

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

MATTHEW

The Ancestry of Christ (1:1-17)

1 This is a record of the ancestry of Jesus Christ, the descendant of David and Abraham. ²⁻⁶In total, there were fourteen generations from Abraham until the time of David: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and his brothers Perez and Zerah whose mother was Tamar, Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salmon, Boaz whose mother was Rahab, Obed – Ruth’s son, and Jesse the father of king David.

⁷⁻¹¹There were a further fourteen generations between the time of David until the exile in Babylon: David, Solomon whose mother was Bathsheba, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon the father of Jeconiah and his brothers during the Babylonian exile.

¹²⁻¹⁷And there were a further fourteen generations from the exile to the coming of the Christ, the Messiah, God’s Son: Jeconiah, Shealtiel, Zerubbabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor, Zadok, Akim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob the father of Joseph who was the husband of Mary, to whom Jesus the Christ was born.

Joseph’s dream (1:18-25)

¹⁸Now this is how the birth of Jesus took place: His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they married they had no sexual union; Mary became pregnant through the activity of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹Being a righteous man, Joseph did not want Mary to be disgraced publicly, so he thought about releasing her quietly from her commitment to him.

²⁰After thinking about this Joseph had a dream in which an angel from the Lord appeared to him and said: “Joseph, son of David, there is nothing for you to fear. Take Mary home as your wife because she has conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit.

²¹She will have a Son, whom you are to call Jesus, because He will save the people from their sins.”

²²⁻²³All this happened to fulfil what the Lord had spoken prophetically: “The virgin will become pregnant and will bear a Son who will be called Immanuel, meaning, ‘God is with us.’”

²⁴When Joseph awoke he obeyed what the Lord’s angel had told him to do and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he had no sexual union with her before she gave birth to her Son. And Joseph named Him Jesus.

Escape from Herod (2:1-23)

2 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the time of King Herod. Wise men came to Jerusalem from the east asking: ²“Where has the King of the Jews been born? We followed a star from the east and have come to worship Him.”

³This disturbed King Herod and those in authority in Jerusalem. ⁴So Herod called together the chief priests and teachers of the law, asking them where the Messiah, the Christ, was to be born. ⁵⁻⁶“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they told him, “for the prophets predicted, ‘You Bethlehem in the land of Judah are not the least in importance among the places of Judah; for from you will come a ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod contacted the wise men secretly to find out when exactly the star had appeared to them. ⁸He then sent them to Bethlehem with these instructions: “Go and search carefully for the child. When you find Him, report to me so that I also may come and worship Him.”

⁹They went as the king ordered, following the star they had seen in the east until it reached the place where the child lay. ¹⁰They were overjoyed to have the star to guide them.

¹¹When they entered the house they saw the Child with Mary, His mother; and they bowed before Him in worship. Then they presented the gifts they had brought – gold, incense and myrrh. ¹²However, they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, and so they made their way back to their own country by another route.

¹³After their departure, one of the Lord’s angels appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying: “Go, escape immediately to Egypt taking the Child and His mother with you. Stay there until I tell you it is safe to return, for Herod will search for the Child with the intention of killing Him.”

1:22-23 *Isaiah 7:14*
2:5-6 *Micah 5:2*

¹⁴When he awoke, Joseph, the Child and Mary left for Egypt during the night. ¹⁵They stayed there until Herod's death, fulfilling what was predicted by the prophet: "I called My Son out of Egypt."

¹⁶Herod was furious when he realised he had been outsmarted by the wise men and ordered that all boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or less were to be killed, estimating the time from the information he received from the wise men.

¹⁷⁻¹⁸And so what the prophet Jeremiah wrote was fulfilled, 'In Ramah a sound of weeping and great mourning is heard. Rachel is weeping for her children and refuses to be comforted because they have been taken from her.'

¹⁹⁻²⁰After Herod's death, the Lord's angel appeared again in a dream to Joseph, saying: "Go, take the Child and His mother and return to the land of Israel, for those who wanted to take the Child's life are themselves dead."

²¹⁻²²So in obedience Joseph returned to Israel with Jesus and Mary. But on hearing that Archelaus was now reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, for he had again been forewarned in a dream. ²³So they went instead to Galilee where they set up home in a small town called Nazareth. This fulfilled another prophecy: 'He will be called a Nazarene.'

John the Baptist (3:1-12)

3 Some years later, John the Baptist began to preach in the Judean desert saying: ²"Repent! Turn from your sins and return to God, for the Kingdom of heaven is approaching." ³John was the one referred to by the prophet Isaiah: "A voice will be heard in the desert calling, 'Make ready for the Lord's coming; make a straight pathway for Him!'"

⁴John wore clothes of camel hair with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁵People came to him from Jerusalem, all over Judea and from the whole region around the river Jordan. ⁶After confessing their sins, they were immersed by John in the river.

⁷However, when John saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees arriving at the place where he was baptising, he addressed them by saying: "You are a brood of poisonous snakes! Who warned you to flee from the Lord's anger that is coming upon you? ⁸You have to produce fruit that proves you have genuinely repented. ⁹It is no use

2:14 *Hosea 11:1*

2:17-18 *Jeremiah 31:15*

3:3 *Isaiah 40:3*

saying to yourselves, 'Abraham is our father, so we are safe!' I tell you plainly that God is able to raise up children for Abraham out of these stones. ¹⁰The axe is ready to fell the trees, and every one who does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire of judgment.

¹¹"I immerse in water those who have truly turned away from their sins and surrendered to God. But after me someone more powerful than I is coming. I am not fit even to carry His sandals. He will immerse people in the Holy Spirit and in God's purifying fire. ¹²The tools for gathering the harvest are in His hand. He will preside over the spiritual threshing floor, gathering the good wheat into His barn, but burning the useless chaff in unquenchable fire."

Jesus' baptism (3:13-17)

¹³One day Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. ¹⁴But John was very reluctant to do this, saying to Jesus: "I should be immersed by you, and yet you come to me!"

¹⁵Jesus replied: "This is how it should be for now; for in this way it will be seen that we will fulfil everything necessary for righteousness." Then John agreed to do as Jesus wanted.

¹⁶After Jesus had been baptised He came out of the water. Then the heavens were opened to Him, and the Spirit of God descended upon Him as a dove and remained on Him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven was heard, saying: "This is my Son whom I love; I am very pleased with Him."

Jesus in the wilderness (4:1-11)

4 Then the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert where He had to be subjected to temptation from the devil. ²During a period of forty days and nights He fasted, after which He was hungry. ³The tempter came to Jesus suggesting: "If you are really God's Son, you could command these stones to become bread, and so satisfy your hunger."

⁴Jesus replied: "It is written: 'Man is not to live only on bread, but he is to feed on every word that comes from God's mouth.'"

⁵Then the devil took Him in a vision to the holy city, to stand on the highest part of the temple. ⁶"If You are really God's Son," the devil suggested, "You could do something truly spectacular. For if You jumped from here to the ground You know what is written:

4:4 *Deuteronomy 8:3*

4:6 *Psalms 91:11-12*

‘God will command His angels on your behalf. They will catch hold of you in their hands and prevent you from striking a single stone with your foot.’”

⁷ Jesus replied: “It is also written: ‘You are not to put the Lord your God to the test!’”

⁸ In another vision, the devil took Jesus to the top of a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in their splendour. ⁹ “All these I will give You,” he lied, “if only You will bow down before me in worship.”

¹⁰ Jesus said to him: “Get away from me Satan! For it is written, ‘You are to worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him.’”

¹¹ Defeated, the devil then left Him and angels came to be with Jesus.

The calling of the first disciples (4:12-22)

¹² Jesus returned to Galilee when He heard that John had been imprisoned; but ¹³ He left His home in Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum on the shore of the lake near Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴⁻¹⁶ This fulfilled another prophecy spoken through Isaiah, ‘In the area of Zebulun and Naphtali along the Jordan by the way of the sea, in the Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who formerly lived in darkness have seen a great light. On those who lived in the shadow of eternal death, a light has now dawned.’

¹⁷ This marked the beginning of Jesus’ preaching. “Repent,” He proclaimed, “for now the Kingdom of heaven is within your reach.”

¹⁸ When Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee He saw two brothers, Simon known later as Peter and His brother Andrew. They were fishermen and were casting their nets into the lake. ¹⁹ “Come and follow Me,” Jesus called to them, “and I will enable you to catch men!” ²⁰ Immediately they abandoned their nets and followed Jesus.

²¹⁻²² Further on Jesus saw two other brothers, James and John the sons of Zebedee. They were with their father in a boat, preparing their nets. Jesus called them and they immediately left their father in the boat and followed Him.

Jesus teaches and heals (4:23-25)

²³ Jesus then went throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues there, preaching the good news about God’s Kingdom. He healed

4:7 Deuteronomy 6:16

4:10 Deuteronomy 6:13

4:14-16 Isaiah 9:1-2

people from every disease and sickness. ²⁴ So the news of what He was doing spread all over Syria as well. As a result, people were brought to Him suffering from various diseases, often in severe pain. Some were demon possessed, others suffered from seizures or were paralysed. And He healed them all. ²⁵ Large crowds came not only from Galilee but from the Ten Towns on the far side of the lake, from Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan. They followed Him wherever He went.

Those who are blessed (5:1-12)

5 Because of the large crowds, Jesus went onto a hillside and sat down. His disciples gathered around Him ² and He began to teach them, saying:

³ "The truly humble, those who are poor in spirit, are blessed, because the Kingdom of heaven is given to them.

⁴ Those who mourn are blessed, because they shall be comforted.

⁵ Those with gentle spirits, the meek, they also are blessed, because they will have the earth as their inheritance.

⁶ Those who long for righteousness are blessed, because they will be filled with God's life.

⁷ The merciful are blessed, for God will be merciful to them.

⁸ The pure in heart are blessed, because they will see God, the Holy One.

⁹ Those who make peace with God and with others are blessed, for they will be known as sons of God.

¹⁰ Even those who are persecuted for doing what is right are blessed, because the Kingdom of heaven is given to them.

¹¹ "You are blessed when people insult you, persecute you or accuse you falsely of all forms of evil because of your allegiance to Me. ¹² You should rejoice and be glad because a rich reward awaits you in heaven. The prophets who lived before you were persecuted in the same way.

Be salt and light (5:13-16)

¹³ "You are to be salt for the world. However, if salt is stale it loses its taste, and what can you do to restore its saltiness? Nothing! It may as well be thrown away and trampled underfoot!

¹⁴ “You are to give light to the world. A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden from sight. ¹⁵ Neither do people hide the light from a lamp under a basin. No, they place the lamp on a lamp-stand where it can give light to the whole house. ¹⁶ In the same way, your spiritual light is to be evident to all around you; so that they can see the good things you do and then praise your Father in heaven.

Jesus came to fulfil God’s words (5:17-20)

¹⁷ “Do not imagine that I have come to do away with God’s law or with what the prophets have said. No, I have not come to abolish God’s words, but to fulfil them. ¹⁸ I tell you the truth, until this present heaven and earth disappear, not one word of what God has said or written will be removed from the law; everything God has said will be fulfilled. ¹⁹ So anyone who breaks even the least of these commandments and encourages others to do the same will be numbered among the least in the Kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys God’s commands and teaches others to do likewise will be called great in God’s Kingdom.

²⁰ “So I tell you clearly, your righteousness must surpass that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law; otherwise it is certain that you will not be part of the Kingdom of heaven!

Attitudes of the heart (5:21-32)

²¹ “You have heard that long ago people were told, ‘Do not murder, for anyone guilty of murder will be judged accordingly.’ ²² However, I tell you that simply to be angry with your brother is enough to bring you under judgment.

“It is also acknowledged that anybody who treats another with contempt is to be answerable to the Council. But I tell you that anyone who condemns his brother as a fool will be in danger of being condemned himself, to the fire of hell!

²³⁻²⁴ “This being the case, when you come to the altar to offer a gift, if you realise that a brother holds something against you, leave your gift before the altar while you go first to be reconciled with that brother; then you can come and offer your gift!

²⁵ “If your adversary takes you to court, settle matters with him quickly before your case is called; or you could find your destiny in the hands of the judge, who would then hand you over to the official who would throw you into prison. ²⁶ I tell you the truth, if that is the case you will not be released until you have served your sentence in full and have paid back whatever you owe.

²⁷“You have heard that it has been said, ‘Do not commit adultery!’
²⁸But I tell you clearly that just to look at a woman in a lustful way means that you have already committed adultery with her in your heart. ²⁹If you sin because of the way you use your eyes, it would be better to gouge one out and throw it away. For it is better for you to be without one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰Similarly, if you sin because of the way you use your hands, it would be better to have one cut off and thrown away, if by losing one part of your body you avoid your whole body going to hell.

³¹“It has been said that if anyone decides to divorce his wife, he has only to give her a certificate of divorce. ³²But I make it clear to you that the only grounds on which to divorce your wife is marital unfaithfulness. Under any other circumstances she would become an adulteress and the one who marries her an adulterer!

Do not break your word (5:33-37)

³³“You are also aware that long in the past people were told, ‘Do not break your word, but keep the promises you have made to the Lord!’ ³⁴I tell you clearly, do not swear to keep your word by calling on heaven as your witness, for this is God’s throne. ³⁵Nor swear with the earth as your witness, for that is His footstool. Do not swear by Jerusalem, for this is the city of the great King. ³⁶Do not swear by your own head, for you cannot make even one of your hairs white or black naturally. ³⁷It is enough for your ‘Yes’ to mean ‘Yes’ and your ‘No’ to mean ‘No’; only the evil one will tempt you to go beyond this.

Love your neighbour (5:38-48)

³⁸“You are also aware of the saying, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth!’ ³⁹But I tell you not to retaliate when attacked by an evil person. So if someone slaps you on one cheek, offer him the other to hit. ⁴⁰If someone wants to sue you and take the shirt off your back, let him have whatever he wants and more besides. ⁴¹If you are forced to carry a soldier’s burden for one mile, do the totally unexpected and offer to go with him for two miles!

⁴²“This is the principle by which to live: Give to anyone who asks you and do not refuse someone who wants to borrow from you.

⁴³“You have heard the saying, ‘Love your neighbour, but hate your enemy’. ⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵What I tell you is different: Love even your enemies and pray for those who persecute and oppose you and do good to

those who hate you, for this is the right way for the sons of your heavenly Father to act! He allows the sun He created to rise on the evil and the good alike. He sends rain on everyone, whether they are good or bad.

⁴⁶ "If you love only those who love you, what reward would you expect for that? Even the tax collectors who swindle people do that, don't they? ⁴⁷ And if you associate only with your fellow believers, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Even pagans act like that!

⁴⁸ "So be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect!

Give secretly (6:1-4)

6 "When you do what is right, make sure that you do not show off before others. If you simply want applause from men, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² So when you give to those in need, do not trumpet what you are doing. Only hypocrites do that kind of thing because, whether they give in a meeting or on the streets, they want to be honoured by others. I tell you the truth, such people have already received the only reward they will get!

³ "No, when you give to those in need, it should be as if your left hand doesn't know what your right hand is doing. ⁴ In other words, you will give secretly, without any flourish. Then your Father who sees what you do secretly will reward you.

Teaching on prayer (6:5-15)

⁵ "And do not imitate the hypocrites when you pray. Again, they want to be seen and applauded by others, whether they stand in the meeting or on street corners in public. I tell you most emphatically, they also have already received the only reward they will ever get! ⁶ Rather, when you pray, go in your private room, shut the door and pray unseen by others to your Father, who is also unseen. Your Father sees and rewards what you do secretly.

⁷ "And when you pray, do not keep babbling on like the pagans do, thinking that the more words they use, the more effective their prayers will be. ⁸ No, do not be like them, for your Father is well aware of what you need even before you ask Him.

"This is the kind of outline you should use when praying:

⁹ "Our heavenly Father, let your Holy Name be praised.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come and your will be done on earth as is already the case in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today everything we need. ¹² Forgive us when we sin against you, just

as we forgive those who sin against us. ¹³And do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from all the power and influence of the evil one.

¹⁴“You can be sure that your heavenly Father will forgive you if you forgive others when they sin against you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive others their sins, there is no point in expecting your Father to forgive your sins!

Fasting (6:16-18)

¹⁶“Do not act like the hypocrites when you fast. They make it clear to everyone that they are fasting. I tell you the truth, the praise they seek from others is the only reward they will ever receive. ¹⁷⁻¹⁸ No, when you fast, do not look drab and dreary, but do your hair nicely and wash your face so that it will not be obvious to anyone that you are fasting; only your Heavenly Father will know. Although you cannot see Him, He sees you and knows what you do secretly, and will reward you accordingly.

Store up heavenly riches (6:19-24)

¹⁹“There is no point in storing up for yourselves money and earthly possessions. Here moths and rust destroy things and thieves can break in and steal what you have. ²⁰It is far better to store up heavenly riches, for such riches cannot be destroyed by either moths or rust; and in heaven there are no thieves to break in and steal what is yours.

²¹“Here is the spiritual principle: wherever you put your money shows where your heart is also.

²²“Your eye gives light to your body. So if your eyes are good, your whole body will be filled with light. ²³But if your eyes are bad, your entire body will be filled with darkness. If instead of light you are filled with darkness, how deep that darkness will be!

²⁴“It is not possible for anyone to serve two different masters. For he will hate one and love the other, or he will be truly devoted to one and treat the other with contempt. You cannot serve both God and money!

Do not worry (6:25-34)

²⁵“So I tell you clearly, do not worry about any aspect of your life, what you should eat or drink or what you should wear on your body. There are far more important things in life than food and

there are many more important things about you than what clothes you wear!

²⁶ “Think of the birds you see flying around. They neither sow nor reap, nor do they store food away in barns; and yet your heavenly Father supplies food for them. Do you not consider yourself more valuable than the birds? ²⁷ And who can add anything positive to his life through worrying?

²⁸ “So why worry about your clothes? Look how beautiful the lilies in the field are! They neither work nor weave to make themselves appear so good. ²⁹ And yet I tell you clearly that even Solomon in his most glorious apparel could not match these lilies for beauty. ³⁰ So if this is the way in which God dresses what grows naturally in the fields, things that are here today and tomorrow are thrown away and burned, will He not make sure that you are well clothed? How weak your faith is!

³¹ “Therefore, do not worry by saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What have we to drink?’ or ‘What can we wear?’ ³² The pagans are concerned about such things, but your heavenly Father is well aware of everything you need. ³³ Let the Kingdom of heaven and living in a right relationship with God be your priorities; then everything else you need will be given to you as well. ³⁴ So do not worry about what will happen tomorrow. Let tomorrow worry about itself! You have enough to think about today, and that is true for every day!

Do not judge (7:1-5)

7 “Do not judge others, or you will also be judged. ² Yes, you will be judged in the same way that you judge others. The way you treat others will be the way you yourselves will be treated.

³ “Why do you search for the tiny speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye, while ignoring the plank of wood in your own eye? ⁴ What justification would you have in saying to your brother, ‘Allow me to remove the speck from your eye,’ when at the same time there is a whole plank in your own eye? ⁵ What a hypocrite you would be. First, remove the plank from your own eye and then you will see clearly to take the speck from your brother’s eye!

Value what is holy (7:6)

⁶ “Do not give what is holy to those who act like dogs. Do not throw precious pearls of truth to those who live like pigs. If you do they will only treat these holy things with contempt, trampling them underfoot like animals. They could even turn on you to tear you to pieces!

Ask, seek and knock (7:7-14)

⁷“Continue to ask, and what you pray for will be given you. Go on seeking and you will find what you are looking for. Keep knocking and the door will be opened for you.

⁸“For everyone who continues to ask receives. He who goes on seeking finds. The door will be opened to the one who keeps knocking.

⁹“If your son asks you for some bread, who among you would give him a stone instead? ¹⁰Or if he was to ask you for a fish, would you give him a snake? ¹¹If you, then, who are by no means sinless, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your perfect heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask Him!

¹²“This is a spiritual principle of both the law and the Prophets: In everything do to others what you want them to do to you!

¹³“Enter into life through the narrow gate. There is a wide gate that leads to a wide road, but that leads to destruction and many go that way. ¹⁴But the gate to the narrow road that leads to life is small, and only a few find it.

Good and bad fruit (7:15-23)

¹⁵“Be on the watch for false prophets. They come appearing to be one of My sheep, whereas they are really ferocious wolves. ¹⁶You will be able to discern who they are by the fruit they produce. Is it possible for people to pick grapes from thorn bushes, or do they gather figs from thistles? ¹⁷You can see that a good tree will produce good fruit, but a rotten tree will only produce rotten fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear rotten fruit; neither can a rotten tree produce good fruit. ¹⁹If a tree is rotten and cannot bear good fruit, it is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰So you can recognise whether a prophet is true or false by the fruit you see in his life.

²¹“Because someone says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ does not mean he or she will necessarily enter the Kingdom of heaven; that is reserved for those who do the will of My Father who is in heaven. ²²Many will say to Me on the Day of Judgment, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, cast out demons in your name and perform many miracles?’ ²³But I will tell them bluntly, ‘Go away from Me, you evil people. I never knew you!’

The wise man (7:24-29)

²⁴“Therefore, whoever hears what I say and puts my words into practice is like a wise man who decided to build his house on solid

rock. ²⁵The storm rains fell, the streams rose, the gale winds buffeted it; yet it stood firm because it was built on solid rock.

²⁶“But whoever hears what I say and fails to act upon My words is like a foolish man who decided to build his house on shifting sand. ²⁷The storm rains fell, the streams rose, the gale winds buffeted the house and it came crashing down!”

²⁸⁻²⁹After Jesus had said these things, the crowd that had gathered was amazed by such teaching because He spoke with great authority, not at all like the teachers of the law they were accustomed to hearing!

A leper healed (8:1-4)

8 When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds still followed Him wherever He went. ²A leper came, knelt before Him and said: “Lord, You can cleanse me and heal me, if You want to.” ³Jesus reached out His hand, touched him and said: “Of course I want to. Be cleansed!” At once he was healed of his leprosy. ⁴Jesus then told him: “Be sure that you don’t tell anyone immediately, but go and show yourself to the priest who will verify you have been healed. Then offer the gift that Moses commanded, for this will be a testimony recognised as valid by everyone.”

The Centurion understands authority (8:5-13)

⁵ When Jesus had arrived at Capernaum, a Roman centurion approached Him seeking help. ⁶He said to Jesus: “Lord, my servant lies paralysed at my home and is suffering terribly.”

⁷“I will go and heal him,” Jesus offered. ⁸But the centurion replied: “Lord I am not worthy enough to have You in my house. You only have to issue the command and my servant will be healed. ⁹As a soldier I am myself under authority, with soldiers under my authority. If I say to one, ‘Go,’ he goes, or to another, ‘Come,’ he comes; I only have to say, ‘Do this,’ to my servant and he does it.”

¹⁰Jesus was astonished at what the centurion said and told those who were following Him: “I tell you the truth, nowhere among all the people of Israel have I found anyone with such faith as this Roman soldier. ¹¹I tell you clearly that many will come from the east and west and will be welcome to take their places at the feast alongside Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven. ¹²Yet those who you would think would automatically be considered as belonging to that Kingdom will be excluded and thrown into outer darkness, where there will be deep mourning and cries of despair.”

¹³Turning to the centurion, Jesus said: “Go! The healing will take place in precisely the way you believed it would happen.” The soldier’s servant was healed at exactly the time Jesus said this!

Jesus heals and delivers many (8:14-22)

¹⁴When Jesus arrived at Peter’s house He found Peter’s mother-in-law in bed, sick with a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand and the fever left immediately. She was able to get up and prepare a meal for them.

¹⁶In the evening many people possessed by demonic powers were brought to Jesus. He needed to speak only a word of command and the evil spirits were cast out of them, and He healed all who were sick. ¹⁷This fulfilled what God spoke through the prophet Isaiah: ‘He took our infirmities and diseases upon Himself.’

¹⁸Because of the great crowds that pressed around Him, Jesus told the disciples that they would cross to the other side of the lake. ¹⁹But first a teacher of the religious law came to Him, saying: “Teacher, I am ready to follow You wherever You go.”

²⁰Jesus told him: “Foxes have holes to live in and the birds that fly around have their nests, but the Son of Man has no place of His own in which to rest.”

²¹Another disciple said: “Lord, I want to follow You, but first I have to go and bury my father.” ²²But Jesus told him: “Follow me now and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

Jesus stills the storm (8:23-27)

²³Then Jesus boarded the boat together with His disciples. ²⁴As they were crossing the lake a sudden furious storm arose, causing waves to sweep over the sides of the boat. Jesus was sleeping peacefully through all this. ²⁵In desperation the disciples awoke Him. “Lord save us! We are about to drown!” they cried out in alarm.

²⁶“What little faith you have,” Jesus replied. “Why be so afraid?” Then He stood up and spoke with authority to the winds and waves, and it became completely calm.

²⁷They were amazed at this and asked among themselves: “What kind of man can He be? Even the winds and the waves do whatever He says!”

Two demon possessed men delivered (8:28-34)

²⁸When He arrived at the other side of the lake in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men who lived among the tombs

approached Jesus. They were so violent that no one dared go near them or the place where they lived. ²⁹They shouted to Jesus: “What business do You have with us, Son of God? Have You come here to torture us before our appointed time?”

³⁰Some way off a large herd of pigs was feeding. ³¹The demons in the men pleaded with Jesus: “If You drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.”

³²Jesus spoke just one word: “Go!” The demons immediately came out of the men and entered the pigs. The whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake where they were all drowned.

³³Those who had been minding the pigs ran into the town and told everyone all that had happened, including the way the demon-possessed men had been set free. ³⁴The whole town came to see Jesus; but instead of welcoming Him, they pleaded with Him to leave their region.

A paralytic is healed (9:1-8)

9 So Jesus again boarded a boat and crossed back over the lake to His own town. ²There some men brought to Him a paralysed man lying on a mattress. Jesus discerned the faith that had motivated them and said to the paralysed man: “Be encouraged, son; all your sins are forgiven.”

³“That is blasphemy!” some of the teachers of the law said among themselves. ⁴But Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked: “Why do you have such evil thoughts in your hearts? ⁵Is it easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk?’ ⁶But to prove that the Son of man has authority on this earth to forgive sins,” Jesus turned to the paralytic and said: “Stand up, take your mattress and go home!” ⁷The man stood up and walked home. ⁸The crowd was filled with awe when they saw this and praised God for giving such authority to men.

Jesus calls Matthew (9:9-13)

⁹As Jesus continued on His way, He saw a man called Matthew sitting where he collected the taxes. “Follow Me,” Jesus said to him, and Matthew obeyed and followed Him.

¹⁰Jesus then went to Matthew’s house for dinner. Many other tax gatherers and those regarded as sinners came to eat with Jesus and His disciples. ¹¹This scandalised the Pharisees, who asked His disciples: “Why does your teacher eat with such people as these tax collectors and sinners?”

¹²Jesus overheard this and said to them: “Healthy people don’t need a doctor, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and learn what this scripture means when God says, ‘I delight in mercy, not sacrifice!’ You see, I have not come to save people who think they are righteous, but those who acknowledge they are sinners!”

Jesus questioned about fasting (9:14-17)

¹⁴Some of John’s disciples came to Jesus and asked Him: “Why is it that we fast like the Pharisees do, but Your disciples don’t fast?”

¹⁵Jesus replied: “How can you expect the bridegroom’s guests to mourn while he is with them? When the bridegroom is taken away from them, that will be the time for them to fast.

¹⁶“No one would think of sewing a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. When the garment was washed, the patch would shrink and only make the tear worse.

¹⁷“Nor would men pour new wine into old, hardened wineskins. If they were to do this, the skins would burst and both the wine and the wineskins would be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new flexible wineskins and then both are preserved.”

A woman healed and a girl raised to life (9:18-26)

¹⁸While He was speaking, a ruler of the synagogue came and knelt before Jesus. “My daughter has just died,” he said, “but if You come and place Your hand on her, she will live again.” ¹⁹So Jesus stood and went with him, accompanied by His disciples.

²⁰⁻²¹On the way a woman came up behind Jesus and touched the border of His robe. She had suffered from constant bleeding for twelve years and had said to herself: “If I only touch His robe, I shall be healed.”

²²Jesus looked round and said to her: “Be encouraged, daughter, your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed instantly.

²³When Jesus arrived at the ruler’s house, the flute players and a noisy crowd of mourners had already gathered. ²⁴“Out of the house,” He commanded them, “the girl is only sleeping; she is not dead.” But they laughed at Him. ²⁵Once the crowd was outside, Jesus went in to where the girl lay, took hold of her hand and she stood up! ²⁶News of such an event spread rapidly through the whole region.

Two blind men healed (9:27-34)

²⁷As Jesus continued on His journey, two blind men followed Him on the road, calling out to Him: “Son of David, be merciful to us.”

²⁸ The blind men entered the house where Jesus was going. So He asked them: “Do you believe I am able to restore your sight?”

“Yes, Lord,” they replied.

²⁹ “Then Jesus reached out His hand, touched their eyes and said: “It will now be done to you exactly as you have believed.” ³⁰ And their sight was restored immediately. Then Jesus spoke strictly to them: “Be sure that no-one knows about this.” ³¹ But instead they left the house and told people all over that region about Jesus and the wonderful thing He had done for them.

³² While they were leaving the house, a demon-possessed man who was dumb was brought to Jesus. ³³ As soon as He had cast out the demon the man began to speak. This amazed the crowd. “Nothing like this has ever been seen anywhere in Israel,” they said.

³⁴ However, the Pharisees said: “He drives out demons through the power of the prince of demons.”

Jesus has compassion on the people (9:35-38)

³⁵ Jesus travelled through every town and village teaching in the synagogues, preaching the good news of the Kingdom of heaven and healing people from every disease and sickness. ³⁶ Whenever He saw the crowds that gathered He had compassion on them. They seemed to be helpless to deal with the things that afflicted them. They were like sheep who had no one to shepherd them and care for them.

³⁷ He said to His disciples: “There is a plentiful harvest waiting to be reaped, but so few workers. ³⁸ So pray to the Lord of the harvest and ask Him to send more workers into His harvest field.”

The disciples sent out (10:1-23)

10 Jesus drew His twelve disciples around Him and gave them the authority to drive out the evil spirits that afflicted people and to heal all their diseases and sicknesses.

²⁻⁴ The names of the twelve apostles are: first, Simon (known as Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who later betrayed Him.

⁵ Jesus sent these twelve out with clear instructions: “You are not to go among the non-Jews or into Samaritan towns. ⁶⁻⁷ Instead you are to go to the lost sheep of Israel, with this message: ‘The Kingdom of heaven is fast approaching and is within your reach.’

⁸ Heal those who are sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demonic powers. You have received the authority to do these things freely, so give to others freely. ⁹ Do not take any money with you, no gold, silver or even copper. ¹⁰ You will not need to take any luggage or extra clothing, no sandals nor a staff for your protection. Because the worker is worthy of his keep, everything you need will be provided for you.

¹¹ “Whenever you enter a town or village, look for some responsible person and stay in his house until you leave that place. ¹² When you enter his home, speak a blessing over it. ¹³ If deserving people live there, the blessing of peace will rest upon that place. But if you are not welcomed, that blessing of peace will come upon you instead. ¹⁴ If no one welcomes you or listens to what you say, shake the dust of that place off your feet when you leave. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, on the Day of Judgment Sodom and Gomorrah will fare better than that town. ¹⁶ Yes, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So you will need to be as wise as snakes but as innocent as doves.

¹⁷ “Be wary of men, for they will hand you over to the local councils and you will even be flogged in their synagogues. ¹⁸ You will be brought before governors and kings because of your allegiance to Me. So you are witnesses to them and to the nations. ¹⁹ You will not have to be concerned about what to say or how to respond when you are arrested. At such times the Holy Spirit will give you the right words to say. ²⁰ So it will not really be you speaking, but the Spirit of your heavenly Father speaking through you.

²¹ “One brother will betray another, even if it means he will die as a result. The same will happen with a father and his child. Children will rebel against their believing parents and be responsible for them being put to death. ²² It will seem that all men hate you because of your faith in Me. But he who remains faithful to the end will be saved.

²³ “When they persecute you in one place, go somewhere else. I tell you the truth, the Son of Man will return before all the cities in Israel are reached with the gospel.

Further teaching (10:24-42)

²⁴ “A student is not more important than his teacher, nor is a servant of greater significance than his master. ²⁵ It is sufficient for the student to aim to be like his teacher and for the servant to imitate his master.

²⁵ “If they call the head of the house the devil, it is likely that they will accuse the members of his household of also belonging to the devil! ²⁶ But do not be afraid of those who oppose you. There is nothing

hidden that will not be openly revealed and made known publicly.
²⁷ So what I tell you secretly, you can then speak openly. Whatever I whisper in your ear, you can shout in the open air. ²⁸ Do not fear those who can kill the body but have no power over your soul. It is better to live in fear and awe of God who has the power to destroy both soul and body in hell!

²⁹ "Two sparrows are sold for an insignificant amount. And yet your heavenly Father knows whenever one of them falls to the ground dead. ³⁰ He even knows the number of hairs on your head, so great is His concern for you. ³¹ So there is nothing to fear; to Him you are worth far more than many sparrows.

³² "Anyone who honours Me before men I will honour before My Father in heaven. ³³ But he who disowns Me before others, I shall disown before My Father in heaven.

³⁴ "You should not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. On the contrary, I have come with a sword, the Word of truth, and not to create a false peace by hiding the truth. ³⁵ The result of My coming will turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶ Sadly, a man's enemies will be the members of his own family!

³⁷ "So anyone whose love for his father or mother is greater than his love for Me is not worthy of belonging to Me. Neither is anyone who has more love for his son or daughter than he has for Me. ³⁸ Anyone who is not prepared to face whatever sacrifices are necessary to follow Me is not worthy of belonging to Me. ³⁹ Whoever tries to hold onto his life for himself will lose it; but whoever is ready to lose his life for My sake will find the real life that only I can give.

⁴⁰ "Anyone who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives the One who sent Me. ⁴¹ If a person receives a prophet graciously because he is a prophet, that person will receive the same reward as a prophet. In like manner, anyone who treats a righteous person with honour because he is righteous, will receive the same reward as a righteous person. ⁴² A person will even be rewarded for giving a drink of water to one of My little ones simply because he is My disciple!"

The Kingdom of heaven is advancing (11:1-19)

11 Having given these instructions to His twelve disciples, Jesus moved on to teach and preach in other Galilean towns.

²⁻³ In prison John heard what Christ was doing and sent his disciples to ask Him: "Are you the long-expected Messiah, or should we await someone else?"

⁴⁻⁵ Jesus answered: "Return to John and tell him what you hear and see: the blind are receiving their sight, the lame are walking, those with leprosy are being healed, the deaf are able to hear, even the dead are being restored to life; and the good news is being preached to the poor. ⁶The man who does not depart from his faith in Me is truly blessed."

⁷As John's disciples were departing, Jesus spoke to the crowd about John. "When you went to see him in the desert, what did you expect to see? A reed swaying about in the wind? ⁸No? Then what did you expect to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, such people are in king's palaces. ⁹Then why go to see him? Because he is a prophet? I tell you, he is even greater than a prophet. ¹⁰John is the one of whom it is written, 'I will send My messenger ahead of you to prepare the way before you!'

¹¹"I tell you the truth, of all those born of women, no one has been greater than John the Baptist. And yet even the least person in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the time John the Baptist began to preach until now, the Kingdom of heaven has been advancing on earth by power, and forceful people are laying hold of it. ¹³Before John you had the prophetic words written in the law and by all the Prophets. ¹⁴If you only realise and believe it, John is the Elijah who was to come before the Christ. ¹⁵He who has spiritual understanding, let him hear what I say.

¹⁶⁻¹⁷"How would you describe this present generation? They are like children who sit in the marketplaces shouting to others, 'We played the flute for you but you refused to dance. When we sang a funeral song, you refused to mourn.' ¹⁸For John did not come eating and drinking and they accused him of having a demon. ¹⁹Then the Son of Man came both eating and drinking and they say, 'He is a glutton and a drunkard, who befriends the tax collectors and sinners.' True wisdom is demonstrated by the fruit that results from it!"

Unrepentant cities are cursed (11:20-24)

²⁰Because they had not repented, Jesus then began to speak against the cities in which most of His miracles had been performed.

²¹"Korazin, you are cursed; Bethsaida, you also are cursed! If the miracles that took place among you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes long ago. ²²But I tell you plainly, on the Day of Judgment Tyre and Sidon will fare better than you! ²³And what about you Capernaum? Will

you be exalted at that time? No, you will be cast down into the depths. If the miracles you witnessed had been performed in Sodom, it would still exist today. ²⁴So I make it clear to you that on the Day of Judgment Sodom will fare better than you!”

²⁵Then Jesus worshipped: “I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from those who consider themselves wise and learned, and have revealed them to those who regard themselves as your little children. ²⁶Yes, Father, this is what it pleased you to do.”

Rest in Jesus (11:25-30)

²⁷Then Jesus explained: “The Father has entrusted everything to Me. Only He really knows the Son, and no-one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to make Him known.

²⁸“Everyone who feels tired and oppressed, come to Me and I will give you rest! ²⁹Be united with Me and learn from Me, for I have a humble and gentle heart; then you will find peace for your souls.

³⁰When you are united with Me I make light of your burdens.”

The Sabbath (12:1-14)

12 Around this time, Jesus was walking through some fields of grain on the Sabbath. Because they were hungry, His disciples picked some seeds and ate them. ²Some Pharisees saw what they did and challenged Jesus: “Look at what Your disciples are doing! That is unlawful on the Sabbath.”

³Jesus replied: “Have you never read about what David did when he and those with him were hungry? ⁴He entered God’s house and together with his companions ate the consecrated bread which only the priests are permitted to eat. ⁵Or have you not read what it says in the law, that on the Sabbath the priests are allowed to work in the temple, and yet are regarded as innocent of any offence against God? ⁶I tell you clearly, One is here among you who is greater than the temple. ⁷Clearly you do not understand what these words mean, ‘I prefer mercy to sacrifice.’ ⁸If you had understood, you would not have condemned those who are innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”

⁹Moving on, Jesus went into their synagogue. ¹⁰A man with a shrivelled hand was present and because they wanted to find some reason to accuse Jesus, the Pharisees asked Him: “Is it right, according to the law, to heal on the Sabbath?”

¹¹ Jesus replied: "If one of you has a sheep that falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not do whatever is needed to rescue it? ¹² A man is far more valuable than a sheep! So of course it is right, according to God's law, to do good on the Sabbath."

¹³ Then He said to the man: "Stretch out your hand." When he did so it was completely healed and was just as strong as the other hand. ¹⁴ But this angered the Pharisees so much that they left the synagogue and plotted how they could kill Jesus.

Prophecy fulfilled (12:15-21)

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ Aware of their plans, Jesus withdrew from there. But many followed Him and He healed all the sick among them, warning them not to say who He was. ¹⁷ This fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁸ "This is My chosen servant, the one I love and in whom I delight. My Spirit will be upon Him and He will proclaim justice to the nations. ¹⁹ He will not fight nor will He make His voice heard in the streets. ²⁰ He will not snap a bruised reed, nor will He extinguish a smouldering wick, until He has first led those who love justice to victory. ²¹ In His Name, the nations will place their hope."

Address to the Pharisees (12:22-37)

²² Later, a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Him. Jesus healed him and he was able both to talk and see. ²³ Everyone was astonished. "Could this be the Christ, the Son of David?" they asked.

²⁴ However, when the Pharisees heard this they said: "This man drives out demons by the devil, the prince of demons."

²⁵ Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said to them: "Every kingdom that fights against itself will be ruined. Every divided city or household will not last. ²⁶ So if Satan was to drive Satan out of people's lives, he would be divided against himself. How could his kingdom last if that was the case?

²⁷ "And if it was true to say that I cast out demons by the devil himself, by whom do your people drive them out? Even they will judge you for what you have said. ²⁸ However, if I drive out demons through God's Spirit, then His Kingdom has come upon you.

²⁹ “Think again! Is it possible for anyone to enter the house of a strong man and take away his possessions unless he first binds up the strong man? Only then can he rob his house.

³⁰ “He who is not on My side is opposed to Me, and the one who does not join with Me in gathering, scatters instead. ³¹ So I tell you clearly, every sin and blasphemy men commit will be forgiven. ³² But those who curse the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. It is possible for anyone who speaks against the Son of Man to be forgiven; but anyone speaking against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, neither in this present time nor in the eternal age that is to come.

³³ “If you have a good tree its fruit will be good. If you have a rotten tree its fruit will be rotten, for each tree is evaluated by the fruit it bears. ³⁴ You collection of snakes, you are so evil; how can you recognise what is good?

³⁴ “A person speaks from the overflow of his heart. ³⁵ So the good man expresses good things that flow out of the good stored up in him. The evil person expresses evil things that flow from the evil stored up in him. ³⁶ So I tell you clearly that every man will have to give account on Judgment Day for every careless word he has spoken. ³⁷ For by your words you will be declared innocent, and by the words you have spoken you will be condemned.”

A wicked and adulterous generation (12:38-45)

³⁸ Next some Pharisees and teachers of the religious law said to Jesus: “Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign that proves who You are.”

³⁹ He replied: “Only a wicked and adulterous generation would ask for such a miraculous sign. No sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. ⁴⁰ He was in the belly of a large fish for three days and nights. In the same way, the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and nights. ⁴¹ At the judgment, the men of Nineveh will stand in judgment on this generation and will condemn it, for they repented when Jonah preached to them. Now One who is far greater than Jonah is here among you.

⁴² “The Queen of Sheba will speak in judgment on this generation and will condemn it. She came from far away to hear Solomon’s wisdom, and now one far greater than Solomon is here among you!

⁴³ “What happens to an evil spirit when it comes out of a man? It travels through desert places looking for rest, but is unable to find it. ⁴⁴ Then it decides, ‘I will return to the place I inhabited before.’ When it arrives it discovers the house is vacant, clean and with everything in order. ⁴⁵ So it goes and gathers seven other spirits even

more wicked than itself. Together they enter to live there, so the man's final state is far worse than it was at first. This is exactly as it will be with this evil generation."

Jesus' true family (12:46-50)

⁴⁶While Jesus was still addressing the crowd, His mother and brothers came and stood outside wanting to speak to Him. ⁴⁷Someone gave Jesus the message: "Your mother and brothers are waiting outside, wishing to speak with You."

⁴⁸He replied: "Who is My mother, and who are truly My brothers?"

⁴⁹Then He pointed to His disciples and said: "Here is My family, My mother and brothers. ⁵⁰For anyone who obeys the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother!"

The parable of the sower (13:1-23)

13 Later that same day Jesus left the house and went to sit by the lake. ²Such large crowds gathered around Him that He had to sit in a boat, while the people remained on the shore. ³Then He explained many things to them in parables.

"A farmer began to sow his seed. ⁴As he scattered it around him, some fell on the pathway and the birds came and ate it. ⁵⁻⁶Some fell in rocky places, where there was no depth to the soil. At first it grew quickly, but because the soil was so shallow the plants were soon scorched by the sun and withered because they did not have deep roots. ⁷Some of the seed fell among thorns, which also grew and choked the plants. ⁸But some of the other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a good crop. These seeds multiplied, producing a hundred, sixty or thirty times the amount that was sown. ⁹He who has ears open to My Word let him hear and understand what I say."

¹⁰The disciples came and asked Him: "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

¹¹He replied: "The revelation of the secret things of the Kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to everybody. ¹²Whoever has what I give will be given more until he has an abundance. But anyone who does not have what I offer will lose even what he does have. Everything will be taken from him. ¹³I spoke in parables because it is written, 'Though they have eyes they do not see; though they have ears, they do not hear nor understand.' ¹⁴So the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled in them:

13:13 *Jeremiah 5:21*

‘You will keep hearing what is said, but never understand. You will keep looking but never receive the revelation placed before you. ¹⁵For a hard skin covers the hearts of this people. They can hardly hear anything with their ears and they have closed their eyes to the truth. If this was not the case, they would see with their eyes, hear with their ears and understand with their hearts. Then they would turn to me and I would heal them.’

¹⁶“But your eyes are blessed because you do see, and your ears are blessed because you do listen. ¹⁷For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men of the past longed to see what you now see, but they never saw it. They longed to hear what you now hear, but never heard it!

¹⁸“Listen and I will explain what the parable of the sower means. ¹⁹The seed on the path represents anyone who hears the gospel of God’s Kingdom, but does not understand it. The evil one is able to come and steal the seed of truth that was sown in his hard heart.

²⁰“The person whose life is like the rocky soil receives with joy the seed, the Word of truth, when he first hears the gospel. ²¹But because the Word is not deeply rooted in his shallow heart, his response is short lived. As soon as difficulties arise or he has to face persecution because of his faith in the Word, he rapidly deserts the truth.

²²“The thorny soil represents the kind of person who hears and knows the Word of truth, but he allows himself to be overcome through other things in his life that cause him to worry, or because he places his trust in his worldly possessions instead of in My words. So, the truth cannot be fruitful in his life because he has a divided heart.

²³However, the seed that falls on good soil signifies those who receive the Word with faith. When they hear it they understand and apply it to their lives; so they produce a harvest. They have good hearts and the seed of truth is reproduced and multiplied in others, a hundred, sixty or thirty times!”

The parable of the weeds (13:24-29)

²⁴Then Jesus told the people another parable: “The Kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵But under cover of dark when all were asleep, his enemy came and sowed

weeds among the wheat, the good seed, and then quietly crept away. ²⁶As the wheat grew and developed, so the weeds also became obvious.

²⁷“The servants of the field’s owner asked him, ‘Sir, you sowed good seed in your field, didn’t you? So how is it that there are all these weeds among the wheat?’ ²⁸‘An enemy must have done this,’ the owner replied.

²⁸“Do you want us to pull the weeds up?’ the servants asked. ²⁹‘No,’ he replied, ‘because in the process you may also pull up the wheat accidentally. ³⁰So let both the wheat and weeds grow together until it is time to harvest the crop. Then I will give these instructions to the reapers, ‘First you are to collect the weeds, tie them in bundles and burn them. Then you can gather the wheat and store it in my barn.’”

The mustard seed and the yeast (13:31-35)

³¹Jesus told them a further parable: “The Kingdom of heaven can be likened to a mustard seed which a man planted in his field. ³²Although this is such a tiny seed, it becomes a large plant and then a tree big enough for the birds to come and perch in its branches.”

³³In yet another parable Jesus said: “The Kingdom of heaven is like the yeast that a woman mixed into a large amount of flour. The yeast permeated the whole lump of dough.”

³⁴Jesus never spoke to the crowd without using such parables as these. ³⁵In this way He fulfilled the prophetic words, ‘I will speak openly in parables. I will reveal things that have remained hidden since the world was created.’

Jesus explains the parable of the weeds (13:36-43)

³⁶When Jesus left the people and entered the house, the disciples said to Him: “Please explain to us the meaning of the parable of the weeds in the field.”

³⁷Jesus replied: “The Son of Man sowed the good seed, the Word of truth. ³⁸⁻³⁹The field represents the world and the good seeds stand for those who believe, the sons of the Kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one because they believe the lies sown by the devil. Harvest time will be at the end of this age when the angels will be sent to gather the harvest.

⁴⁰“At that time the weeds, the devil’s children, will be uprooted and thrown into the fire. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send His angels to

weed out of His Kingdom all who do evil and everything that causes sin. ⁴²They will be thrown into the furnace of fire, where they will mourn their foolishness and suffer eternally. ⁴³By contrast, the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Let the one with spiritual perception hear what I am saying.

More parables about the Kingdom (13:44-52)

⁴⁴“The Kingdom of heaven is like treasure that a man found hidden in a field. He was so overjoyed that he concealed it again, then went and sold everything he had so he could buy the field and own the treasure.

⁴⁵“Similarly, the Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant who sought the finest pearls. ⁴⁶He discovered one of such great value, that he went and sold everything he had to enable him to buy that one pearl.

⁴⁷“Again, you can liken the Kingdom of heaven to a net in which all kinds of fish were caught when it was cast into the sea. ⁴⁸The fishermen pulled it to shore when it was full and then sat and sorted out the catch. The good fish they put in baskets, but the bad they threw away. ⁴⁹This is what will happen at the time of judgment at the end of this present age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous. ⁵⁰They will throw the wicked into the furnace of fire where they will mourn their foolishness and suffer eternally.”

⁵¹Jesus asked His disciples: “Do you understand these things?”

“Yes,” they replied.

⁵²So He then told them: “This being the case, every teacher of the religious law who has himself been taught about the Kingdom of heaven is like the house-owner who brings out of his storehouse these new treasures, as well as the truth he already knew.”

Jesus rejected in Nazareth (13:53-58)

⁵³It was time for Jesus to move on when He had finished telling these parables. ⁵⁴He came to His hometown of Nazareth and began teaching the people in their synagogue. They were astonished at what they heard. They asked: “Where could this man have received all this wisdom and the power to work such miracles? ⁵⁵This is the carpenter’s son, isn’t it? We know Mary His mother and His brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas. ⁵⁶And all His sisters lived here among us, didn’t they? So from where did this man receive all these things He now teaches and does?” ⁵⁷They were offended by Him.

So Jesus said to them, “A prophet is honoured everywhere except in his own town and among his own family.”⁵⁸ Because of this they failed to believe in Him, and so Jesus did not perform many miracles there.

Account of John the Baptist’s death (14:1-12)

14 About that time Herod, the district ruler, heard reports about Jesus² and said to his staff: “This must be John the Baptist risen from the dead. This is why such miraculous powers are working through Him.”

³⁻⁴ John had been arrested and imprisoned by Herod through the influence of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, for John had openly declared: “It is unlawful for you to have her as your wife.”⁵ Herod had wanted to kill John, but was afraid to do so because the people regarded him as a prophet.

⁶⁻⁷ However, Herodias’ daughter danced for the guests on Herod’s birthday and this pleased him so much he swore on oath that he would give her anything she asked.⁸ Her mother prompted her to say: “Give me the head of John the Baptist on a plate.”⁹ This concerned the king, but because he had given his oath before his dinner guests, he commanded that her desire should be fulfilled.¹⁰⁻¹¹ So John was beheaded in the prison and his head was carried on a plate and given to the girl, who in turn presented it to her mother.¹² Meanwhile John’s disciples came and took his body for burial before going to tell Jesus what had happened.

Five loaves and two fish (14:13-21)

¹³ On hearing this news, Jesus went away privately by boat, wanting to be alone. Aware of His departure, crowds of people from the surrounding towns went on foot around the lake and were waiting for Him when He landed.¹⁴ When He saw such a vast crowd, His heart went out to them with compassion and He healed the sick among them.

¹⁵ When evening approached, His disciples came and said: “It is getting late and this is such a remote place that you had better send the crowds away so they can go and buy food in the villages.”

¹⁶ “There is no need for them to leave,” Jesus replied. “You provide food for them.”¹⁷ But they answered: “All we have between us is five loaves of bread and two fish.”

¹⁸ “Well, bring them to me,” Jesus said.¹⁹ After telling the people to sit on the grass, He took the five loaves and two fish, looked up to heaven and gave thanks to God. He then broke the loaves into

pieces and gave them to the disciples to distribute among the people.²⁰⁻²¹ They all ate as much as they wanted and when the disciples collected what remained, they filled twelve baskets; yet about five thousand men, plus women and children, had eaten.

Peter comes to Jesus on the lake (14:22-36)

²² Immediately after this, Jesus ordered the disciples to board the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side of the lake, while He sent the crowds home. ²³ Having done this, He went up on the side of a mountain alone to pray. He was still there by Himself as it grew dark. ²⁴ The boat was by now some way from the land, but was being buffeted by strong head winds.

²⁵ About three o'clock in the morning, Jesus walked towards them on the surface of the lake. ²⁶ When the disciples saw Him walking on top of the water, they were scared. "It must be a ghost," they said and cried out in alarm.

²⁷ Immediately Jesus called out to them: "Have faith! It is I. Don't be afraid."

²⁸ Peter said: "Lord, if it really is you, command me to come to you walking on the water."

²⁹ "Come," said Jesus.

Peter climbed out of the boat and began to walk on the water towards Jesus. ³⁰ However, he became conscious of the force of the wind and began to fear. Immediately he began to sink and cried out: "Save me, Lord!"

³¹ Jesus reached out His hand and caught hold of Peter. He said to him: "Why did you doubt? Is your faith so weak?"

³² As soon as they had climbed together into the boat, the wind died down. ³³ The others in the boat worshipped Him, saying: "You really are God's Son."

³⁴ Having crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret. ³⁵⁻³⁶ The local residents recognised Jesus and sent word around the surrounding district. People brought all the sick to Him, pleading with Him to let them merely touch the edge of His robe. And everyone who touched Him was healed!

The clean and the unclean (15:1-20)

15 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came from Jerusalem and said to Jesus: ² "Why do you allow your disciples to break the traditions of the elders? For example, they do not perform the ritual of washing their hands before a meal."

³ Jesus replied: “Why do you break God’s commands in order to keep your traditions? ⁴ God said, ‘Honour your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother should be put to death.’ ⁵⁻⁶ But you say that if a man tells his father or mother, ‘What you could have received from me to help you has been given to God instead,’ he is not to honour his father with that gift. So you disregard God’s Word for the sake of your traditions. ⁷⁻⁸ What hypocrites you are! Isaiah was justified in prophesying about you, ‘These people honour me by what they say, but their hearts are far from Me. ⁹ Their worship of Me is empty and their teaching is only rules that they have devised themselves.’”

¹⁰ Then Jesus gathered the crowd around Him and said: “Listen to Me and understand what I say. ¹¹ Nothing that enters a man’s mouth can make him unclean. It is what comes out of his mouth, from his heart, which defiles him.”

¹² Later the disciples asked Jesus: “Are you aware that the Pharisees were greatly offended by what you said?”

¹³ To this Jesus replied: “Whatever is not planted by My heavenly Father will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Take no notice of these men; they are guides who are blind themselves. And if someone who is blind leads another who is blind, both will fall into a ditch.”

¹⁵ Peter said: “Explain clearly what you mean.”

¹⁶ “Do you still not understand?” Jesus asked them. ¹⁷ “Can you not see that whatever enters a man’s mouth goes into his stomach before passing out of his body? ¹⁸ But whatever comes out of the mouth originated in his heart and such utterances make a man unclean. ¹⁹ For evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony and slander all originate in the heart. ²⁰ Such things prove a man is unclean. But acting without ritually washing your hands does not make you guilty of such things.”

Canaanite girl set free (15:21-28)

²¹ Jesus then left that place and journeyed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² A local woman, who was a Canaanite, came to Him in distress: “Lord, Son of David, please have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffers terribly.”

²³ At first Jesus did not answer her. His disciples urged Him: “Send her away, for she keeps on and on and won’t leave us alone.”

15:4 Exodus 21:17

15:4 Exodus 20:12

15:9 Isaiah 29:13

²⁴ Jesus answered them: “My mission is to the lost sheep of Israel. That is why I was sent.”

²⁵ The woman came, knelt before Him and pleaded: “Lord, please, please help me!”

²⁶ “It is not right to take the bread intended for the children and throw it to the dogs instead,” Jesus replied.

²⁷ “True, Lord,” she said, “but even the dogs are allowed to eat the crumbs that fall from the master’s table.”

²⁸ “Woman, your faith is great,” Jesus answered. “What you ask for is done.” And her daughter was set free at that very moment.

Many healed by Jesus (15:29-31)

²⁹ When Jesus left that area He returned to the Sea of Galilee. He climbed the side of a mountain and sat down. ³⁰ Great crowds came to Him, bringing the lame, the blind and the crippled, the dumb and many others in distress, who they laid at His feet. And He healed them. ³¹ The people were awestruck when they witnessed those who had been dumb now able to speak, the crippled completely restored and those formerly blind able to see clearly. So they praised the God of Israel.

Jesus feeds four thousand (15:32-39)

³² Jesus gathered the disciples around Him and said: “I feel such compassion for these people. They have already been here with Me for three days with nothing to eat. I don’t want to send them away hungry in case they collapse on their way home.”

³³ But His disciples responded: “Where in such a remote place can we buy enough bread to feed so many people?”

³⁴ “How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked them.

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

³⁵ Jesus then told the crowd to sit on the ground. ³⁶ Taking the seven loaves and the fish, He first gave thanks for them, and then broke them in pieces, giving them to the disciples to distribute among the people. ³⁷ They all ate as much as they wanted, and the disciples filled seven baskets with the remaining pieces. ³⁸ Four thousand men plus the women and children had eaten. ³⁹ Then Jesus sent them all home before going by boat to the area near Magadan.

Warning against wrong influences (16:1-12)

16 The Pharisees and Sadducees came to test Jesus, wanting Him to show them a sign from heaven. ² He told them:

“When you see a red sky in the evening you say, ‘Tomorrow the weather will be good.’ ³But if you see a red and overcast sky in the morning you say, ‘It will be stormy today.’ You can interpret the way the sky appears, but you are unable to interpret the signs of these present times. ⁴Only a wicked, adulterous generation would ask for a sign; and none shall be given to it, except what happened to Jonah.” With that Jesus turned away from them and left.

⁵He went across the lake with his disciples, who had forgotten to take any bread with them. ⁶Jesus told them: “Be on your guard. Be careful not to be influenced by the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

⁷They discussed among themselves what He meant by this and concluded: “He is referring to the fact that we didn’t bring any bread with us.” ⁸Aware of what they were saying, Jesus asked them: “Why do you talk about forgetting to bring bread? Is your faith still so weak? ⁹Do you still not understand what I mean? Surely you remember how five thousand men were fed from five loaves, and how many baskets were filled with the remaining pieces! ¹⁰What about the four thousand who were fed with seven loaves! How many basketfuls did you gather on that occasion? ¹¹Why don’t you understand that I was not referring to bread at all? I repeat, be sure that you do not allow the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees to influence you in any way.”

¹²Then they realised that Jesus had not been referring to the yeast used in making bread, but they were to be wary of what the Pharisees and Sadducees taught.

Peter’s revelation of Christ (16:13-20)

¹³When they arrived in the area of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked His disciples: “What do the people say about the Son of Man? Who do they understand Him to be?”

¹⁴They answered: “Some say He is John the Baptist, others Elijah and others think He is Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

¹⁵“Well, what do you think?” Jesus asked. “Who do you say I am?”

¹⁶“You are the Christ, the Messiah, God’s Son,” Simon Peter answered.

¹⁷“Simon, son of Jonah, you are blessed,” Jesus said. “This could not have been revealed to you by any man, but only by My Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you clearly that you are Peter, a rock, and I will build My church on the bedrock on which you are placed. And

the very gates of hell shall not overcome My church. ¹⁹I give you the key truths that unlock the way into the Kingdom of heaven. So you have the authority to restrict or prevent on earth what is not allowed in heaven. And you have my permission to liberate on earth whatever is liberated in heaven.”

²⁰Then He forbade His disciples to tell anyone that He was the Christ, the Messiah.

The cost of following Jesus (16:21-28)

²¹Now they knew for certain who He was, Jesus began to explain to His disciples that it was necessary for Him to go to Jerusalem, where He would suffer greatly at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the religious law. He must even be killed, but He would be raised back to life on the third day after His death.

²²When he heard this, Peter took Jesus to one side and began to rebuke Him. “God forbid that this should ever happen to You!” he said.

²³Jesus turned and said directly to Peter’s face: “Get out of My way Satan! You only want to hinder Me, because you do not understand the things of God; you think only as men think.”

²⁴Then Jesus said to all the disciples: “If anyone makes the decision to be My follower, he will have to deny what he wants for himself. He must be prepared to suffer willingly any cross of sacrifice asked of him; then he can follow Me. ²⁵For whoever is intent only on his own welfare will lose his life eternally. But whoever is prepared to lose his life for Me will find eternal life.

²⁶“What good would it do a man if he were to have everything he wanted in this world, yet lose his soul in the process? What could be more valuable to anyone than the eternal destiny of his soul?

²⁷You see, the Son of Man will come again in His Father’s glory together with His angels. Then He will give each person the appropriate reward, according to what he or she has done. ²⁸So I tell you the truth, some of you here with Me will not die before you see that I, the Son of Man, reveal the glory of My Kingdom.”

The Transfiguration (17:1-13)

17 Six days later Jesus took Peter, James and his brother John, up a high mountain. ²There He was transfigured before their eyes. His face was radiant, shining like the brilliance of the sun; His clothes shone with glorious light. ³Moses and Elijah appeared to them also, talking with Jesus.

⁴“Lord, it is so good for us to be here to see this,” Peter said to Jesus. “Would you like me to erect three canopies for you, one for You and one each for Moses and Elijah?”

⁵While he was saying this, a bright cloud enveloped them all and they heard a voice speak from the cloud: “This is My beloved Son; I am very pleased with Him. So listen to what He says.”

⁶On hearing this voice the disciples were scared and fell to the ground on their faces. ⁷Jesus came and touched each of them saying: “Stand up; there is no need to be afraid.” ⁸When they looked again, only Jesus was there with them.

⁹While making their way down the mountain Jesus commanded them: “Do not tell anyone about what you have just seen until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

¹⁰The disciples wanted to know: “Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must appear before the Messiah comes?” ¹¹Jesus told them: “It is true, Elijah comes to restore everything that was lost. ¹²But I tell you clearly, Elijah has come already but they did not recognise him. Instead they treated him exactly as they wished. And in similar fashion they will also cause the Son of Man to suffer.” ¹³The disciples then realised He was referring to John the Baptist.

A demon possessed boy is healed (17:14-23)

¹⁴When they rejoined the crowd a man came and knelt before Jesus.

¹⁵“Have mercy on my son, Lord,” he said. “He suffers greatly from seizures that often throw him into fire or water. ¹⁶I brought him to Your disciples but they were unable to heal him.”

¹⁷“What a generation of unbelief and perversion this is,” Jesus said. “For how much longer must I remain among you? How much longer do I have to put up with you? Bring your son to me.” ¹⁸As soon as Jesus rebuked the demon in the boy, it came out of him and he was completely healed.

¹⁹Later the disciples asked Jesus privately: “Why were we unable to cast that demon out of the boy?”

²⁰“Because your faith is so weak,” Jesus answered. “Most emphatically I tell you this truth, if you had true faith that was even the size of a minute mustard seed, you would be able to say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible for you! ²¹This kind of deliverance takes place when you pray with faith!”

²²⁻²³When they were together in Galilee, Jesus told the disciples: “The Son of Man will be betrayed. Men will lay hands on Him and

kill Him; yet on the third day after His death, He will be raised back to life." On hearing this, the disciples were grief-stricken.

Temple tax (17:24-27)

²⁴When Jesus and His disciples arrived at Capernaum, those responsible for collecting the tax for the temple asked Peter: "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?"

²⁵"Yes, He does," Peter replied.

When Peter entered the house, Jesus spoke first and asked: "From whom do earthly kings collect the customs and taxes, from their only sons or from others? What do you think Simon?"

²⁶"From others," he answered.

"This means the sons are exempt from paying taxes," Jesus said to him. ²⁷"However, so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw your line into the water. Open the mouth of the first fish you catch and you will find a coin sufficient to pay the tax for both of us. Take it and give it to those responsible."

The greatest in the Kingdom (18:1-9)

18 "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?" the disciples asked Jesus. ²He called a little child over and had him stand in their midst. ³"I tell you the truth," He said, "you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven unless you are converted and become like little children. ⁴So whoever humbles himself and becomes childlike is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.

⁵"What is more, anyone welcoming a little child like this in My Name, also welcomes Me. ⁶But if anyone causes one of My little ones to sin, it would be better for him to be drowned in the sea with a large millstone hung round his neck!

⁷"The world is under a curse for the way it causes people to sin! Such things inevitably happen, but the one through whom they happen is cursed! ⁸If you sin because of what you do with your hand or foot, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better to enter eternal life maimed or crippled than to have all your limbs and be cast into eternal fire. ⁹And if you sin by the wrong use of your eye, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better to enter eternal life with one eye than to have both and be cast into the fire of hell.

The parable of the lost sheep (18:10-14)

¹⁰"So be sure that you do not look down on one of my little children. For I tell you clearly that in heaven their angels look continually on

the face of My Father.” ¹¹ The Son of Man came to save those who are lost.

¹² “What do you think about this? Suppose a man owns a hundred sheep and one of them strays, will he not leave the ninety-nine grazing on the hills and go in search of the stray? ¹³ I tell you most emphatically, he is happier over that one sheep when he finds it than over the rest which did not stray. ¹⁴ In the same way your Father in heaven does not want even one of His little children to be lost.

Forgive your brother (18:15-20)

¹⁵ “When a brother sins against you, go to him and between the two of you show him how he has wronged you. If he listens, both of you will be reconciled. ¹⁶ If he refuses to listen, then take one or two others with you to confront him with his wrong. This fulfils what is written, that the testimony of two or three witnesses is needed to determine a dispute! ¹⁷ If he still refuses to acknowledge his guilt, then the whole church needs to be told of the matter. If he still thinks he is in the right, despite what the whole church says, then he is to be treated in the same way as you would a pagan or a crooked tax collector.

¹⁸ “I tell you this truth most emphatically, you have authority to prevent on earth what heaven does not allow, and you can liberate on earth what has been liberated in heaven.

¹⁹ “I also tell you clearly that when two of you agree in faith about the outcome of any matter about which you pray, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven. ²⁰ You see, whenever two or three of you gather together with faith in the authority of My Name, I am there with you.”

The parable of the unmerciful servant (18:21-35)

²¹ Peter then asked Jesus: “Well, Lord, how many times do you expect me to forgive my brother when he wrongs me? Would seven times be enough?”

²² “No, not seven times,” Jesus answered, “I tell you to forgive seventy times seven.

²³ “Therefore the Kingdom of heaven is like a king who needed to settle accounts with those indebted to him. ²⁴ One man brought before him owed him millions. ²⁵ Because he was unable to settle the debt, the master ordered that he, his wife, children and everything he possessed should be sold in repayment.

²⁶ “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he pleaded, ‘and I promise to pay back everything I owe.’

²⁷In compassion for him the servant's master cancelled the debt and released him.

²⁸"As soon as the servant had left his master's presence, he went in search of one of his fellow servants who owed him a pittance by comparison. He took hold of him and began to throttle him. 'Pay me what you owe me,' he demanded.

²⁹"His fellow servant fell on his knees and pleaded with him, 'Give me more time, and I will repay all I owe you.'

³⁰"But he refused to listen. Instead he had the man thrown into prison, where he was to be kept until the debt was repaid fully.

³¹"When the other servants realised what had happened, they were so upset that they went and told their master everything that had taken place.

³²"Then the master recalled the servant and said to him, 'You wicked servant. I cancelled that enormous debt because you pleaded with me to do so. ³³Should you not have been just as merciful to your fellow servant?' ³⁴His master was so angry that he put him in the hands of the jailers to be tortured until the debt that was previously cancelled was fully repaid."

³⁵Then Jesus warned: "This is how My heavenly Father will deal with you unless you are merciful and forgive your brother from your heart."

Divorce and marriage (19:1-12)

19 After teaching these things Jesus left Galilee and went to the region of Judea on the far side of the Jordan. ²As usual, large crowds followed Him and He healed the sick among them.

³Some Pharisees came to Him with another trick question. "Are there any circumstances in which under the law a man is allowed to divorce his wife?" they asked.

⁴⁻⁵Jesus replied: "Surely you have read that in the beginning the Creator made both male and female and said: 'Because of this, a man is to leave his father and mother and become one with his wife; the two then become one flesh.' ⁶This being the case, they are no longer two separate individuals. But by their union they have become one. Therefore because God has joined them together and made them one, no one should dare to separate them!"

⁷The Pharisees then asked: "If this is the case, why did Moses legislate that a man could give his wife a certificate of divorce and separate from her?"

⁸ Jesus answered: "It was only because of the hardness of your hearts that Moses permitted you to divorce your wives. But from the beginning this was never God's intention. ⁹And I tell you clearly that whoever divorces his wife, and then marries another woman, is guilty of adultery in God's eyes, unless the wife has been unfaithful sexually"

¹⁰ The disciples said to Jesus: "It would be better not to marry at all, if that bond between a husband and wife is so great."

¹¹ To this Jesus replied: "Not everybody is prepared to accept this word of truth. It is for those to whom such grace is given. ¹²Some are born eunuchs, others are castrated, but there are those who have renounced marriage so they can devote themselves to the work of the Kingdom of heaven. But that is for those who can accept such a sacrifice."

Children (19:13-15)

¹³ Some small children were brought to Jesus so that He could lay His hands on them and pray for them. The disciples rebuked those who bothered Jesus in this way. ¹⁴But He told them: "Allow these little ones to come to Me. Don't hinder them. Remember, the Kingdom of heaven belongs to those who know they are God's little children."

¹⁵ Having prayed for them, Jesus then moved on.

A wealthy man talks to Jesus (19:16-30)

¹⁶ A man came to Him and asked: "Teacher, what good deed can I do to ensure I receive eternal life?"

¹⁷ Jesus replied: "Why do you question me about doing good? God is the only one who is good. So if you want to enter into His life, obey His commandments."

¹⁸⁻¹⁹ "But which of them?" the man asked.

Jesus answered: "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honour your father and mother and love your neighbour as you love yourself."

²⁰ "I have kept all these commandments; what else do I still need to do?" the young man asked.

²¹ Jesus told him: "In your case, if you really want to be perfect, you need to go and sell all your possessions and give to the poor. Then you will have treasure in heaven and you can come and follow Me."

²² He went away sad when he heard this, for he was very wealthy.

²³ Jesus then said to His disciples: "I tell you this truth, it is difficult

for a wealthy person to enter into the Kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ I tell you clearly that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a wealthy person to enter God's Kingdom."

²⁵ The disciples were really amazed when they heard Jesus say this and asked Him: "Who can possibly be saved then?"

²⁶ Jesus looked straight at them and said: "It is impossible for man to save anyone; but all things are possible for God!"

²⁷ Then Peter said: "We have sacrificed everything to follow you! What will our reward be?"

²⁸ Jesus told them: "I tell you the truth, that at the fulfilment of all things, when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me faithfully will also sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ Everyone who has left behind homes, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or possessions on My behalf will receive a hundred times as much as he has sacrificed, and will also inherit eternal life. ³⁰ Many who in this world seem to have everything will then have nothing, and many who appear to have nothing will have everything!"

The parable of the vineyard (20:1-16)

20 "The Kingdom of heaven is like the owner of an estate who early in the morning went to hire workers for his vineyard.

² He agreed their pay for the day and set them to work.

³ "He went out again around nine o'clock and saw others standing idly in the market place. ⁴ He said to them, 'Go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you the right amount at the end of the day.' So they also accepted his offer.

⁵ "The owner of the estate went out again about noon and at three in the afternoon and hired others on the same understanding. ⁶ Even at five o'clock he found others doing nothing and so asked them, 'Why have you been standing around all day with nothing to do?'

⁷ "They answered, 'Because no one hired us.' He replied: 'Well, go and work in my vineyard.'

⁸ "At the end of the working day, the owner of the estate told his foremen, 'Call the workers together and pay them, beginning with those I hired last and working up to those I hired first.'

⁹ "Those employed around five o'clock came and each received a full day's wage. ¹⁰ So when those who were hired at the beginning of the day came forward, they expected to be paid more. But each was given only the full day's wage. ¹¹⁻¹² At this they began to complain about the owner, saying, 'Those who were hired to work for only

one hour have received the same amount as us, and we have been working all day long in the scorching heat.'

¹³⁻¹⁴ "The owner answered, 'My friends, I am not being unjust to you. You agreed to work for the amount I have paid you, didn't you? And I have paid you accordingly; so go on your way. It was my decision to pay those I hired last the same as you. ¹⁵ Surely I have the right to use my money as I choose? Are you jealous because I am so generous?'"

¹⁶ Then Jesus concluded: "So those who think they are last, the bottom of the pile, will become the first. And those who think they deserve the top positions will find themselves at the bottom of the pile."

Jesus predicts His death (20:17-19)

¹⁷⁻¹⁹ As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem with His twelve disciples, He said privately to them: "We are going up to Jerusalem and there the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the religious law. They will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Roman authorities to be ridiculed, flogged and crucified. But on the third day after His death, He will be raised back to life!"

The importance of serving (20:20-28)

²⁰ Later, the mother of James and John came to Jesus with her two sons and knelt before Him to ask a favour of Him. "What do you want?" He asked.

²¹ She replied: "Please give my two sons the places of highest honour in your Kingdom, one immediately on your right and the other on your left."

²² Jesus told all three: "You don't appreciate the significance of what you are requesting. Are you able to drink the same cup of suffering that I will have to drink?"

"Yes, we can," James and John both answered.

²³ Jesus replied: "You will surely have to drink from this cup, but it is not for Me to decide who should sit at My right and left. My Father has reserved these places for those He has chosen to fill them."

²⁴ The other ten disciples were indignant with the two brothers when they heard about the request. ²⁵ So Jesus called them all together and said: "You are aware that kings love to lord it over those beneath them, and their secular officials enjoy exercising their authority over them. ²⁶⁻²⁷ But this is not the way for you to behave. Those among you who want to become great must have servant

hearts and whoever wants a higher position must be prepared to serve as if he were your slave. ²⁸For this is the example given you by the Son of Man who came to serve others, not to be served by them! He came to sacrifice His life as a ransom to save many!”

Two blind men healed (20:29-34)

²⁹A large crowd followed Jesus as He and His disciples left Jericho. ³⁰Sitting on the roadside were two blind men who shouted out as Jesus passed: “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us.”

³¹Those around them rebuked them, telling them to be quiet. But this made them even more determined; so they shouted more loudly: “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”

³²Hearing them, Jesus stopped and called them forward. “What is it that you want Me to do for you?” He asked them.

³³“Lord, we want our sight to be restored,” they answered.

³⁴With compassion Jesus touched their eyes, and immediately they received their sight and then followed Him.

Jesus enters Jerusalem (21:1-11)

21 Jesus and His disciples arrived at Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem. Jesus told two of the disciples: ²“Go into the village ahead of us and there you will see a donkey with her year-old colt tethered. Untie them and bring them here to Me. ³If anyone wonders what you are doing, simply tell him that the Lord has need of them, and he will immediately agree that you should take them.”

^{4,5}This happened to fulfil the prophetic words: “Tell the daughter of Zion, My people Israel, ‘Look, your King comes humbly to you riding on the colt of a donkey.’”

⁶The disciples went and did what Jesus had said. ⁷They returned with the donkey and her colt. When they had placed their cloaks on its back, Jesus sat on the colt. ⁸As they made their way to Jerusalem, a very large crowd laid their cloaks on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them in His path. ⁹Both those ahead of Him and those who followed shouted out: “Praise to the Saviour, the Son of David.” “Blessed is He who comes in the Lord’s Name.” “Glory be to the One who saves.”

¹⁰The entire city was impacted as Jesus entered Jerusalem and people asked: “Who is this creating such a stir?” ¹¹Those in the crowd answered: “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Jesus cleanses the temple (21:12-17)

¹²When He entered the temple courts, Jesus began driving out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those selling doves. ¹³He said: "It is written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it into a den of thieves."

¹⁴The blind and crippled came to Jesus in the temple and He healed them. ¹⁵When the chief priests and teachers of the religious law saw these wonderful miracles and the children shouting in the temple courts, 'Praise to the Saviour, the Son of David,' they were outraged. ¹⁶They challenged Jesus: "Do you hear what these children are shouting?"

"Of course," Jesus replied. "But have you never read the scripture, 'You have determined that children and infants will declare My praises!'"

¹⁷Then Jesus left and went to spend the night at Bethany.

Faith in prayer (21:18-22)

¹⁸As He was returning to the city on the next morning, He was hungry. ¹⁹He noticed a fig tree on the roadside, but when He looked closely at it there was no fruit, only leaves. So He said to the tree: "You will never bear fruit again." Immediately the tree withered. ²⁰This amazed the disciples who asked: "How could the fig tree wither so quickly?"

²¹Jesus replied: "I tell you this truth most emphatically, if you have faith and do not doubt the outcome, you can not only do similar things to this, but you can also command this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be moved. ²²You see, no matter what you ask in prayer, you will receive if you truly believe."

Jesus' authority is questioned (21:23-27)

²³Jesus entered the temple courts. While He was teaching the people there, the chief priests and elders challenged Him: "On whose authority are You doing these things? Who gave You such authority?"

²⁴Jesus answered: "I will ask you a question as well. Answer Me and then I will tell you on whose authority I do these things. What about John's baptism? Was it inspired by heaven or only the work of man?"

²⁵They discussed this among themselves. "If we say it was inspired by heaven," they said, "He will ask, 'In that case why did

you not believe John?' ²⁶ But if we dare to say that it was only the work of man, we fear the reaction of the people; for they believe John to be a prophet."

²⁷ So they told Jesus: "We don't know the answer to your question."

"Then neither will I answer your question," Jesus said. "I will not tell you on whose authority I do these things."

The parable of the two sons (21:28-32)

²⁸ "What do you say to this? A man had two sons. He told one, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.' ²⁹ 'No, I will not,' he answered; but he changed his mind later and went and did as his father had said.

³⁰ "Then the father gave the same order to his other son. He answered, 'Certainly sir, I will go,' but he never went.

³¹ "Now which of the two sons obeyed his father?"

"The first," they answered.

So Jesus said to them: "I tell you this truth most emphatically, crooked tax collectors and prostitutes are entering God's Kingdom ahead of you self-righteous leaders. ³² John came to show you the way of true righteousness, but you refused to believe what he said; but the tax collectors and the prostitutes who recognised their need of forgiveness, did believe him. Even though you saw what was happening, still you refused to repent and believe the message he brought from God."

The parable of the tenants (21:33-46)

³³ "Listen to this parable: A landowner planted a vineyard, put a wall around it, dug a winepress and built a watchtower. Then he leased the vineyard to tenants while he went on a prolonged journey.

³⁴ When it was nearing harvest time, the owner sent servants to the tenants to collect his share of the fruit.

³⁵ "But they seized the servants. They beat one, killed one and stoned another. ³⁶ So the owner sent a greater number of servants to them, but the tenants treated them in a similar way. ³⁷ Finally, he sent his own son saying, 'Surely they will respect my son.'

³⁸ "However, knowing him to be the heir, the tenants said to each other, 'We can take his inheritance if we kill him. Come on, let us do it.' ³⁹ So they took hold of him, threw him out of the vineyard and then killed him.

⁴⁰ "So what will the owner do to those tenants when he returns?"

⁴¹The religious leaders answered: “He will be certain to send such terrible men to a horrific death. Then he will find responsible tenants for the vineyard, who will give him his rightful share of the harvest.”

⁴²Jesus then said to them: “Have you not read the scriptures that say: ‘The builders rejected the stone that became the keystone. This was the Lord’s purpose, and we now see how wonderful it is.’

⁴³“Therefore I warn you that God’s Kingdom will be taken from you and will be given to those who will reproduce its fruit. ⁴⁴Anyone who falls on this Stone will be shattered and he on whom it falls will be crushed.”

⁴⁵The chief priests and the Pharisees realised that Jesus was referring to them in these parables. ⁴⁶So they wanted to find a way to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the reactions of the crowd because they held Jesus in such high regard.

The parable of the wedding feast (22:1-14)

22 Then Jesus taught them another parable: ²“The Kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding feast for his son. ³He sent his servants to those already invited, telling them it was time to come to the feast; but they all refused to come.

⁴“So the king sent more servants with these instructions: ‘Tell the invited guests that I have prepared the feast. The cattle have been slaughtered and the meat is cooked and ready. So come to the wedding feast immediately.’

⁵“But the guests ignored the pleas of the king and went about their daily business as usual, one to his farm, another to his office. ⁶Some took hold of the king’s servants, abused them and then killed them. ⁷This so angered the king that he sent his soldiers to kill the murderers and destroy their city by fire.

⁸“Then he instructed other servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those I invited did not deserve the honour of sitting at my table. ⁹So go now into the streets and invite anyone you find to come to the feast.’ ¹⁰The servants obeyed and gathered all those they found, whether good or bad characters; and so the place where the wedding feast was held was filled with guests.

¹¹“When the king himself entered, he noticed among the guests one man who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹²He asked him, ‘Friend how were you admitted without the right wedding clothes?’ But the man had nothing to say in response.

¹³ “So the king told his assistants, ‘Bind his hands and feet and throw him out into the spiritual darkness where people will weep for their foolishness and suffer eternal affliction.’”

¹⁴ Then Jesus said: “I invite many to my heavenly wedding feast, but only a few are chosen!”

Paying taxes to Caesar (22:15-22)

¹⁵ On hearing this the Pharisees left and planned how they could trap Jesus by His own words, giving them opportunity to accuse Him. ¹⁶ They sent some of their disciples along with some members of Herod’s political party, and said: “Teacher, we know that it is clear You are a man of integrity who teaches God’s ways according to the truth of His Word. You will not be influenced by the opinions of men, caring nothing for their rational ideas. ¹⁷ So tell us what to think about this. Should we pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

¹⁸ Jesus perceived the malice behind their question and replied: “You are hypocrites, all of you. Why do you want to trap Me like this? ¹⁹⁻²⁰ Bring me a coin used to pay taxes.” When they gave Him the coin, he asked them, “Whose portrait is this? And to whom does this inscription refer?”

²¹ “Caesar,” they answered.

Then Jesus told them: “Give to Caesar what you owe Caesar, but give to God what you owe God.”

²² They were speechless when they heard this and could only go away silent.

Marriage at the resurrection (22:23-33)

²³ Later on that same day, the Sadducees tried to trick Jesus with another question. Now the Sadducees do not believe there is any resurrection after death. ²⁴ So they said: “Teacher, Moses decreed that the brother of a man who dies childless must marry his widow so she can bear children. ²⁵ Now imagine there were seven brothers. The first married, died childless and left the widow for his brother. ²⁶ But he also died childless, as did a third brother, and so on until all seven had married her in turn. ²⁷ Then the woman also died. ²⁸ So in the resurrection, since all seven were married to her, whose wife will she be?”

²⁹ Jesus answered: “You know neither the scriptures nor God’s power, so you have no understanding. ³⁰ There will be no marriage at the resurrection, for everyone in heaven will be like the angels.

³¹⁻³² “Now concerning whether the dead are raised or not, have you not read the words of God Himself: ‘I am the God of Abraham,

the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? So He is not God of the dead but of the living!"

³³When the crowds heard what He said they were amazed at how Jesus silenced His critics by teaching the truth.

The most important commandment (22:34-40)

³⁴⁻³⁶ Seeing how Jesus had dealt with the Sadducees, one of the Pharisees who was an expert in the religious law, asked Him another test question: "Teacher, which is the most important commandment God has given in the law?"

³⁷ Jesus answered: 'You are to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul life, every aspect of your personality, and with all your mind.' ³⁸This is the greatest and most important of God's commands. ³⁹The second is similar: 'You are to love your neighbour in the same way that you already care about yourself and your own welfare.' ⁴⁰Everything that is taught in God's law and by the Prophets is based on these two commandments to love."

Christ, Messiah, Lord (22:41-46)

⁴¹ Then Jesus put a question to the group of Pharisees who were present. ⁴² "What do you believe about the Christ, the Messiah? Whose Son is He?"

They replied: "He is the Son of David."

⁴³⁻⁴⁴ So Jesus asked them: "If that is the case, how could David, speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, call Him 'Lord'? For David says, 'The Lord said to My Lord, 'Sit down at My right hand while I bring all Your enemies into subjection until they are all under Your feet.'"

⁴⁵ "If David calls the Messiah 'Lord', how could He be his son?"

⁴⁶ Again there was silence; no one had any answer to His question. In fact from that day no one else dared to put any more trick questions to Jesus.

Jesus instructs His followers (23:1-12)

23 Then Jesus addressed both the crowds and His disciples: ² "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees are to interpret the scriptures correctly. ³ When they do so, you are to obey whatever they teach you. But do not follow the example they set by the way they live, for they do not put into practice themselves what they

22:37 *Deuteronomy 6:5*

22:39 *Leviticus 19:18*

tell others to do. ⁴They place heavy burdens of legalistic religious traditions onto people, and do nothing to help them be free of their real burdens.

⁵“Instead, they act in ways they think will impress others as to how religious they are. They wear large boxes containing scripture verses on their arms and their robes have long tassels, for they think this will prove what great authority they have. ⁶They are mere show-offs who want the places of honour at public events and the most prominent seats in the synagogues. ⁷They feel so proud when others acknowledge them in the market places and treat them with deference calling them ‘Master!’

⁸“But you, My followers, are not to be called ‘master,’ for you are all brothers who have only one Master. ⁹Neither are you to call anyone here on earth your spiritual ‘father’, for you have only one Father spiritually, and He is in heaven. ¹⁰Neither are you to be addressed as ‘teacher’, for you have only one Teacher, the Christ.

¹¹“The greatest ones among you will be those who are happy to serve others. ¹²For whoever tries to place himself in a position of prominence will be humbled, but whoever is humble before God and others will be placed in a position of prominence before God.

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees (23:13-39)

¹³“You teachers of the law and you Pharisees are hypocrites and are cursed. Not only do you fail to enter the Kingdom of heaven yourselves, but you prevent others from doing so. You shut the door to the Kingdom in their faces, even though they want to enter. ¹⁴You teachers of the law and you Pharisees are hypocrites and are cursed for you take advantage of widows and pray long pretentious prayers for effect. Your punishment will be more severe as a result.

¹⁵“You teachers of the law and you Pharisees are cursed because of your hypocrisy. You will travel great distances by land or sea to win a single person over to your own ways; but if he becomes one of you, then you have only succeeded in making him twice as much a son of hell as you are yourselves.

¹⁶“You are cursed, you blind guides! You teach, ‘It means nothing if someone swears by the temple when he makes an oath. But if someone swears by the gold of the temple then his oath is valid and must be kept.’ ¹⁷What blind fools you are! Really, which is greater, the gold or the temple itself that is sacred to God?

¹⁸“You also have a saying, ‘It means nothing if someone swears by the altar; but if anyone swears by the gift laid on the altar, he is

bound by the oath he has taken.’¹⁹ How blind you are! Which is greater? The gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?²⁰ Because this is the case, if you swear by the altar you swear by all that has been laid on it.²¹ Also he who swears by the temple swears by God who reveals His presence in the temple.²² And if anyone should swear by heaven, he swears by God’s throne and by the One who sits in Majesty upon it.

²³“You hypocritical teachers of the law and Pharisees are cursed. You are so particular about tithing all you receive, that you even give a tenth of your spices. Yet at the same time you fail to observe the more important aspects of God’s law: justice, mercy and forgiveness. These are the things you should practise, while still giving the first tenth of all you receive.²⁴ You blind guides! You are so concerned not to swallow a fly, but end up swallowing a camel instead!

²⁵“You teachers of the law and you Pharisees are cursed. You are hypocrites. You are meticulous about cleansing the external things, such as the cups and dishes you use.²⁶ But inside, in your own hearts, you are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisees! If you first clean the inside of the cup and dish, your own heart, then the external things will also be clean!

²⁷“You are cursed, you teachers of the law and you Pharisees. You are hypocrites! You are like tombs whitewashed on the outside to look good, but inside you are full of the bones of the dead and everything that is foul and unclean. You are just like that.²⁸ Outwardly you give the impression of being so righteous, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and evil.

²⁹“You are cursed, you teachers of the law and you Pharisees. What hypocrites you are! You build ornate tombs for the prophets you say you honour, and you decorate the graves of the righteous who you say you revere.³⁰ You even say, ‘If we had lived in their times, we would not have treated them as our ancestors did. We would never have shed the blood of the prophets.’³¹ Actually, you are testifying against yourselves, for you are the descendants of the very ones who murdered the prophets.³² You may as well finish what they started!

³³“You are snakes, the sons of vipers! How can you escape being condemned and thrown into hell?³⁴ I will send you prophets, those who are truly wise, who speak and live according to the truth. And what will you do to them? Some you will kill and have crucified. Others you will flog in your synagogues and still others you will persecute in every town.³⁵ And so you will be guilty of joining the long line of those who have murdered the truly righteous, from the

murder of Abel through to the killing of Zechariah, the son of Berekiah, who was even murdered in the temple between the altar and the holy place.

³⁶ "I tell you the truth; this judgment will come on you in this present generation.

³⁷ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you have killed the prophets and stoned those God sent to you. Yet often I have longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings to protect them; but you would not allow Me to do so. ³⁸Look now, you have inherited a house that has become desolate. ³⁹For I tell you clearly, you will not see Me again until you say, 'We bless Him who comes in the Lord's name.' "

Jesus foretells the demolition of the temple (24:1-3)

24 As Jesus was walking away from the temple, His disciples drew His attention to the magnificence of the building. ²He said to them: "All these buildings you see will be demolished. I tell you the truth, not one stone will be left on another; everything will be destroyed."

³Later, when He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples approached Him privately and said: "Please tell us when these things will take place. And what signs shall we look for that will indicate You are about to come again and this age is about to end?"

Signs of the times (24:4-36)

⁴Jesus replied: "Be very careful that you allow no one to deceive you. ⁵Many will claim to come in My name saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will deceive many.

⁶"You will hear news about wars and potential wars, but be sure not to be alarmed. It is inevitable that such events will take place, but this does not mean the end of time has come. ⁷Nations will make war on other nations, kingdoms will oppose other kingdoms. There will be times of famine, and earthquakes will cause destruction in several places. ⁸Yet all such events are only the very beginning of the terrible things that will take place.

⁹"Then My followers will be persecuted, killed and hated simply because they believe in Me. ¹⁰During the testing times ahead many will deny their faith in Me and will betray those they formerly regarded as brothers. Their love will turn to hatred. ¹¹And many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. ¹²⁻¹³Wickedness

will increase to such an extent that the love of many will grow cold; but he who stands firm in his faith to the very end will be assured of salvation.

¹⁴ “Despite all this, the gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the world, so that all nations may hear the truth; only when that has happened will the end come.

¹⁵ “Pay particular notice of this: the prophet Daniel spoke of the ungodly object that desecrates the Holy Place. ¹⁶ When you see that this has taken place then you will know it is time for those who live in Judea to flee to the mountains. ¹⁷⁻¹⁸ There will be no time for anyone on the roof of his house to gather his belongings together; neither will those caught out in the open have time to go home for their clothes. ¹⁹ At that time it will be terrible for those who are pregnant or have young babies.

²⁰ “Pray that you will not have to flee during the winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ But there has never been such a time of distress to match what will happen then, nor will such an event be equalled in the future. ²² Unless God intervenes to cut short this time, no one would be able to survive. However He will ensure that these days will be restricted for the sake of those He has chosen.

²³ “Should anyone say to you then, ‘See, here is the Christ!’ or ‘He is over there!’ do not believe him. ²⁴ False Christs and false prophets will appear and will even perform great demonic signs and miracles that will deceive some who believe in Me. That hardly seems possible, but it will happen. ²⁵ And then you will remember this warning that I gave you beforehand.

²⁶ “If someone tells you the Christ is out in the desert, do not go there to search for Him. If they say, ‘He is concealed here’, do not believe what they say. ²⁷ For the Son of Man will come as swiftly as a flash of lighting that can be seen everywhere from east to west.

²⁸ “You can tell where there is a dead carcass by the vultures that gather in that place. So you will see the evidence that demonstrates that the end is near.

²⁹ “During the aftermath of these terrible events, ‘the sun will be darkened, the moon will give no light, the stars will fall from the skies and the heavens will be shaken.’

³⁰ “Then the sign of the Son of Man will be seen in the sky, and every nation on earth will mourn. They will behold the Son of Man coming among the clouds in the sky, with power and great glory. ³¹ And with the loud sound of the trumpet He will send His angels

to gather all those He has chosen from every direction of the earth and every part of heaven.

³² "Now learn an important lesson from the fig tree. As soon as its branches come into bud, you know that summer approaches. ³³ In the same way, when you see the events I am describing you know that the time is near, as if it was knocking on your door.

³⁴ "I tell you the truth, all these things will have taken place before the end of this generation.

³⁵ "The heavens and the earth will end, but My words are eternal and will remain forever. ³⁶ No one knows the exact timing of the end of all things, not the angels in heaven, not even the Son. This is known only to the Father.

The second coming of the Son of Man (24:37-51)

³⁷ "The second coming of the Son of Man will be as it was in Noah's time. ³⁸ Before the flood, people were living their normal lives, eating, drinking, getting married. It was like this right up to the day when Noah entered the ark. ³⁹ They had no idea of what was about to happen. Then suddenly the flood came and they were all destroyed. This is what it will be like when the Son of Man comes again. ⁴⁰ Two men will be working in a field; one will be taken, the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding the grain; one will be taken and the other left behind.

⁴² "So be on the alert because you do not know when your Lord will come for you.

⁴³ "However you can understand this analogy: If the owner of the house had known when the thief intended to come and rob him, he would have been ready and waiting for him and would not have allowed the break-in to take place. ⁴⁴ In the same way, you must be ready and waiting because the Son of Man will come at a time when you least expect Him.

⁴⁵ "Who, then, will be considered to be a faithful and wise servant whom the master can trust to be in charge of the other servants in his household, to ensure they are provided for in the right way and are ready? ⁴⁶ That servant will be well rewarded if his master finds him fulfilling his duties diligently when he returns. ⁴⁷ I tell you most emphatically, his master will put him in charge of all he possesses.

⁴⁸⁻⁴⁹ "But what if that servant is evil and says to himself, 'My master has been away a long time,' so he begins to mistreat his fellow servants and indulges in drugs and drink? ⁵⁰ His master will come when that servant is totally unprepared and has no expectation of his arrival.

⁵¹And the master will deal savagely with him and condemn him to be eternally with the other hypocrites, in the place where there will be continual mourning and eternal suffering.

The parable of the ten bridesmaids (25:1-13)

25 “This future revelation of the Kingdom of heaven can be likened to ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ² Five were foolish and five were wise. ³ Although the foolish ones took their lamps they did not take any spare oil with them. ⁴ However, the wise took jars of oil as well as their lamps.

⁵ “Now because the bridegroom was such a long time in coming, they all became tired and fell asleep. ⁶ Then at midnight they heard a shout, ‘Here comes the bridegroom! Come and meet him.’

⁷ “All the bridesmaids awoke and prepared their lamps. ⁸ But the foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Our lamps are going out. Give us some of your oil.’

⁹ “But the wise ones replied, ‘No, there is not enough for all of us. You must go and buy some oil for yourselves.’ ¹⁰ But while on their way to the store, the bridegroom arrived. The wise bridesmaids were ready and followed him into the wedding feast. Then the doors were shut.

¹¹ “Later the foolish ones arrived. ‘Sir! Sir!’ they pleaded, ‘Open the door so we can come in.’ ¹² But the bridegroom responded: ‘I tell you the truth, I do not know you!’

¹³ “So be on the alert because you do not know the day or the time when the Bridegroom will come for you!

The parable of the faithful servants (25:14-30)

¹⁴ “You can also compare the Kingdom of heaven to a man who, because he was going to be away on a long journey, called his servants together and gave them various sums of money to put to use. ¹⁵ To one he gave five thousand, to another two thousand and to a third one thousand, knowing they had different abilities.

¹⁶ “The man who had been entrusted with five thousand used the money well and doubled the amount, making a further five thousand. ¹⁷ The servant who had been given two thousand also doubled the amount and made a further two thousand profit.

¹⁸ “However, the man with the one thousand merely found a safe place and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹ "The master returned after a long time and called the servants to account for how they had used the money. ²⁰ The man who had received five thousand brought the further five thousand profit he had made, saying, 'Master, I have doubled the five thousand you entrusted to me.'

²¹ "His master replied, 'You have done well. You are a good and faithful servant! You have proved your faithfulness in a small way; now I will give you much more responsibility. Come and share in your master's joy!'

²² "Then the man who had been given two thousand came forward and said, 'Master, I have doubled the two thousand you gave me to use.'

²³ "His master replied, 'You also have done well and are a good and faithful servant. You have proved your faithfulness so now I can promote you. Come and share in my delight!'

²⁴ "Then the man who had been entrusted with one thousand came forward and said, 'Master, I regarded you as a hard man, expecting to gather a harvest where you have not sown the seed yourself. ²⁵ So in fear I went and put your money in a safe place. So here it is. I return what belongs to you.'

²⁶⁻²⁷ "His master replied, 'You are a wretched lazy servant! If you knew that I expected to gather a harvest where I have not sown personally, then you should at least have deposited my money in the bank, where it would have gained some interest by the time I returned.'

²⁸ "Then he ordered, 'Take the thousand from him and give it to the one who now has ten thousand. ²⁹ For everyone who is faithful in using what he has received will be given more, so much more that he will have an abundance. But those who are unfruitful in the way they use the little they have will end up with nothing; everything will be taken from them. ³⁰ Throw this useless servant out into the spiritual darkness, where there will be continual mourning and eternal suffering.'

The sheep and the goats (25:31-46)

³¹ "When the Son of Man returns He will come in glory attended by angels; and He will sit on His throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him and as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, so He will divide the people into two groups. ³³ Those who are His sheep He will place on His right; the goats will be on His left.

³⁴“The King will say to the sheep on His right, ‘You are blessed by My Father. So come and claim your inheritance, the Kingdom He prepared for you since creation began. ³⁵For you fed Me when I was hungry and you satisfied My thirst. When I came to you in the form of a stranger, you invited Me in to stay. ³⁶When I needed clothing you gave Me clothes. When I was sick you cared for Me. And when I was in prison you came and visited Me.’

³⁷“Then the righteous, the sheep, will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You or when did we satisfy Your thirst? ³⁸When did we invite You in as a stranger or clothe You? ³⁹When did we see You sick or in prison and visit You?’

⁴⁰“The King will then reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for another person who I regard as My brother, you actually did for Me.’

⁴¹“But then the King will say to the goats on His left, ‘Go away from Me into the eternal fire made ready for the devil and his angels, for you are cursed. ⁴²I was hungry but you gave Me nothing, I was thirsty and you did not care. ⁴³I was a stranger and you ignored Me. I was cold and you gave Me nothing to wear. I was sick and in prison and you avoided Me.’

⁴⁴“Then the goats will answer, ‘Lord when did we see You hungry or thirsty or as a stranger or cold, sick or in prison, and did nothing to help You?’

⁴⁵“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, when you failed to do any of these things for other people who I regard as My brothers, you refused to do them for Me.’

⁴⁶“Then the goats will suffer eternal punishment, but the righteous sheep will enjoy eternal life.”

The plot to arrest Jesus (26:1-5)

26 When Jesus had finished speaking these things publicly, He said to His disciples in private: ²“You know that it is only two days to Passover when the Son of Man will be betrayed and crucified.”

³⁻⁴The high priest, Caiaphas, called together a meeting of the chief priests and elders of the people to plan how they could have Jesus arrested secretly and then killed. ⁵“This must not happen during the Feast or the people could riot,” they concluded.

A woman anoints Jesus (26:6-13)

⁶Meanwhile, Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon who had been healed of leprosy. ⁷A woman carrying an alabaster jar of very

expensive perfume approached Him while at the table, and poured the perfume over His head. ⁸The disciples were indignant at this. “What a waste,” they said. ⁹“This perfume is so valuable it could have been sold and the money given to the poor.”

¹⁰Jesus was aware of their concern and asked them: “Why are you worried about what this woman has done? She has blessed Me in a beautiful way. ¹¹You will always have the poor with you, but I will not always be with you. ¹²When this dear woman anointed My body with the perfume, she was preparing it for My burial. ¹³I tell you the truth, what she has done for Me today will be told throughout the world in her memory, wherever the gospel is preached.”

Judas betrays Jesus (26:14-16)

¹⁴⁻¹⁵At this point Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the chief priests and asked them: “What will you give me if I betray Jesus to you?” They agreed to give him thirty silver coins that they counted out there and then. ¹⁶So from that moment Judas looked for a suitable opportunity to betray Jesus.

The Last Supper (26:17-29)

¹⁷On the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came and asked Jesus: “Where do You want us to prepare the Passover meal?”

¹⁸He told them: “Go to a certain man in the city and tell him, ‘The Teacher says, ‘My appointed time has arrived. I intend to celebrate the Passover with My disciples in your house.’” ¹⁹They went and did as Jesus had ordered and prepared for the Passover.

²⁰⁻²¹While eating the evening meal with the twelve, Jesus said: “I tell you the truth, one of you is about to betray Me.”

²²This grieved them and one after another they asked Him: “Surely, it could not be me, Lord?”

²³Jesus replied: “One of you who shares this meal with Me now will surely betray Me. ²⁴The Son of Man will die in precisely the way that has been written prophetically about Him. But the one who betrays the Son of Man will be cursed! He will wish he had never been born!”

²⁵Then Judas, the guilty one, said: “Surely you don’t refer to me, Master?”

Jesus replied: “Yes, you are the betrayer.”

²⁶During the meal Jesus took some bread into His hands, gave thanks to the Father, broke it and then gave it to His disciples saying: “Take this and eat it; for this is My body.”

²⁷ Then He took a cup in His hands, gave thanks and passed it to His disciples saying: "Drink this, all of you. ²⁸ The new covenant is being established in My blood that is poured out for many, so their sins might be completely forgiven. ²⁹ I tell you clearly, that I will not drink wine again from now until I drink the heavenly wine with you in My Father's Kingdom."

Jesus predicts His disciples will disown Him (26:30-35)

³⁰ When they had sung praises to God, they left for the Mount of Olives. ³¹ Jesus warned them: "Tonight all of you are going to desert Me because of what happens to Me, for it is written, 'God will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of His flock will be scattered.' ³² But when I have risen after My death, I will go ahead of you to Galilee where you shall see Me again."

³³ Peter reacted: "Even if everyone else leaves You because of what happens to You, I will never do so."

³⁴ Jesus told Him: "I tell you the truth, three times before the cock crows at dawn you will disown the fact that you even know Me."

³⁵ But Peter insisted: "Even if it means I have to die with You, I will never disown You." And all the other disciples gave the same undertaking.

Gethsemane (26:36-46)

³⁶ Jesus then went to a place called Gethsemane. He said to His disciples who went with Him: "Sit here while I go and pray by Myself." ³⁷ He took only Peter, James and John with Him, and was obviously troubled and full of sorrow. ³⁸ He told them: "I feel that I could die of grief, so great is My sorrow. Stop here and keep praying for Me."

³⁹ Jesus went a little further by Himself, fell to the ground on His face and prayed: "My Father, please take this cup of suffering away from Me if this is at all possible. Yet I want your will above any desires of My own."

⁴⁰ When He returned to the three disciples, He found them asleep. "Could you not pray for Me even for one hour?" He asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Wake up and pray that you will not be overcome by temptation. Your spirit is willing, but your body is so weak."

⁴² Jesus again went by Himself and prayed: "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup of suffering to be taken away, I simply resign Myself to Your will. I am ready to drink from this cup."

⁴³ When He returned to the disciples, He discovered they had fallen asleep again; they had been unable to stay awake. ⁴⁴ So He left them and went to pray for a third time, submitting Himself again to His Father's will!

⁴⁵ Then He returned to them and said: "Are you still sleeping and resting? Wake up! The time has come for the Son of Man to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Come on, let us go! Here comes My betrayer!"

Jesus' arrest (26:47-56)

⁴⁷ Even as He was speaking, Judas, who was one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a large crowd armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent by the chief priests and the other religious leaders. ⁴⁸ Judas had arranged to give them a signal, 'The man you are to arrest is the one I kiss.' ⁴⁹ He went straight up to Jesus and said: "It is good to see You, Master!" Then Judas kissed Him.

⁵⁰ Jesus said to him: "My friend, what have you come here to do?" But the other men immediately grabbed hold of Jesus and arrested Him. ⁵¹ One of those with Jesus drew his sword and struck out at the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear.

⁵² "Put your sword away," Jesus commanded Him. "All who depend on the sword will die by the sword! ⁵³ Surely you realise that if I chose to do so I could call on My Father to help Me, and immediately He would put thousands of angels at My disposal! ⁵⁴ But if I was to do that, how could the scriptures be fulfilled that predict that all this must happen?"

⁵⁵ Then Jesus addressed the crowd: "Do you think I am the leader of a rebellion? Why have you come with swords and clubs to capture Me? I sat teaching in the temple courts every day, yet you did not arrest Me then. ⁵⁶ However, what the prophets wrote has to be fulfilled." At this point all the disciples left Him and fled.

Jesus before the chief priests (26:57-68)

⁵⁷ The crowd that had arrested Jesus took Him to the house of the high priest, Caiaphas, where the teachers of the law and other religious leaders had gathered together. ⁵⁸ Peter followed at a safe distance and even entered the courtyard of the high priest's house, where he sat with the guards to see what would happen to Jesus.

⁵⁹ The chief priests and the whole Jewish Council were trying to find witnesses to testify falsely against Jesus so they could justify putting Him to death. ⁶⁰ But although many false witnesses came forward, none of them agreed with each other.

Finally, they found two that did agree. ⁶¹ “We heard this man say, ‘I can destroy God’s temple and rebuild it in three days.’ ”

⁶² Then the chief priest stood and addressed Jesus: “Do you have no answer to this charge? Can you refute the testimony these witnesses bring against you?” ⁶³ But Jesus said nothing.

So the high priest said to Him: “I charge you in the Name of the living God, tell us plainly: Are You the Christ, the Messiah, God’s Son?”

⁶⁴ “Yes, what you have said is the truth,” Jesus replied. “And I tell all of you that the time will come when you will see Me as the Son of Man, sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One in heaven and coming on the clouds of glory!”

⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothes as a sign of his disgust and said: “This is blasphemy! We do not need to look for any further witnesses, do we? You have all heard for yourselves the blasphemy He has spoken. ⁶⁶ What is your judgment?”

“He deserves the death penalty,” they answered.

⁶⁷⁻⁶⁸ Then they spit in Jesus’ face and punched Him. Others struck Him saying: “Prophesy to us now, O Christ. Who hit You?”

Peter denies knowing Christ (26:69-75)

⁶⁹ As Peter was sitting in the courtyard, one of the servant girls challenged him: “You were with this Jesus of Galilee, weren’t you?”

⁷⁰ He denied this in front of everyone. “I have no idea what you are talking about,” he said.

⁷¹ He went to the entrance, but there another servant girl looked at him and said to the others: “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁷² Again Peter denied this: “I swear I do not know the Man!”

⁷³ A little while later, the others approached Peter and said: “You must be one of His followers. Your accent gives you away.”

⁷⁴ Then Peter began to curse and swear: “I do not even know this Man!” No sooner had he spoken, than he heard the cock crow and immediately remembered what Jesus had said: “Before you hear the cock crow, you will declare three times that you do not even know Me.”

⁷⁵ And Peter went out and wept bitter tears of remorse.

Judas hangs himself (27:1-10)

27 In the early hours of the morning, the chief priests and other religious leaders passed judgment on Jesus and condemned

Him to death. ² They had Him bound and handed Him over to Pilate, the Roman governor.

³⁻⁴ When Judas, the betrayer, saw how Jesus had been condemned, he was so filled with remorse that he wanted to return the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and religious leaders, saying: "I have sinned greatly in betraying One who was innocent."

⁵ "Why should that concern us?" they replied. "You are responsible for your own actions." So Judas threw the money down on the floor of the temple. He then went and hanged himself.

⁶ The chief priests picked up the money but said: "It would be unlawful for us to put this into the temple treasury because it has the mark of death on it." ⁷ So they decided to use it to buy the potters place to bury foreigners. ⁸ It has been called the Field of Blood ever since. ⁹⁻¹⁰ This fulfilled what was said by the prophet, Jeremiah: 'They took the thirty pieces of silver, the amount He was valued at by the people of Israel, and used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord had determined.'

On trial before Pilate (27:11-14)

¹¹ As Jesus stood before the governor, Pilate asked Him: "Are You really the King of the Jews?"

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus answered.

¹² But when the chief priests and religious leaders brought their accusations against Him, Jesus made no response. ¹³ So Pilate asked Him: "Surely You hear these charges that are being brought against You?" ¹⁴ But Jesus still remained silent, refusing to answer any of these false accusations, much to the governor's astonishment.

Barabbas released (27:15-25)

¹⁵ Now it was the Roman custom to release a prisoner of the people's choice at the time of the Feast. ¹⁶ A notorious criminal called Barabbas was in prison at that time. ¹⁷ So when the people were assembled, Pilate asked them: "Who do you want me to release, Barabbas or Jesus, the Christ?" ¹⁸ He was well aware that the religious leaders had only handed Jesus over to him out of jealousy, not because He was guilty of any crime.

¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, Pilate's wife sent him a message, 'Don't become involved because I have had a terrible dream on account of this Man. He is innocent!'

²⁰ But the chief priests and religious leaders stirred up the crowd to shout for Barabbas to be released and for Jesus to be executed.

²¹ So when Pilate put the question, 'Which of the two do you want me to release?' they shouted: "Barabbas!"

²² "Then what do you want Me to do with Jesus, the Christ?" Pilate asked. They all shouted: "Crucify Him!"

²³ "Why?" Pilate asked. "What crime is He guilty of?"

But they only shouted more loudly: "Crucify Him!"

²⁴ Pilate saw that reason was of no avail and he was fearful of a riot breaking out. So he called for a bowl of water to be brought and publicly washed his hands before the crowd saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this Man. This is your responsibility!"

²⁵ All the people responded: "Let the responsibility for His death be on us and on our children!"

The Crucifixion (27:26-44)

²⁶ So Pilate released Barabbas as they wished. Then he had Jesus flogged before handing Him over to the soldiers for crucifixion.

²⁷ First they took Him to their barracks and gathered all the soldiers around Jesus. ²⁸ They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.

²⁹ They made a crown out of thorns twisted together and placed this on His head. Instead of a sceptre, they put a wooden stick in His hand and then knelt before Him in mock homage. "All hail, King of the Jews!" they said. ³⁰ They spat on Him and struck Him on the head again and again with the stick they had given Him.

³¹ When they had finished mocking Him, they took the robe off Him and replaced His own clothes, before leading Him to the place of crucifixion.

³² On the way, they forced a man from Cyrene called Simon to carry the cross. ³³⁻³⁴ When they reached the spot known as the Place of the Skull, they offered Jesus a drink of wine mixed with bitter gall. On tasting it, Jesus refused to drink.

³⁵ Then they crucified Him. While He hung on the cross, the soldiers divided His clothes among them by casting lots. The prophetic word had to be fulfilled, 'They divided My apparel among them and cast lots for My clothing.' ³⁶ Then they sat down to keep watch while Jesus died.

³⁷ They had placed the charge brought against Him above His head. It read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' ³⁸ Two thieves were crucified, one on either side of Him. ³⁹⁻⁴⁰ People passing by ridiculed Him. They shook their heads and shouted abuse: "You said You were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days. Come

on, then, save Yourself. If You really are God's Son, come down from the cross!"

⁴¹ The chief priests and religious leaders joined in this mockery. ⁴² They said: "He was able to save others, but look at Him now. He cannot even save Himself! Yet He says He is Israel's King! Well, if He comes down from the cross now, we will believe Him. ⁴³ He says He trusts in God. Let God rescue Him then, if He truly belongs to Him. After all, He claimed to be God's Son!" ⁴⁴ The thieves, who were crucified with Him, ridiculed Him in similar fashion and heaped insults on Him.

Jesus' death (27:45-56)

⁴⁵ Darkness fell across the whole land and lasted from noon until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁶ At about three o'clock Jesus cried loudly: "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"

⁴⁷ "He is calling for Elijah," some of those around said when they heard this. ⁴⁸ One of them immediately filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a stick and lifted it to Jesus' lips. ⁴⁹ The others said: "Leave Him alone. We will see if Elijah comes to save Him!"

⁵⁰ When Jesus had given a loud cry, He then gave up His spirit.

⁵¹ At that very moment the curtain concealing the Holy of holies in the temple was torn apart from top to bottom. ⁵² The earth shook, rocks were split apart, tombs were opened and many holy people were raised from the dead. ⁵³ They came out of the tombs and appeared to many people in the holy city of Jerusalem after Jesus' resurrection.

⁵⁴ The earthquake and these other phenomena terrified the centurion and soldiers guarding Jesus' body. "Truly, this was God's Son," they said.

⁵⁵⁻⁵⁶ Present at His death were many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for Him. They watched from a distance and among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of James and John.

The Burial of Jesus (27:57-66)

⁵⁷⁻⁵⁸ Towards evening a wealthy man from Arimathea, called Joseph, went to Pilate to ask for Jesus' body; and Pilate released the body to him. ⁵⁹⁻⁶⁰ Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb that had been carved out of the rock. He

rolled a large stone over the tomb's entrance and left. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary watched all this.

⁶²The next day was the one that followed the Day of Preparation. The chief priests and Pharisees went to see Pilate ⁶³ and told him: "Sir, we remember that before He died that deceiver said, 'I will rise again after three days.' ⁶⁴Please order that the tomb should be guarded and kept secure until after the third day, or His disciples may come and steal the body and then claim to everyone that He has been raised from the dead. This would be an even greater deception."

⁶⁵Pilate told them: "Go and set guards at the tomb to make it as secure as possible." So they went and sealed the tomb and posted guards.

The Resurrection (28:1-15)

28 As dawn broke on the Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb. ²Suddenly the earth shook violently and an angel of the Lord came from heaven, rolled back the stone that covered the tomb entrance and sat on it. ³He appeared radiant with clothes that were brilliantly white. ⁴The guards were so terrified that they shook with fear and then fell to the ground as if dead.

⁵The angel spoke to the women: "There is no need to fear, for I know that you have come looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is no longer here; He has risen from the dead, as He promised He would. Come and you can see the place where His body lay. ⁷Then go at once and give His disciples this message: 'Jesus has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you to Galilee where He will meet with you.'" The angel added: "I came to give you this message."

⁸So the women ran from the tomb, afraid and yet filled with joy, to relay the message to Jesus' disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus was there before them. "Rejoice!" He said to them. They fell before Him, took hold of His feet and worshipped Him. ¹⁰Then Jesus told them: "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee, where they shall see Me."

¹¹Meanwhile, some of the guards went to the city to report to the chief priests about all that had happened. ¹²The chief priests then met with the other religious leaders to devise a plan. They bribed the soldiers with a large sum of money ¹³ and told them: "You are to say that during the night His disciples came and stole His body while we were sleeping. ¹⁴If the governor hears about this, we will speak to him on your behalf so that you are not punished." ¹⁵The

soldiers accepted the money and said what they were told to say. As a result this fabrication has been spread widely among the Jews, even to this present day.

The disciples commissioned to go (28:16-20)

¹⁶The eleven disciples went to the mountain in Galilee where Jesus had instructed them to go. ¹⁷When they saw him they worshipped Him, but some still had doubts. ¹⁸Jesus told them: "All heavenly and earthly authority has been given to Me. ¹⁹So now I tell you to go and make disciples in every nation. Baptise them in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰Teach them to obey all that I have taught and commanded you. And be assured of this: I am always present with you, even to the end of this age."

