said, 'Boss, *I was afraid of you.* I knew that you are a man who does not do foolish things with his money. *You even take from others money* that does not really belong to you, *like a farmer who harvests grain from another man's field* where he did not even plant *the seeds.*

<sup>25</sup> So because I was afraid *of what you would do to me if I did not make a profit from my business,* I went out and hid your 1,000 dollars in the ground *to keep it safe.* Here, this is *the money* that belongs to you!'

<sup>26</sup> His boss replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! ◀You knew that I take *from others money* that does not really belong to me, *like a farmer who*

harvests *grain from another man's field* where I did not even plant *the seeds!*/Did you not know that I *take from others money that does not really belong to me, like a farmer who harvests grain from another man's field* where I did not even plant *the seeds?*► [RHQ]

<sup>27</sup> So then, you should have put my money *on deposit* in a bank, so that when I returned I would get it back with the interest *it earned!*'

<sup>28</sup> *Then the boss said to his other servants, 'Take the 1,000 dollars from him, and give it to the servant who has the 10,000 dollars!*

<sup>29</sup> To those who *use well what* they have received, God will give more, and they will have plenty. But from those who *do not use well what they have received*, even what they *already* have will be taken away.

<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where he will be *with those who are* wailing and gnashing their teeth *because they are in much pain.'* "

*Jesus told a parable about how he will judge between those who have shown kindness to others and those who have not.*

*Matthew 25:31-46*

<sup>31</sup> "When I, the one who came from heaven, come again, I will be very radiant and *bring* all my angels with me. Then I will sit as a king on my wonderful throne *to judge people.*

<sup>32</sup> People from all nations [MTY] will be gathered in front of me {*The angels* will gather in front of me people from all nations}. Then I will

separate them, one from another, as a shepherd separates his sheep from his goats.

<sup>33</sup> I will put *the righteous people* on my right and *the unrighteous ones* on my left, as a shepherd puts sheep on one side and goats on the other side.

<sup>34</sup> Then I will say to those on my right, 'You people who have been blessed by my Father {whom my Father has blessed}, come! From the time he created the world, he has been preparing to allow you to *receive the blessings that he will give to all those* who let him rule their lives. *Now is the time for you to receive those blessings*

<sup>35</sup> *They belong to you*, because you gave me something to eat when I was hungry. (OR, *They belong to you*. It is as though you gave me something to eat when I was hungry.) You gave me something to drink when I was thirsty. When I was a stranger *in your town*, you invited me to stay in your houses.

<sup>36</sup> When I needed clothes [MTY], you gave me some. When I was sick, you took care of me. When I was in prison, you came to visit me.'

<sup>37</sup> Then the righteous people will reply, 'Lord, when were you hungry and we saw you and gave you something to eat? When were you thirsty and we gave you something to drink?

<sup>38</sup> When were you a stranger *in our town* and we invited you *to stay in our houses*? When did you need clothes and we gave you some?

<sup>39</sup> When were you sick or in prison and we went to visit you?' *We do not remember doing any of these things for you.*

<sup>40</sup> I will reply, 'The truth is that whatever you did for any one of your fellow believers, even an unimportant one, *it was as though* you did it for me.'

<sup>41</sup> Then I will say to those on my left, 'You people who have been cursed *by God* {whom God has cursed}, leave me! Go into the eternal fire that God has prepared for ◀the devil/Satan▶ and his angels!

<sup>42</sup> *It is right for you to go there*, because you did not give me anything to eat when I was hungry. You did not give me anything to drink when I was thirsty.

<sup>43</sup> You did not invite me into *your homes* when I was a stranger *in your town*. You did not give me any clothes when I needed them [MTY]. You did not take care of me when I was sick or in prison.'

<sup>44</sup> They will answer, 'Lord, when were you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and we did not help you?'

<sup>45</sup> I will reply, 'The truth is that whenever you did not do anything to help any one of *my people*, *even if they were* unimportant people, *it was as though* you did not do anything *to help* me.'

<sup>46</sup> Then those people *on my left* will go away to the place where *they* will be punished {God will punish them} eternally, but the righteous people will go to where they will live forever *with God*."

## 26

*Jesus told his disciples of his coming arrest.*

*The Jewish leaders planned how to seize Jesus.*

*Matthew 26:1-5*

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus had finished saying all those things, he said to us disciples,

<sup>2</sup> “You know that two days from now we will celebrate the Passover festival. At that time I, the one who came from heaven, will be handed over to {they will put me, the one who came from heaven, into the hands of} those who will nail me to a cross.”

<sup>3</sup> At the same time the chief priests and the Jewish elders gathered in the home of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas.

<sup>4</sup> There they plotted how they could seize Jesus in some deceitful way so that they could have him executed.

<sup>5</sup> But they said, “We must not do it during the Passover festival, because if we do it then, the people might riot.”

*Jesus commended a woman for showing her appreciation of him.*

*Matthew 26:6-13*

<sup>6</sup> While Jesus and we were in Bethany village in the home of Simon, whom Jesus had healed of leprosy,

<sup>7</sup> a woman came to him. She was carrying a stone jar containing very expensive perfume. To show how much she appreciated Jesus, she poured the perfume on his head as he was eating.

<sup>8</sup> When we disciples saw that, some of us were angry. One of us said, “◀It is terrible that this perfume was wasted!/Why was this perfume wasted?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>9</sup> We could have sold it and gotten a lot of money for it! Then the money could have been given {*we could have given the money*} to poor people.”

<sup>10</sup> Jesus knew *what we were saying*. So he said to us, “◀You should not be bothering this woman!/Why are you bothering this woman?▶ [RHQ] She has done a beautiful thing to me.

<sup>11</sup> *Keep in mind that you will always have poor people among you, so you can help them whenever you want to. But I will not always be with you, so it is good for her to show now that she appreciates me!*

<sup>12</sup> When she poured this perfume on my body, *it was as if she knew that I am going to die soon. And it is as if she* has anointed my body for being buried.

<sup>13</sup> I will tell you this: Wherever this good message *about me* is preached {people preach this good message about me} throughout the world, those who preach it will tell what this woman has done, *and as a result* people will *always* remember her.”

*Judas agreed to betray Jesus for 30 silver coins.  
Matthew 26:14-16*

<sup>14</sup> Then Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth Town), *even though he was one of us twelve disciples*, went to the chief priests.

<sup>15</sup> He asked them, “If I enable you to seize *Jesus*, how much *money* are you willing to give me?” They *agreed to give him* 30 silver coins. So they counted out the coins and *gave them* to him.

<sup>16</sup> From that time Judas watched for an opportunity to enable them to seize *Jesus*.

*Two disciples prepared the Passover meal. During the meal, Jesus said that Judas would betray him.*

*Matthew 26:17-25*

<sup>17</sup> On the first day of the week-long festival ◀when we Jews ate bread which had no yeast in it/of Unleavened Bread▶, we disciples went to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to prepare *the meal* for the Passover celebration so that we can eat it with you?"

<sup>18</sup> In reply, he gave instructions to two disciples about where they should go. He said to them, "Go into the city to a man with whom I have previously arranged this. Tell him that the teacher says, 'The time [MTY] that I told you about is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover meal with my disciples at your house, and I have sent these two to prepare the meal.' "

<sup>19</sup> So the two disciples did as Jesus told them. They went and prepared the Passover meal in that man's house.

<sup>20</sup> When it was evening, Jesus was eating the meal with us twelve disciples.

<sup>21</sup> While we were eating, he said to us, "Listen carefully to this: One of you is going to enable my enemies to seize me."

<sup>22</sup> We were very sad. We began to say to him, one after the other, "Lord, ◀it is surely not I/I'm not the one, am I?▶ [RHQ]"

<sup>23</sup> He replied, “The one who will enable my enemies to seize me is one of you who is dipping bread [MTY] into *the sauce in* the dish along with me.

<sup>24</sup> *It is certain that* I, the one who came from heaven, will *die*, because that is what has been written {*the prophets* have written} about me. But there will be terrible punishment for the man who enables *my enemies* to seize me! It would be better for that man if he had never been born!”

<sup>25</sup> Then Judas, the one who was going to betray him, said, “Teacher, ◀surely it is not I!/I’m not the one, am I?▶ [RHQ]” Jesus replied, “Yes, you are the one.”

*Jesus gave the disciples the bread and wine to symbolize his coming death.*

*Matthew 26:26-30*

<sup>26</sup> While we were eating, Jesus took *a small loaf* of bread and thanked God for it. He broke it *into pieces* and gave it to *us* disciples, and said, “Take this *bread and* eat it. *It represents* my body.”

<sup>27</sup> Later he took a cup of *wine* and thanked *God* for it. Then he gave it to us, saying, “Drink some *of the wine in this cup*, all of you.

<sup>28</sup> *The wine in* this cup *represents* my blood, which will soon flow *from my body*. *With my blood I will sign* the new agreement *that God is making* to forgive the sins of many *people*.

<sup>29</sup> Note this carefully: I will not drink wine in this way any more until the time when I drink it with you with a new *meaning*. *That will happen*

when my Father *enables me to begin* to rule as king.”

<sup>30</sup> After we sang a hymn, we started out towards Olive Tree Hill.

*Jesus prophesied that Peter would deny three times that he knew Jesus.*

*Matthew 26:31-35*

<sup>31</sup> On the way, Jesus told us, “This night all of you will desert me because of *what will happen to me! This is certain to happen* because *these words that God said* are written in the Scriptures: ‘I will *cause* the shepherd to be killed, and *all* the sheep will be scattered {scatter}.’”

<sup>32</sup> But after I have *died and* become alive again, I will go ahead of you to Galilee *district and meet you there.*”

<sup>33</sup> Peter replied, “Perhaps all *the other disciples* will desert you *when they see what happens to you*, but I *certainly* will never leave you!”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus replied to him, “The truth is that this very night, before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me!”

<sup>35</sup> Peter said to him, “Even if they kill me *while I am defending you*, I will never say that I do not know you!” All *the rest of us* disciples also said the same *thing*.

*While the disciples slept, Jesus prayed that God would spare him from the coming suffering.*

*Matthew 26:36-46*

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus went with us to a place that is called {that people call} Gethsemane. There he

said to *most of* us, "Stay here while I go over there and pray."

<sup>37</sup> He took Peter, James, and John with him. He became extremely distressed.

<sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, "I [SYN] am very sorrowful, so much so that I *feel as if I were* about to die! Remain here and stay awake with me!"

<sup>39</sup> After going a little further, he threw himself face down *on the ground*. He prayed, "My Father, if it is possible [MTY], do not make me have to endure the suffering *that is coming* now. But do not do as I want. Instead, do as you want!"

<sup>40</sup> Then he returned to the *three* disciples and saw that they were sleeping. He *woke* Peter and said to him, "◀I am disappointed that you *men fell asleep* and were not able to stay awake with me for just a short time!/Why were you men not able to stay awake with me for just one hour?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>41</sup> You must keep alert and pray so that you can resist when you are tempted {something tempts you}. You want *to do what I tell you*, but you [SYN] are not strong enough *to actually do it*."

<sup>42</sup> He went away a second time. He prayed, "My Father, if it is necessary for me to suffer [LIT], may what you want happen!"

<sup>43</sup> When he returned to the *three disciples*, he saw that they were asleep *again*. They could not keep their eyes open [IDM].

<sup>44</sup> So he left them and went away again. He prayed the third time, saying the same thing *that he had prayed before*.

<sup>45</sup> Then he returned to us disciples. He *woke up and* said to us, “◀I am disappointed that you are still sleeping and resting!/Why are you still sleeping and resting?▶ [RHQ] *Look* Someone is about to enable sinful *men* to seize *me*, the one who came from heaven!

<sup>46</sup> Get up! Let’s go *to meet them* Here comes the one who is enabling them to seize me!”

*After Judas enabled men to seize Jesus, Jesus ridiculed them, but the disciples fled.*

*Matthew 26:47-56*

<sup>47</sup> While *Jesus* was still speaking, *Judas arrived*. Even though he was one of us twelve disciples, he came *to enable Jesus’ enemies to seize him*. A large crowd carrying swords and clubs was with him. They had been sent by the chief priests and elders {the chief priests and *Jewish* elders had sent them}.

<sup>48</sup> Judas had *previously* arranged to give them a signal, saying, “The man whom I will kiss is the one *you want*. Seize him!”

<sup>49</sup> He immediately went to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Teacher!” Then he kissed Jesus *on the neck/cheek*.

<sup>50</sup> Jesus replied, “Friend, is it *to kiss me* that you are here?” (OR, “Do what you have come for!”) Then *the men who came with Judas* stepped forward and seized Jesus.

<sup>51</sup> Suddenly, one of the men who was with Jesus pulled his sword out *of its sheath*. He struck the servant of the high priest *to kill him, but only* cut off his ear.

<sup>52</sup> Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its sheath! All those who try to kill others with a sword will themselves be killed with a sword!

<sup>53</sup> Do you think that [RHQ] if I asked my Father, he would not immediately send more than ◀twelve armies of/72,000▶ angels to help me?

<sup>54</sup> *But if I did that, what the prophets have written in the Scriptures about what will happen to the Messiah would not be fulfilled {happen} [RHQ]."*

<sup>55</sup> At that time Jesus said to the crowd *that was seizing him*, "◀It is ridiculous that you have come *here* to seize me with swords and clubs, as if I were a bandit!/Have you come here to seize me with swords and clubs, as if I were a bandit?▶ [RHQ] Day after day I sat in the Temple courtyard, teaching *the people*. Why did you not arrest me *then*?

<sup>56</sup> But all this is happening to fulfill what the prophets *have written in the Scriptures about me*." Then all of us disciples deserted Jesus and ran away.

*Jesus was put on trial before the Jewish Council.*

*Matthew 26:57-68*

<sup>57</sup> The men who had seized Jesus took him *to the house where Caiaphas, the high priest, lived*. The men who taught the *Jewish* laws and the *Jewish* elders had already gathered *there*.

<sup>58</sup> Peter followed *Jesus* at a distance. He came to the high priest's courtyard. He entered *the*

*courtyard* and sat down with the guards to see what would happen.

<sup>59</sup> The chief priests and the rest of the *Jewish* Council were trying to find people who would tell lies about Jesus so that they could *convince the Roman authorities* to execute him.

<sup>60</sup> But even though many people spoke lies about him, they did not find anyone *who said anything that was useful*. Finally two men came forward

<sup>61</sup> and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy God's Temple and to rebuild it within three days.' "

<sup>62</sup> Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to reply? What *do you say about* these things that they are saying to *accuse* you?"

<sup>63</sup> But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I command you to tell us *the truth*, knowing that the all-powerful God is *listening to you*: Are you the Messiah, ◀the Son of God/the man who is also God▶?"

<sup>64</sup> Jesus replied, "Yes, *it is as* you say. But I will also say this to all of you: Some day you will see *me*, the one who came from heaven, sitting beside [MTY] Almighty *God*, and ruling. You will also see me coming on the clouds *from* heaven!"

<sup>65</sup> Then the high priest tore his outer garment. *That was the custom to show that he was shocked to hear Jesus say that he was equal to God*. Then he said, "This man has insulted God! He claims to be equal with God! ◀We certainly do not need anyone else to testify *against this man*!/Why

should we seek any more people who will testify *against this man*?► [RHQ] You heard what he said!

<sup>66</sup> What have you decided?" *The Jewish leaders* replied, "According to our laws, he is guilty and deserves to be executed!"

<sup>67</sup> Then *some of them* spat in his face. *Others* struck him with their fists. *Others, after they blindfolded him,* slapped him

<sup>68</sup> and said, "Since you claim that [IRO] you are the Messiah, tell us who hit you!"

*Peter denied three times that he knew Jesus.*

*Matthew 26:69-75*

<sup>69</sup> Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came up to him *and looked at him*. She said, "You also were with Jesus, *that man from Galilee district!*"

<sup>70</sup> But while everyone there was listening, he denied it. He said, "I do not know what you are talking about!"

<sup>71</sup> Then he went out to the gateway of the courtyard. Another servant girl saw him and said to the people who were standing nearby, "This man was with Jesus, *the man from Nazareth.*"

<sup>72</sup> But *Peter* again denied it. He said, "May God punish me *if I am lying!* I tell you, I do not even know that man!"

<sup>73</sup> After a little while, one of the people who were standing there approached Peter and said to him, "It is certain that you are one of those *who were with that man*. We can tell from your accent that you *are from Galilee.*"

<sup>74</sup> Then Peter began to proclaim loudly that God should curse him *if he was lying*. He asked God in heaven to witness *that he was telling the truth* and said, "I do not know that man!" Immediately a rooster crowed.

<sup>75</sup> Then Peter remembered the words that Jesus had spoken *to him*, "Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me." And Peter went *out of the courtyard*, crying because he was very sad *about what he had done*.

## 27

*The Jewish religious leaders took Jesus to the Roman governor.*

*Matthew 27:1-2*

<sup>1</sup> Very early the next morning all the chief priests and Jewish elders decided how *to arrange for the Romans* to execute Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> They tied his hands and took him to Pilate, the *Roman* governor.

*After Judas returned the money and hanged himself, the Jewish leaders bought a field with the money, in fulfillment of prophecy.*

*Matthew 27:3-10*

<sup>3</sup> When Judas, the one who had ◀betrayed/enabled Jesus' enemies to seize▶ him, realized that they had decided to have Jesus executed, he was very sorry *about what he had done*. He took the 30 coins back to the chief priests and elders.

<sup>4</sup> He said, "I have sinned. I have ◀betrayed/enabled you to seize▶ a man who ◀is innocent/has not done anything wrong▶." They replied,

“◀That means nothing to us!/What does that mean to us?▶ [RHQ] That is your problem!”

<sup>5</sup> So Judas *took* the money *and* threw it inside the Temple. Then he went away and hanged himself.

<sup>6</sup> *Later* the high priests *found* the coins. They picked them up and said, “This is money that we paid *to have a man killed* [MTY], and our law does not allow *such money* to be put {us to put *such money*} into the *Temple treasury*.”

<sup>7</sup> So they decided to use that money to buy the field where clay was dug for making pots {men dug ground for making pots}. *They made that field* a place where they buried strangers *who died in Jerusalem*.

<sup>8</sup> That is why that place is still called {why they still call that place} ‘The field of blood’.

<sup>9</sup> *By buying that field*, they fulfilled these words that the prophet Jeremiah wrote *long ago*:

They took the 30 silver coins; That was what the leaders of Israel decided *that he was worth*;

<sup>10</sup> and with that money they bought the field where clay was dug for potters. They did that as the Lord had commanded me.

*Jesus was put on trial before the governor.*

*Matthew 27:11-26*

<sup>11</sup> Jesus stood in front of *Pilate*, the governor. The governor asked Jesus, “Do you *claim to be* the king of the Jews?” Jesus replied, “*It is as you have just said.*”

<sup>12</sup> When he was accused by the chief priests and elders {When the chief priests and elders

accused him} about various things, he did not answer.

<sup>13</sup> So Pilate said to him, "You hear how many things they are saying to accuse you; *are you not going to reply?*"

<sup>14</sup> But *even though he was not guilty*, Jesus did not say anything. He did not reply to any of the things about which they were accusing him. As a result, the governor was very surprised.

<sup>15</sup> It was the governor's custom *each year* during the *Passover* celebration to release *one person who was in prison*. He released whichever prisoner the people wanted.

<sup>16</sup> At that time there was *in Jerusalem* a well-known prisoner whose name was Barabbas.

<sup>17</sup> So when the crowd gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which *prisoner* would you like me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus, whom *some of you* claim to be the Messiah?"

<sup>18</sup> *He asked that question* because he realized that the chief priests *wanted to have Jesus executed*. They had brought Jesus to him *only* because they were jealous of Jesus. *And Pilate thought that the crowd would prefer that he release Jesus*.

<sup>19</sup> While Pilate was sitting on the platform *where he made judicial decisions*, his wife sent him *this message*: "Early this morning I had a bad dream because of that man. So do not condemn that righteous man!"

<sup>20</sup> But the chief priests and elders persuaded the crowd to ask *Pilate to release Barabbas*, and

to *order* that Jesus be executed {that *his soldiers* execute Jesus}.

<sup>21</sup> So when the governor asked them, "Which of the two men do you want me to release for you?" They replied, "Barabbas!"

<sup>22</sup> Pilate, *very astonished*, asked, "So what shall I do with Jesus who *some of you* say is the Messiah?" They all answered, "*Command that he be crucified!* {*Command your soldiers* ◀to crucify him/to nail him to a cross▶}!"

<sup>23</sup> Pilate replied, "Why? What crime has he committed?" But they shouted even louder, "*Have him crucified* {*Command that your soldiers crucify him*}!"

<sup>24</sup> Pilate realized that he was accomplishing nothing. He saw that instead, the people were starting to riot. So he took *a basin of water* and washed his hands as the crowd was watching. He said, "*By washing my hands I am showing you that if this man dies [MTY], it is your fault, not mine!*"

<sup>25</sup> And all the people answered, "The guilt for causing him to die [MTY] will be on us, and it will be on our children, too!"

<sup>26</sup> Then he *ordered the soldiers to* release Barabbas for them. But he *ordered that his soldiers* flog Jesus. And then he turned Jesus over to the soldiers for them ◀to nail Jesus to a cross/to crucify him▶.

*The soldiers made fun of Jesus before taking him to be crucified.*

*Matthew 27:27-31*

<sup>27</sup> Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the government headquarters. The whole ◀cohort/group of soldiers▶ gathered around him.

<sup>28</sup> They pulled off *his clothes*, and *pretending he was a king*, they put a purple robe on him.

<sup>29</sup> They *took some branches with thorns* and wove them to make a crown and put it on his head. They put in his right hand a reed *like a staff that a king would hold*. Then they knelt in front of him and made fun of him, saying, "Hooray for the king of the Jews [IRO]!"

<sup>30</sup> They kept spitting on him. They took the staff and kept striking him on the head with it.

<sup>31</sup> When they had finished ridiculing him, they pulled off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to *the place where they would nail him to a cross*.

*Jesus was crucified, along with two bandits.*

*Matthew 27:32-44*

<sup>32</sup> *After Jesus carried his cross* a short distance, the soldiers saw a man named Simon, *who was from Cyrene city*. They forced him to carry the cross for Jesus.

<sup>33</sup> They came to a place called Golgotha. That name means 'the place *like a skull*'.

<sup>34</sup> When *they got there*, they mixed with wine something that tasted very bitter. They gave it to Jesus to drink *so that he would not feel so much pain when they nailed him on the cross*. But when he tasted it, he refused to drink it. *Some soldiers took his clothes*.

<sup>35</sup> Then they nailed him to the cross. Afterwards, they divided his clothes among themselves by gambling with something like dice *to decide which piece of clothing each one would get.*

<sup>36</sup> Then the soldiers sat down there to guard him, *to prevent anyone from trying to rescue him.*

<sup>37</sup> They fastened *to the cross* above Jesus' head a sign on which had been {they had} written why they were nailing him to the cross. *But all* it said was, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews'.

<sup>38</sup> Two bandits were also nailed {They also nailed two bandits} on crosses. One was nailed to a cross on the right side *of Jesus* and one to a cross on the left side.

<sup>39</sup> The people who were passing by insulted him by shaking their heads *as if he were an evil man.*

<sup>40</sup> They said, "You said you would destroy the Temple, and then you would build it again within three days! *So if you could do that, you should be able to save yourself!* If you are the man who is also God (OR, If you are the Son of God), come down from the cross!"

<sup>41</sup> Similarly, the chief priests, the men who taught the Jewish laws and the elders made fun of him. *Various ones of them* said things like,

<sup>42</sup> "He claims that he saved others [IRO] *from their sicknesses*, but he cannot help himself!" "He says that he is [IRO] the King of Israel. So he should come down from the cross. Then we would believe him!"

<sup>43</sup> "He says that he trusts in God, and that he is the man who is also God. So if God is pleased

with him, God should rescue him now!”

<sup>44</sup> And the *two* bandits who had been crucified with him also insulted him, saying similar things.

*When Jesus died at about three o'clock, several unusual events occurred.*

*Matthew 27:45-56*

<sup>45</sup> At noon it became dark over the whole land. *It stayed dark* until three o'clock in the afternoon.

<sup>46</sup> At about three o'clock Jesus shouted loudly, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” That means, ‘My God, my God, why have you deserted me?’

<sup>47</sup> When some of the people standing there heard *the word ‘Eli’*, *misunderstanding it*, they said, “He is calling for *the prophet* Elijah!”

<sup>48</sup> Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with sour wine. Then he put the sponge on *the tip of* a reed and *held it up in order that Jesus could suck out the wine that was in it*.

<sup>49</sup> But the other *people there* said, “Wait! Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him!”

<sup>50</sup> Then after Jesus shouted out loudly again, he died, giving his spirit over *to God*.

<sup>51</sup> At that moment the *heavy thick* curtain *that closed off the most holy place* in the Temple split into two pieces from top to bottom. *That signified that ordinary people could now go into the presence of God*. The earth shook, and *some large rocks* split open.

<sup>52</sup> *Some* tombs opened up, and the bodies of many godly people who had died became alive again.

<sup>53</sup> They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus became alive again, they went into Jerusalem and appeared to many people *there*.

<sup>54</sup> The officer who supervised the soldiers *who nailed Jesus to the cross was standing nearby*. His soldiers who had been on guard *so that no one would rescue Jesus were also there*. When they *felt* the earthquake and saw all the *other* things that happened, they were terrified. They exclaimed, "Truly he was both man and God! (OR, a Son of God)."

<sup>55</sup> Many women were there, watching from a distance. They were women who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee *district* in order to provide the things he needed.

<sup>56</sup> Among these women were Mary from Magdala *town*, *another* Mary who was the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of James and John.

*Jesus was buried.*

*Matthew 27:57-61*

<sup>57</sup> When it was *almost* evening, a rich man named Joseph came *there*. He was from Arimathea *town*. He also was a disciple of Jesus.

<sup>58</sup> He then went to Pilate and asked Pilate to *allow him to take the body of Jesus and bury it*. Pilate ordered that *he* be allowed to {*his soldiers let Joseph*} *take the body*.

<sup>59</sup> So Joseph *and others* took the body and wrapped it in a clean white cloth.

<sup>60</sup> Then they placed it in Joseph's own new tomb that had been dug out of the rock *cliff*. They

rolled a huge *circular flat* stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. Then they left.

<sup>61</sup> Mary from Magdala and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb, *watching*.

*The religious leaders arranged for Jesus' tomb to be sealed and guarded.*

*Matthew 27:62-66*

<sup>62</sup> The next day was Saturday, the Jewish day of rest. The chief priests and *some of* the Pharisees went to Pilate.

<sup>63</sup> They said, "Sir, we remember that while that deceiver was still alive, he said, 'Three days after I *die* I will become alive again.'

<sup>64</sup> So we ask you to order that the tomb be guarded {that *soldiers* guard the tomb} for three days. If you do not do that, his disciples may come and steal the body. Then they will tell people that he has risen from the dead. If they deceive *people by saying that*, it will be worse than the way he deceived people before *by saying that he was the Messiah*."

<sup>65</sup> Pilate replied, "You *can* take some soldiers. Go to the tomb and make it as secure as you know how."

<sup>66</sup> So they went and made the tomb secure by *fastening a cord from the stone that was in front of the entrance to the rock cliff on each side* and sealing it. They also *left some soldiers there to guard the tomb*.

## 28

*After an angel appeared to several women and*

*showed them the tomb was empty, Jesus appeared to them.*

*Matthew 28:1-10*

<sup>1</sup> After ◀the Sabbath/the Jewish day of rest▶ ended, on Sunday morning at dawn, Mary from Magdala and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

<sup>2</sup> Suddenly there was a strong earthquake. *At the same time* an angel from God came down from heaven. He *went to the tomb and* rolled the stone away *from the entrance so that everyone could see that the tomb was empty*. Then he sat on the stone.

<sup>3</sup> His appearance was *as bright* [SIM] as lightning, and his clothes were as white as snow.

<sup>4</sup> The guards shook because they were very afraid. Then they became *completely motionless*, as though they were dead.

<sup>5</sup> The angel said to the two women, "You should not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was {whom they} ◀nailed to a cross/crucified▶.

<sup>6</sup> He is not here! *God has* ◀caused him to be alive again/raised him *from the dead*▶, just like *Jesus told you would happen!* Come and see the place where his body lay!

<sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead! He will go ahead of you to Galilee district. You will see him there.' *Pay attention to what I have told you!"*

<sup>8</sup> So the women left the tomb quickly. They were afraid, but they were *also* very joyful. They ran to tell us disciples *what had happened*.

<sup>9</sup> Suddenly, *as they were running*, Jesus appeared to them. He said, "Greetings!" The women came close to him. They knelt down and clasped his feet and worshipped him.

<sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid! Go and tell ◀all my disciples/all those who have been accompanying me▶ that they should go to Galilee. They will see me there."

*What the guards were told to tell people about why Jesus' body was gone.*

*Matthew 28:11-15*

<sup>11</sup> While the women were going, some of the soldiers who had been guarding *the tomb* went into the city. They reported to the chief priests everything that had happened.

<sup>12</sup> So the chief priests and Jewish elders met together. They made a plan *to explain why the tomb was empty*. They gave the soldiers a lot of money *as a bribe*.

<sup>13</sup> They said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came during the night and stole his *body* while we were sleeping.'

<sup>14</sup> If the governor hears [MTY] about this, we ourselves will make sure that he does not get angry *and punish you*. So you will not have to worry."

<sup>15</sup> So the soldiers took the money and did as they were told {as *the chief priests and elders* told them}. And this story has been told {People have told this story} among the Jews to the very day *that I am writing* this.

*Jesus appeared to the apostles in Galilee and gave them final instructions.*

*Matthew 28:16-20*

<sup>16</sup> *Later we eleven disciples went to Galilee district. We went to the mountain where Jesus had told us to go.*

<sup>17</sup> *We saw him there and worshipped him. But some of us doubted that it was really Jesus, and that he had become alive again.*

<sup>18</sup> *Then Jesus came close to us and said, "My Father has given me all authority over everything and everyone in heaven and on earth.*

<sup>19</sup> *So go, and using my authority, teach my message to people of all ethnic groups so that they may become my disciples. Baptize them to be under the authority of [MTY] my Father, and of me, his Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

<sup>20</sup> *Teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember that by the Spirit I will be with you always, until the end of this age."*

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