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Matthew

Chapter 1

¹This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah. He is a descendant of {King} David, who was a descendant of Abraham{, the ancestor of all Jewish people}.

²Abraham was the father of Isaac. Isaac was the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Judah and Judah's {older and younger} brothers. ³Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah. Their mother was Tamar. Perez was the father of Hezrom. Hezrom was the father of Aram. ⁴Aram was the father of Amminadab. Amminadab was the father of Nahshon. Nahshon was the father of Salmon. ⁵Salmon was the father of Boaz. Boaz's mother was Rahab. Boaz was the father of Obed. Obed's mother was Ruth. Obed was the father of Jesse. ⁶Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon. Solomon's mother was {Bathsheba, who had been} Uriah's wife. ⁷Solomon was the father of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was the father of Abijah. Abijah was the father of Asaph. ⁸Asaph was the father of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram. Joram was an ancestor of Ozias. ⁹Ozias was the father of Jotham. Jotham was the father of Ahaz. Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah. ¹⁰Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh. Manasseh was the father of Amos. Amos was the father of Josiah. ¹¹Josiah was the grandfather of Jechoniah and Jechoniah's brothers. {They lived} at the time when {the Babylonian army took the Israelites as} captives to the country of Babylon.

¹²After {the Babylonian army took the Israelites as} captives to the country of Babylon, Jechoniah became the father of Salathiel. Salathiel was the father of Zerubbabel. ¹³Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud. Abiud was the father of Eliakim. Eliakim was the father of Azor. ¹⁴Azor was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Achim. Achim was the father of Eliud. ¹⁵Eliud was the father of Eleazar. Eleazar was the father of Matthan. Matthan was the father of Jacob. ¹⁶Jacob was the father of Joseph. Joseph was Mary's husband. Mary was the mother of Jesus. Jesus is the one whom we call the Messiah.

¹⁷So then, there are 14 ancestors when we count from Abraham to David. There are 14 ancestors when we count from David until when {the Babylonian army took the Israelites as} captives to the country of Babylon. There are 14 ancestors when we count from that time to the Messiah.

¹⁸{I will tell you} what happened when the mother of Jesus the Messiah gave birth to him. His mother Mary was about to marry {a man named} Joseph, and they had not yet had sex. Despite that, Joseph discovered that Mary was pregnant with a baby (whom the Holy Spirit had given to her). ¹⁹Joseph, who was about to marry her, {thought that Mary had sex with another man.} Joseph usually did what was right, and he also did not want to shame Mary. So, he decided to say in private that he would not marry her. ²⁰While Joseph was deciding what to do, he saw an angel from the Lord while he was sleeping! The angel said to him, "Joseph, King David's descendant, do not be reluctant to marry Mary. {I say that} because it was the Holy Spirit who caused her to become pregnant. ²¹She will have a male child. You should name him 'Jesus,' {which means 'the Lord rescues'}. {You should name him that} because he will rescue his people from the sins that they have committed."

²²When all those things happened, what the Lord said by speaking through the prophet {Isaiah} came true. {Isaiah} said, ²³"A young woman who has never had sex will become pregnant! She will give birth to a male child. People will name him 'Immanuel.'"

The name Immanuel means, "God is with us." ²⁴After Joseph woke up, he married Mary, which is what the angel from the Lord had told him to do. ²⁵However, he did not have sex with her before she gave birth to a male child. Joseph named the child Jesus.

Chapter 2

¹{Mary} gave birth to Jesus in the town of Bethlehem in the region of Judea. During that time, Herod was the king there. {Some time after Mary gave birth to Jesus,} some scholars who studied the stars traveled from eastern countries to the city of Jerusalem! ²They were asking people, "Where is the child who will be the king over the Jewish people? We saw a star appear in the sky {that indicated that his mother had given birth to} him. We traveled here so that we can worship him."

³When King Herod learned {what these men were asking}, he was upset. Many people in the city of Jerusalem were also upset. ⁴So, King Herod summoned all the Jewish ruling priests and teachers of the Jewish law. He asked them about where the Messiah's mother would give birth to him.

⁵They answered him, "{His mother will give birth to him} in the town of Bethlehem in the region of Judea. {We know that} because of what the prophet {Micah} wrote.

⁶"You who live in the town of Bethlehem in the land of Judah,

your town is one of the important towns in Judah.

{That is} because someone from your town will become a leader.

That person will rule God's people, the Israelites."

⁷After that, King Herod summoned the scholars who studied the stars {to talk with him} privately. He asked them about exactly when they first saw the {special} star. ⁸After that, he told them, "Go to the town of Bethlehem and look for the child. When you are sure that you know who he is, {come back and} tell me {who he is}. That way, I too can go and worship him." Then he sent them away.

⁹The scholars listened to the king, and then they traveled {to Bethlehem}. The star which they saw when it appeared in the sky guided them! It moved {in the sky} until it was directly above the place where the child{, Jesus,} was living. ¹⁰When they saw how the star moved and then stopped, they were extremely happy. ¹¹They went into the house {above which the star had stopped}. There, they saw the child {Jesus} and his mother Mary. They bowed down and worshiped him. Then, they unpacked the valuable things that they had brought with them. They gave Jesus gold, incense, and valuable tree resin. ¹²After that, God used a dream to tell them not to go back to King Herod. So, they went home on a different road {than the one on which they had come}.

¹³After the scholars who studied the stars went home, Joseph saw an angel from the Lord while he was sleeping! The angel told him, "King Herod wants to find the child so that he can kill him. So, when you wake up, escape to the land of Egypt with the child and his mother{, your wife}. Stay there until I tell you {that you can return home}."

¹⁴Then Joseph woke up. During that night, he left for the land of Egypt with the child and the child's mother{, his wife}. ¹⁵They lived in the land of Egypt while King Herod ruled. So, what the Lord said by speaking through the prophet {Hosea} came true:

"I have told my son to leave Egypt."

¹⁶When {the scholars who studied the stars did not come back to King Herod}, he realized that they had fooled him. He became furious. He had some of his soldiers go to the city of Bethlehem and the areas around it and kill every male child who was two years old or younger. {He picked those ages} because of what the scholars who studied the stars told him about the exact time {when they first saw the star}. ¹⁷At that time, what God said by speaking through the prophet Jeremiah came true:

¹⁸“People heard women in the town of Ramah lamenting loudly.

It was the descendants of Rachel mourning for their children.

Because their children were dead, they would not stop mourning.”

¹⁹{During this time, Joseph and his family were living} in the land of Egypt. After Herod died, Joseph saw an angel from the Lord while he was sleeping! ²⁰The angel told him, “Everyone who wanted to kill the child has died. So, when you wake up, return to the country of Israel with the child and his mother{, your wife}.” ²¹Then Joseph woke up. He went back to the country of Israel with the child and the child’s mother{, his wife}.

²²However, Joseph heard that Archelaus had succeeded his father, King Herod, as king over the region of Judea. So, he was afraid to live there. Further, while Joseph was sleeping, God instructed him {to live somewhere else}. So, Joseph decided to live in the region of Galilee. ²³When he and his family arrived {in Galilee}, they lived in the town of Nazareth. In that way, what God said by speaking through the prophets came true: “People will say that the Messiah is from Nazareth.”

Chapter 3

¹While Jesus was living in Galilee, a man whom people called John the Baptizer went to a desolate area in the region of Judea. He proclaimed, ²“Stop doing what is wrong! {You should do that} because God is about to establish his heavenly kingdom here.” ³That man is the one about whom the Lord said, by speaking through the prophet Isaiah,

“In the desolate place, someone will be calling out {to the people}:

‘Prepare yourselves to receive the Lord!

Make yourselves ready for when he comes!’”

⁴As for this man John, he wore rough clothes that he made out of camel’s hair. He fastened around his waist a belt that he made from animal skin. He ate grasshoppers and honey that he found in that desolate area. ⁵At that time, people who lived in the city of Jerusalem, many people who lived in the region of Judea, and many people who lived near the Jordan River often went to listen to John. ⁶Many of these people agreed that they had sinned. Then, John baptized them in the Jordan River.

⁷In fact, many men from the Pharisee sect and from the Sadducee sect went to John so that he would baptize them. When he saw them, he declared to them, “You people are sneaky and dangerous like poisonous snakes! You think that if I baptize you, God will spare you when he punishes sinners. {But I did not say that!} ⁸You need to do the things that show that you have truly rejected your previous sinful way of living! ⁹Do not think to yourselves, ‘{Certainly God will not punish us, because} we are descendants of Abraham!’ {That does not impress God.} Let me assure you, God could turn these stones into descendants of Abraham! ¹⁰You are like fruit trees that do not produce good fruit. God is like a man who is positioning the head of his axe at the base of those trees, ready to chop them down and throw them into the fire. God is ready to punish you like that if you continue sinning.

¹¹I use water to baptize you so that you stop doing what is wrong. However, soon you will see someone else who is more powerful than I am. It is not appropriate for me to be even his servant. He will give you the Holy Spirit and make you pure. ¹²{The Messiah is ready to do that, just like} a farmer who has his winnowing fork ready to use. A farmer separates all the good grain from the useless chaff. He stores the grain safely in his barn, but he burns the chaff until it is all gone. {Much like that farmer, the Messiah will preserve the people who obey God, and he will punish the people who disobey God.}”

¹³After {John began preaching and baptizing people}, Jesus traveled from the region of Galilee to where John was near the Jordan River. He wanted John to baptize him. ¹⁴However, John did not want to baptize him. He said to Jesus, "You should not want me to baptize you. Actually, I need you to baptize me!"

¹⁵Jesus answered him, "Please {baptize me} at this time. When you do, you and I will be acting appropriately by doing what God requires." After {Jesus said that,} John agreed {to baptize} him.

¹⁶Right after John baptized him, Jesus walked out of the River Jordan. Then, God allowed him to see into heaven! He saw that the Holy Spirit, who looked like a small bird, was descending {from heaven} and landing on him. ¹⁷Then God spoke from heaven! He declared, "This man is my Son, the one whom I love dearly. What he does pleases me."

Chapter 4

¹After that, the Holy Spirit took Jesus into a desolate area. That way, the ruling evil spirit could try to make him sin.

²He did not eat any food for 40 days. After that, he was hungry. ³Then the devil arrived. He wanted to make Jesus sin. He said to Jesus, "Show me that you really are God's Son. Command these stones to become loaves of bread {for you to eat}."

⁴Jesus responded, "{I will not do that}, because Moses wrote in the Scriptures, 'People need more than food to stay alive. {They also need to do} everything that God tells {them to do}.'"

⁵After that, the ruling evil spirit transported Jesus to {Jerusalem,} the sacred city. He made him stand on the highest part of the temple. ⁶Then, he said to Jesus, "Show me that you really are God's Son. Jump from here! {You will not hurt yourself,} because it says in the Scriptures,

'God will tell his angels {to protect} you.

They will carry you,

and you will not hurt yourself at all.'"

⁷Jesus responded, "Again, {I will not do that}, because Moses wrote in the Scriptures, 'Do not provoke the Lord your God to see what he will do.'"

⁸Then, the devil transported Jesus to the top of a very tall mountain. {From there,} he showed Jesus all the nations in the world. {He showed Jesus} how rich and powerful they were. ⁹He told Jesus, "Bow down and worship me. Then, I will make you the ruler of all these countries."

¹⁰After that, Jesus responded, "Leave me, Satan! {I will not worship you,} because Moses wrote in the Scriptures, 'You must only worship the Lord your God. He is the only one you may honor {as God}.'"

¹¹After {Jesus said that,} the ruling evil spirit went away. Then, angels arrived and took care of Jesus!

¹²Soon afterward, Jesus learned that {King Herod Antipas} had put John {the Baptizer} in prison. So, Jesus went back to the region of Galilee. ¹³After he visited the town of Nazareth, he went to live in the town of Capernaum. Capernaum is next to the Sea of Galilee in the region that used to belong to the tribe of Zebulun and the tribe of Naphtali. ¹⁴So, what God said by speaking through the prophet Isaiah came true:

¹⁵"{I am speaking about people in} the regions that belong to the tribe of Zebulun and to the tribe of Naphtali.

{These regions are} by the Sea {of Galilee}, on the other side of the Jordan River.

{We call these regions} Galilee, where many non-Jewish people live.

The people {who live in those regions} sin and despair. They are like people who sit in dark places.

However, God will rescue them. They will be like people who see a bright light.

Again, {the people in those regions} suffer and die. They are like people who sit in a dangerous place without any light.

However, God will save them. It will be as if a light shines on them."

¹⁷After {he went to live in the town of Capernaum}, Jesus started proclaiming, "Stop doing what is wrong! {You should do that} because God is about to establish his heavenly kingdom here."

¹⁸One day, Jesus was walking next to the Sea of Galilee. He saw two men: Simon, who also had the name Peter, and Simon's {younger} brother Andrew. They earned money by catching and selling fish. {When Jesus saw them,} they were using nets to try to catch fish. ¹⁹Jesus commanded them, "Come with me and be my apprentices. I will teach you how to gather people {to be my apprentices}, just as you have been gathering fish." ²⁰As soon as {Jesus said this}, they stopped working. They went with him and were his apprentices. ²¹Jesus kept walking {next to the sea}. Then, he saw two more men: James, the son of Zebedee, and James' {younger brother} John. {When Jesus saw them,} they were preparing their fishing tools in a boat with their father, Zebedee. Jesus commanded them, {"Come with me and be my apprentices."} ²²As soon as {they heard what Jesus said,} they got out of the boat and left their father. They went with Jesus and were his apprentices.

²³Jesus visited all the towns in the region of Galilee. He instructed people {when they gathered} in the Jewish meeting places. He proclaimed the good news about God's kingdom. He cured many Jewish people who were sick in any way. ²⁴Many people who lived in the region of Syria heard about him. They took to him many people who were suffering, people who were sick or hurting, people with demons, and people who could not move or who had seizures. Jesus healed them. ²⁵Large groups of people went wherever Jesus went. These people came from the region of Galilee, from the region of the Ten Towns, from the city of Jerusalem, from the region of Judea, and from the east side of the Jordan River.

Chapter 5

¹When Jesus saw these large groups of people, he went up on a hill. He sat down there, {ready to teach,} and his apprentices gathered around him {to listen}. ²Then he began to instruct them. He said,

³"It is very good for those who do not have spiritual strength.

{That is} because they are part of God's heavenly kingdom.

⁴It is very good for those who grieve.

{That is} because God will encourage them.

⁵It is very good for those who are gentle.

{That is} because God will give them the world {when he renews it}.

⁶It is very good for those who greatly desire to do what is right.

{That is} because God will enable them to do what they desire to do.

⁷It is very good for those who are merciful {to other people}.

{That is} because God will be merciful to them.

⁸It is very good for those who desire what is good.

{That is} because they will be with God.

⁹It is very good for those who enable people to be peaceful {with each other}.

{That is} because God will regard them as his own children.

¹⁰It is very good for those whom others mistreat because they do what is right.

{That is} because they are part of God's heavenly kingdom.

¹¹It is very good for you whenever {people act against you} because you are my apprentices. They may shame you, mistreat you, and tell many hurtful lies about you. ¹²{When people treat you like that}, God is ready to reward you greatly from heaven. So, you should rejoice very much! Further, people mistreated the Jewish prophets long ago just as people mistreat you now.

¹³You are like salt since you make people in this world better, just as salt seasons food. However, if salt were to stop seasoning food well, no one could make it season food well again. No one can use it for anything. So, people throw it away, and others walk on it. {In the same way, I will punish you if you do not make this world better.}

¹⁴You are like a light that illuminates everyone in this world {since you tell people about me}. {You are like} a town on a hill that everyone can see {since everyone notices the good things that you do}. ¹⁵Further, when people light a lamp, they do not cover it with a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand. That way, it illuminates everyone in the house. ¹⁶Just as {the light from a lamp illuminates everyone in a house}, so you should publicly do what is right. That way, people will notice the good things that you do. Then, they will praise God, your Father, who rules from heaven.

¹⁷You should not conclude that I am here to abolish any parts of the Scriptures. I am not here to abolish them. Rather, I am here so that they come true. ¹⁸Every part of the Scriptures will be authoritative as long as what God has created continues to exist. {Further, the Scriptures will be authoritative} until everything {that their authors wrote about} happens. What I have said is true. ¹⁹So then, suppose that someone disregards even one of the most insignificant laws. Also, suppose that this person teaches other people to do the same thing. This person will be insignificant in God's heavenly kingdom. In contrast, suppose that someone obeys the laws and teaches other people to do the same thing. This person will be very important in God's heavenly kingdom. ²⁰Here is what I mean: You need to do what is right even more than the teachers of the Jewish law and the Pharisees do. That is the only way to participate in God's heavenly kingdom.

²¹You know that God said to our ancestors, 'You must not murder anyone. People who murder someone deserve to have a judge decide they are guilty and punish them.' ²²Now here is what I want to tell you: people who become angry with fellow believers deserve to have a judge decide they are guilty and punish them. People who insult fellow believers deserve to have the Jewish council decide they are guilty and punish them. People who say {that fellow believers are} foolish deserve to have God punish them in hell. ²³So then, suppose that you are standing near the altar {in the temple} to present something {to God}. Then, you recall that you have offended a fellow believer. ²⁴You should set down near the altar what you are presenting {to God} and depart {to visit that fellow believer}. You should resolve what happened to offend that fellow believer. Then, you can go back {to the altar} and present your gift {to God}. ²⁵Suppose that someone intends to say to a judge that you did something wrong. You should try to resolve what happened before that person can speak to the judge. That way, the person does not bring you to the judge, who would command one of the officials to put you in jail. ²⁶{If you go to jail,} you will never get out of there until you are able to pay every bit of what the judge says you owe. What I have said is true.

²⁷You know that God said, 'Married people must remain sexually faithful to their spouses.' ²⁸Now here is what I want to tell you: suppose that a man stares at a woman who is not his wife so that he can think about having sex with her. Simply because of what he desires, he has been sexually unfaithful to his wife. ²⁹Suppose that you sinned because you looked at something. You should never do that again, even if you have to remove your eyes to make sure of it! {You should respond that drastically} because it is better for you to have no eyes than to have a complete body but end up in hell. ³⁰Suppose that you sinned because you touched something. You should never do that

again, even if you have to chop off your hands to make sure of it! {You should respond that drastically} because it is better for you to have no hands than to have a complete body but end up in hell.

³¹God said, 'Suppose that a man wants to divorce his wife. He must present her with a document that states that he is divorcing her.' ³²Now here is what I want to tell you: a man may divorce his wife only if she has had improper sex. When a man divorces his wife for any other reason, he makes her disobey what God commanded about being sexually faithful to one's spouse. Further, any man who marries a woman whose husband has divorced her also disobeys what God commanded about being sexually faithful to one's spouse.

³³Here are more examples: you know that God said to our ancestors, 'You must not promise to do anything that you will not do. Rather, you must always do what you promised the Lord {that you would do}.' ³⁴Now here is what I want to tell you: you must never have someone or something guarantee what you promise. For example, you must not have heaven guarantee it. That is because heaven is where God rules. ³⁵You must not have the earth guarantee what you promise. That is because the earth is what God rules over. You must not have the city of Jerusalem guarantee it. That is because Jerusalem is a city that belongs to God, who is a powerful king. ³⁶You must not have your own head guarantee what you promise. That is because you cannot even control the color of one of your hairs. ³⁷When you promise something, just say 'Yes, I will do it,' or 'No, I will not do it.' When you say more to guarantee what you promised, you are doing what Satan wants {you to do}.

³⁸You know that God said, '{You must punish people in a way that matches how they hurt others. For example,} consider a person who blinded someone. You should punish that person by blinding him or her too. Consider a person who knocked out someone's tooth. You should punish that person by knocking out his or her tooth too.'

³⁹Now here is what I want to tell you: do not try to stop people who do bad things to you. Rather, suppose that someone {insults you by} hitting you on the right side of your face. You should turn your face so that the person can hit the left side also. ⁴⁰Suppose that someone wants to sue you for your shirt. You should give that person your coat as well. ⁴¹Suppose that someone requires you to carry his or her burden for one section of road. You should continue to carry that person's burden for a second {section of road}. ⁴²Suppose that someone requests something from you. You should give that person {what they requested}. Suppose that someone wants to receive a loan from you. You should lend money to that person.

⁴³You know that God said, 'Care for your fellow Jews.' {Some people add,} 'Despise those who oppose you.' ⁴⁴Now here is what I want to tell you: you should care for those who oppose you. You should pray for those who mistreat you. ⁴⁵God causes the sun to shine on people who are wicked and on people who are good. God makes it rain on people who do what is right and on people who do what is wrong. So, when you {care and pray for people who oppose you}, you are like children of God, your Father, who rules from heaven. ⁴⁶Further, if you care for {only} those who care for you, do not expect God to reward you for doing that. Even {unkind} tax collectors care for those who care for them. ⁴⁷If you say hello {only} to fellow believers, you are not behaving any differently {than unbelievers do}. Even {unbelieving} non-Jews say hello to their friends. ⁴⁸So, you should always do what is right, just as God, your Father, who rules from heaven, always does what is right.

Chapter 6

¹When you do what God desires, make sure that you are not doing it so that people praise you for it. When you do what God desires so that others praise you, God your Father, who rules from heaven, will not reward you.

²Whenever some people give money to help poor people, they have someone announce what they are doing by playing a loud instrument in the Jewish meeting places and in the main roads. They pretend to help others, but they just want other people to praise them. God will not reward them any more than that. What I have said is true. So, you should not behave like that. ³Instead, when you give money to help poor people, you should do it as privately as possible. ⁴That way, only God your Father will know that you have given money to help poor people. When he observes you doing that privately, he will reward you.

⁵Whenever some people pray to God, they enjoy doing so while standing in the Jewish meeting places and on the street corners. They pretend to focus on praying, but they just want other people to recognize them. God will not reward them any more than that. What I have said is true. So, you should not behave like that. ⁶In contrast, when you want to pray to God, you should go to a private room in your house and close the door. Then, you can pray to God your Father, who is there with you in private. When he observes you doing that privately, he will reward you.

⁷Further, as you are praying, do not repeat yourself as non-Jews do. They suppose that their gods will listen to them if they use many words. ⁸So then, do not pray to God as they do. In fact, before you ask him {for anything that you need}, God your Father is already aware of what you need.

⁹Here is how you should pray to God:

{I pray to} God our Father, who rules from heaven.

May all people glorify you.

¹⁰May you establish your kingdom.

May everyone do what you want

here on earth, just as {they already do} in heaven.

¹¹Please give us the food we need each day.

¹²We have forgiven people for when they did not treat us rightly.

In the same way, please forgive us for when we do not act rightly.

¹³Please protect us from everything that tries to make us sin.

Please rescue us when Satan tries to harm us.'

¹⁴God your Father, who rules from heaven, will forgive you as long as you forgive the people who sin against you.

¹⁵However, God your Father will not forgive you when you sin against him as long as you do not forgive other people.

¹⁶Whenever some people do not eat in order to please God, they change how their faces look. They pretend to be sad, but they just want other people to recognize that they are not eating. God will not reward them any more than that. What I have said is true. So, you should not behave like that. ¹⁷In contrast, when you do not eat in order to please God, you should keep yourselves neat and clean. ¹⁸That way, other people do not know that you are not eating. Only God your Father, who is there with you in private, {will know}. When he observes you doing that privately, he will reward you

¹⁹You should not collect many valuable things for yourselves in this world. In this world, insects eat clothes, and metal objects corrode. Further, robbers force their way into people's houses to take their goods. ²⁰Rather, you should collect many valuable things for yourselves in heaven. In heaven, insects do not eat clothes, and metal objects do not corrode. Further, robbers do not force their way into people's houses to take their goods. ²¹{That is important} because you think and care most about the place where you collect valuable things.

²²Your eyes are like a lamp since they enable you to see. If your eyes are working properly, then your whole body will benefit. ²³However, if your eyes are not working properly, then your whole body does not benefit at all. So consider how bad it is when what you see as bright light is actually very dark!

²⁴Servants cannot serve two different masters {at the same time}. {If they tried to do that,} they would hate one of them and love the other one, or they would be loyal to one of them and consider the other one to be unimportant. {In the same way,} you cannot devote your life to serving God if you are also devoting your life to acquiring money and other material possessions.

²⁵So then, here is what I want to tell you: do not worry about whether you will have enough to eat or drink to stay alive. Do not worry about whether you will have enough clothes to wear to stay warm. After all, your life is more important than the food you eat, and your body is more important than the clothes you put on it. ²⁶Think about the birds {that fly} in the sky. They do not plant seeds, and they do not harvest crops. They do not store crops, but God your Father, who rules from heaven, provides food for them. You are certainly much more important than they are{, so you can be sure that God will give you what you need}. ²⁷You cannot add even a minute to your life by worrying about it!

²⁸So, you should not worry about whether you will have enough clothes to wear. Observe the way that flowers grow in a field. They do not work {to earn money}, and they do not make their own clothes. ²⁹However, here is what I want to tell you: King Solomon, who {lived long ago and} wore glorious clothes, never dressed as beautifully as a single flower. ³⁰God makes plants beautiful, even though they grow for only a short time. Then people {cut them down and} throw them into the fire. {But you are very precious to God.} He will care for you even more than he cares for the plants. You should trust God more than you do! ³¹So then, do not worry by asking about whether you have anything to eat or drink, or whether you have clothes to wear. ³²The people who do not know God worry about such things. {However, you should not worry about such things} because God your Father, who rules from heaven, knows that you need them all. ³³You should concentrate primarily on what you can do for God's kingdom and on doing what God considers to be right. When you do those things, {you can trust God} to provide everything you need.

³⁴So then, do not worry about {what will happen} tomorrow. You can worry tomorrow about what will happen during that day. Enough bad things happen each day {that you should not worry about bad things that might happen tomorrow}.

Chapter 7

¹Do not harshly criticize {other people}. That way, God will not harshly criticize you. ²{I say that} because God will harshly criticize you in the same way that you harshly criticize others. In fact, God will treat you in the same way that you treat others. ³{None of you should concentrate on the small faults of another person. You should concentrate on your own serious faults.} Otherwise, that would be like noticing a speck in the eye of that person while not noticing a huge wooden plank in your own eye. ⁴You should not tell another believer, 'Let me help you correct your faults,' while you have not yet dealt with your own faults. ⁵If you do that, you are a hypocrite! You should first {stop committing your own sins. That will be like} removing a large plank from your own eye. Then, as a result, you will have the spiritual insight you need to help others get rid of the {smaller faults that are like} little specks in their eyes.

⁶{Apply this saying to how you live:} do not present sacred things to dogs, and do not put valuable things in front of pigs. {I say that} because the pigs will crush your valuable things, and the dogs will destroy the sacred things and then attack you.

⁷Keep asking {God for the things you need}, and he will give them to you. Keep seeking {those things from God}, and you will receive them. Ask God to make things possible for you, and he will act on your behalf. ⁸{You should do those things} because everyone who keeps asking {God for the things they need} will receive them. Everyone who seeks {those things from God} will receive them. If people ask God to make things possible for them, God will act on their behalf. ⁹Suppose one of you had a child who asked you for bread {to eat}. You certainly would not give your child a rock {to eat}! ¹⁰Similarly, suppose that your child asked you for a fish {to eat}. You certainly would not give your child a poisonous snake {to eat}! ¹¹So, even though you people are sinful, you still know how to give good gifts to your children. Therefore, it is even more certain that God your Father, who rules from heaven, will give good things to those who ask him.

¹²In conclusion, in whatever way you want others to act toward you, that is the way you should act toward them. Then, you will be doing what it says in all the parts of the Scriptures.

¹³⁻¹⁴{When you choose how to live, you are like a traveler choosing which path to take.} There is an easy path and a large gate, and many people go that way. However, if you go that way, God will punish you. There is also a hard path and a small gate, and only a few people go that way. You should use that small gate, because that is how you will truly live.

¹⁵Watch out for people who lie when they claim to speak messages from God. They may look like they are part of God's people, but really they want to hurt God's people. ¹⁶You can tell what people are really like by the things that they do. So, people are like plants in this way. A bush with thorns does not produce grapes. A thorny plant does not produce figs. ¹⁷Similarly, all healthy fruit trees produce fruit that is good to eat. All unhealthy fruit trees produce fruit that is bad to eat. ¹⁸Healthy fruit trees cannot produce fruit that is bad to eat. Unhealthy fruit trees cannot produce fruit that is good to eat. ¹⁹People chop down every tree that does not produce fruit that is good to eat. Then, they burn those trees {for fuel}. {In the same way, God will punish everyone who does not do what is right.} ²⁰Therefore, you can tell if a plant is healthy or unhealthy by what kind of fruit it produces. In the same way, you can tell what people are really like by the things that they do.

²¹Just calling me your Lord is not enough for you to participate in God's heavenly kingdom. Rather, you need to do what God my Father, who rules from heaven, wants {you to do}. ²²On the day when God will judge everyone, many people will tell me, 'Our Lord, we represented you when we proclaimed what God says! We represented you when we drove evil spiritual beings out of people! We represented you when we did many powerful things!' ²³I will then respond to them, 'You were never part of my people. You do what is wrong. Leave me!'

²⁴So, all people who hear my teachings and obey them are acting as wise people who construct their homes on top of solid rock. ²⁵There may be heavy rain, and there may be floods, and there may be strong winds that buffet those homes. However, they will not collapse. That is because the wise people constructed them on top of solid rock. ²⁶However, all people who hear my teachings and do not obey them are like foolish people who construct their homes on top of shifting sand. ²⁷There may be heavy rain, and there may be floods, and there may be strong winds that buffet those homes. Then, they will collapse completely."

²⁸When Jesus finished teaching, the large groups of people {who had listened to him} felt amazed at the way he taught. ²⁹{They felt amazed} because he did not teach as the teachers of the Jewish law did. Rather, he taught them like someone whom God had authorized to do so.

Chapter 8

¹When Jesus went down from the hill, large groups of people went wherever he went. ²Then, a man who had a skin disease came and knelt before Jesus. He said to Jesus, "Lord, {please heal me!} I know that you are able to heal me if you are willing!"

³Then Jesus stretched out his hand and touched the man. He said, "I am willing {to heal you}, and I heal you now!" At that time, Jesus healed the man from his skin disease. ⁴Then Jesus told him, "Do not tell anyone what just happened. Instead, go and show yourself to a priest {so that he can examine you and see that you no longer have the skin disease}. Also, present the offering that Moses required {for people whom God has healed from skin disease}. This will prove to the community {that you no longer have the skin disease}."

⁵While Jesus was visiting the city of Capernaum, an important Roman officer came to him. He urged Jesus {to help him}. ⁶He said, "Lord, one of my servants is lying in bed at my home because he cannot move. He is suffering very much. {Please help him.}"

⁷Jesus answered, "I will go {to your home} and cure him."

⁸The important officer responded, "Lord, I am not important enough for you to come into my house. Instead {of going to my house}, you can cure my servant just by speaking a command. ⁹{I know that you can do this} because I myself am a man who must obey the orders of my superiors. I also have soldiers who must obey my orders. When I

say to one of them, 'Go there!' he goes there. When I say to another one, 'Come here!' he comes {to me}. When I say to my slave, 'Perform this task!' he does it."

¹⁰What the officer said impressed Jesus. Jesus declared to the people who were with him, "I have not met any Israelite who trusts me as much as this man does! What I have said is true. ¹¹So, here is what I want to tell you: many people from every part of the world{, including many non-Jewish people,} will arrive in God's heavenly kingdom. They will feast along with {our Jewish ancestors,} Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ¹²However, God will cast out many people who think that they will participate in his kingdom. He will punish them in a dark place, where they will cry and sorrowfully grind their teeth." ¹³Then, Jesus told the important officer, "Return home. I will do for you what you have trusted me to do." Jesus healed the servant at that exact time.

¹⁴After that, Jesus went to Peter's home. There, he saw that Peter's mother-in-law was lying in bed because she had a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand, and she recovered from the fever. Then she stood up and offered Jesus some food.

¹⁶When it was evening, people brought to Jesus many men and women whom evil spiritual beings controlled. Jesus drove these evil spiritual beings out of those men and women just by speaking words. Also, he cured everyone who was sick. ¹⁷So, what God said by speaking through the prophet Isaiah came true: "When we were sick, he helped us. When we were ill, he cured us."

¹⁸When Jesus saw that there was a large group of people around him, he told his apprentices to take him {by boat} to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. ¹⁹{Before they got into the boat}, a teacher of the Jewish law came up to Jesus and said to him, "My instructor, I want to go with you and be your apprentice."

²⁰Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes in the ground to live in, and birds have nests to live in, but I, the Son of Man, do not have a home to sleep in!"

²¹A different person who was one of Jesus' apprentices said to him, "Lord, let me first go home and stay there until I bury my father. {Then I will go with you}."

²²Jesus responded, "Come with me and be my apprentice {now}. You cannot help anyone who has died."

²³After that, Jesus got on the boat, and his apprentices went with him. {They started sailing to the other side of the Sea of Galilee.} ²⁴{As they were sailing} a strong windstorm developed over the Sea of Galilee! Very high waves were splashing into the boat and filling it, but Jesus was asleep. ²⁵So Jesus' apprentices came over to wake him up. They said to him, "Lord, please help us! We are all going to die!"

²⁶Jesus answered, "You should not be so afraid. You should trust God more than you do!" Then he stood up. He scolded the wind and the water, and everything became calm.

²⁷{What happened} impressed the apprentices. They wondered, "What kind of person is Jesus? The wind and the water do what he says!"

²⁸After that, they arrived on the other side {of the Sea of Galilee}, in the region where the Gadarene people lived. {When they landed}, two men whom demons controlled came up to Jesus. They came from the burial caves. They were strong and dangerous. Because of them, no one could travel on the road {that went near the burial caves}.

²⁹They shouted to Jesus, "Leave us alone, you who are God's Son! You should not arrive to punish us before it is the time {that God has appointed}." ³⁰Now there was a large herd of pigs grazing relatively far away from them. ³¹The demons pleaded with Jesus, "When you drive us out {of these two men}, please allow us to control that herd of pigs!"

³²Jesus answered, "I will allow that!" So, the demons left the men and began to control the pigs. Then, the whole herd of pigs rushed down the steep bank into the Sea of Galilee! They died there in the sea. ³³Then those who were taking care of the pigs ran away. They went to the nearby town, where they told people about everything that had happened, including what had happened to the men whom the demons had controlled. ³⁴Then many people who lived in that town went to see Jesus! When they met him, they pleaded with him to leave their area.

Chapter 9

¹After that, Jesus and his apprentices got into a boat. They sailed across the Sea of Galilee and arrived back in the city of Capernaum, where Jesus was living. ²Some people brought to Jesus a man who could not move! He was lying on a sleeping pad. Jesus perceived that these people believed {that he could heal the man}. So, he said to the man who could not move, "Do not worry, young man. I forgive you for your sins!"

³Some teachers of the Jewish law thought to themselves, "He is insulting God!"

⁴Jesus realized what they were thinking. He said, "You should not be thinking what is wrong! ⁵You may think that it is easy to claim to forgive other people for their sins{, since it is difficult to prove whether this has happened}. Similarly, you may think that it is difficult to tell {someone who cannot move} to stand up and walk around{, since it is easy to prove whether this has happened}. ⁶However, I want you to know that God has authorized me, the Son of Man, to forgive people on earth for their sins." So, he said to the man who could not move, "Stand up, carry your sleeping pad, and go home!" ⁷Then, the man stood up and went home. ⁸Once the large groups of people {who were near Jesus} saw what had happened, they felt afraid. Also, they praised God for enabling people to do such amazing things.

⁹As Jesus was walking away from that place, he noticed a man whom people called Matthew. Matthew was sitting in the booth {where the people came to pay him the taxes that the government required}. Jesus said to him, "Come with me and be my apprentice!" So Matthew stood up and went with him as his apprentice.

¹⁰Later, Jesus was feasting in Matthew's home. Many people who collected taxes and other sinful people arrived! They feasted with Jesus and his apprentices. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw {what Jesus was doing}, they told Jesus' apprentices, "Your instructor should not be feasting with people who collect taxes and other sinful people."

¹²Jesus learned what they said. He answered, "People who are well do not need a doctor. Rather, people who are sick need a doctor. ¹³You should study and learn from what God has said in the Scriptures: 'What I most want is that people treat each other mercifully, not that people present offerings to me.' Much like that, I am here not to invite those who think they are righteous to come to me. Rather, {I invite} those who know that they have sinned {to come to me}."

¹⁴Sometime later, the apprentices of John the Baptizer visited Jesus. They asked him, "We and the Pharisees frequently do not eat in order to please God. However, your apprentices do not do so. Why not?"

¹⁵Jesus answered, "The friends of the bridegroom do not grieve while the wedding celebration is still going on. However, someday the bridegroom will no longer be with his friends. Then they will not eat. ¹⁶People do not place a piece of unshrunk cloth on old clothing in order to mend a hole. {That is} because{, when they washed the garment,} the new piece of cloth would shrink and completely rip out of the clothing. As a result, the hole would become even bigger! ¹⁷Similarly, people do not put fresh wine into old skin bags {to store it}. If they did that, the skin bags would tear open {because they would not stretch when the fresh wine fermented and expanded}. That would ruin the skin bags, and the wine would spill out. On the contrary, people put fresh wine into new skin bags. That way, they do not ruin the wine and the bags."

¹⁸As Jesus was speaking to John's apprentices, an important man arrived! He knelt before Jesus and said, "My daughter just died. Please come with me and touch her. That way, she will live {again}." ¹⁹Jesus and his apprentices stood up, and they went with the man.

²⁰⁻²¹Now there was a woman who had been suffering for 12 years from a disease that caused continual bleeding. She thought, "Just touching Jesus' robe will cure me." So, she approached Jesus from behind, and she touched the hem of his robe.

²²{After the woman touched Jesus' robe}, Jesus turned around and looked at her. He said to her, "Do not worry, young woman. Because you believed {that I could heal you}, you are now well." At that very moment, the woman became well.

²³After that, Jesus arrived at the important man's home. He saw {people grieving there}. Some people were playing instruments, and many people were making a lot of noise. ²⁴He said to these people, "Leave! The young woman is not dead! She is only sleeping." Then, the people made fun of him {for saying that}. ²⁵After those people left, Jesus went {to where the girl was}. He took hold of her hand, and she {became alive again and} stood up. ²⁶After that, people throughout that whole area heard about what Jesus had done.

²⁷When Jesus left the important man's house, two men who were blind went with him. They were shouting, "You who are a descendant of King David, help us!"

²⁸After Jesus entered the house {where he was staying}, the blind men approached him. Jesus asked them, "Do you believe that I can heal you?"

They answered, "Yes, Lord, we do!"

²⁹After {they said that,} he touched their eyes. He declared, "I will do for you what you have trusted me to do."

³⁰Then, they could see. Jesus sternly told them, "Do not tell anyone about what just happened!" ³¹However, after the two men left, they told people throughout that whole area about what Jesus had done.

³²While the two men were leaving, some people brought a man to Jesus! A demon was controlling him and keeping him from speaking. ³³Jesus drove the demon out of the man, and he was able to speak. What Jesus had done impressed the large groups of people {who were nearby}. They declared, "We have not seen anything like this before in our country Israel!"

³⁴However, the Pharisees declared, "It is the leader of the demons who enables this man to drive out demons!"

³⁵Jesus traveled to many of the cities and towns {in that area}. He instructed people {when they gathered} in the Jewish meeting places. He proclaimed the good news about God's kingdom. He cured people who were sick in any way. ³⁶Jesus observed that the large groups of people {who traveled wherever he went} seemed upset and confused. They were like sheep who did not have a shepherd {to lead them and to take care of them}. So, Jesus pitied them. ³⁷So he told his apprentices, "Many people are ready to believe in me, but there are only a few people whom I can send out to help them. ³⁸So pray to God {, who wants all of those people to believe,} and plead with him for more people who can go and help them."

Chapter 10

¹Then, Jesus told his 12 apprentices to come to him. He authorized them to drive demons out of people and to cure people who were sick in any way. ²Here is a list of the names of the 12 men whom Jesus chose to represent him: Simon, whom people also call Peter; Andrew, Peter's {younger} brother; James, Zebedee's son; John, James' {younger} brother; ³Philip; Bartholomew; Thomas; Matthew, a man who collected taxes; James, Alphaeus' son; Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Zealot; and Judas Iscariot, who eventually helped to arrest Jesus.

⁵Jesus sent those 12 men {to represent him}. {Before they went}, he told them, "Do not travel to places where non-Jews live. Do not visit Samaritan towns. ⁶Instead, go to your fellow Israelites. They are like sheep who have wandered off {and need help}. ⁷While you are traveling, proclaim {to people}, 'God is about to establish his heavenly kingdom here.' ⁸Cure people who are sick. Make people who have died alive again. Heal people with skin diseases. Drive demons out of people. I have not charged you money as I enable you to do these things. So, you should not charge other people money to do these things for them. ⁹Do not pack any money to take with you. ¹⁰Do not pack a traveler's bag, or an extra shirt, or sandals, or a walking stick. {I tell you not to bring these things} because people who work deserve their food. {So, the people whom you help will give you what you need}. ¹¹When you visit a city or town, look for someone who lives there who welcomes you. {When you find such a person}, stay in that person's home until you leave that area. ¹²When you go into that person's home, say hello to the people who live there {and pray that God will make them peaceful}. ¹³Suppose that the people who live in that house

really do welcome you. Then, God will make them peaceful, as you prayed. However, suppose that the people who live in that house do not welcome you. Then, God will not make them peaceful. ¹⁴Whenever people do not welcome you or listen to what you say, you should leave that home or city. As you are going, shake the dust from that place off your feet {to show that you reject those people}. ¹⁵{God will judge and punish} any people who reject you more severely than he will judge and punish the {wicked} people who lived in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. What I have said is true.

¹⁶I am sending you out {to represent me} to people who will be hostile to you, so you will be like sheep among wolves. Therefore, you need to be as clever as snakes are. You also need to be as innocent as small birds are.

¹⁷Watch out for certain people. They will arrest you and accuse you in front of groups of important people. They will beat you in the Jewish meeting places. ¹⁸Because you are my apprentices, people will accuse you before local rulers and kings. That way, you will tell those rulers and the rest of the non-Jews {about me}. ¹⁹Whenever people arrest you and accuse you, do not worry about how you will respond. At that time, God will reveal to you what you should say. ²⁰{You can be sure of that} because the Holy Spirit, whom God your Father sends, will reveal to you what to say. You will not speak for yourself.

²¹Men will have someone arrest their own brothers, and they will ask the judge to execute them. Fathers {will do the same thing} to their own children. Children will rebel against their parents and cause them to die. ²²Because you are my apprentices, many people will be hostile to you. However, if you persevere {in being my apprentices} while people harm you, God will rescue you. ²³When people in one city try to harm you, you should quickly travel to another city. {You should do that} because I, the Son of Man, will return before you have proclaimed the good news in every town in Israel. What I have said is true.

²⁴Apprentices are not greater than their teacher. Similarly, servants are not greater than their master. ²⁵Those apprentices should be content when they become like their teacher. Similarly, those servants {should be content when they become} like their master. Since people called the person who leads the family Satan, they will also call the people who are part of the family {bad names}. ²⁶So then, do not be afraid of those people. {I say that} because someday God will let everyone know everything people are trying to hide. ²⁷You should declare publicly everything I have said to you privately. You should shout for everyone to hear what you have heard me say quietly. ²⁸Do not be afraid of people. They can kill you physically, but they cannot kill you spiritually. Instead, you should be afraid of God. He can destroy you both spiritually and physically in hell. ²⁹Think about the sparrows. {They have so little value that} you can buy two of them for only one small coin. However, God your Father knows about it whenever one sparrow dies. ³⁰God even knows how many hairs there are on your head. ³¹So, do not be afraid, because you are more precious {to God} than many sparrows.

³²If people tell others that they are my apprentices, then I will say to God my Father, who rules from heaven, that those people are my apprentices. ³³However, if they tell others that they are not my apprentices, then I will say to God my Father, who rules from heaven, that those people are not my apprentices.

³⁴You should not think that I am here so that people will live together peacefully. Indeed, I am here so that people quarrel, not so that they live peacefully. ³⁵In fact, I am here so that {family members} oppose each other. A man will oppose his father. A woman will oppose her mother. A woman who married {a man} will oppose her husband's mother. ³⁶People who are part of a person's family will be those who oppose that person.

³⁷People who care for their fathers or mothers more than they care for me are not behaving as my apprentices should. People who care for their sons or daughters more than they care for me are not behaving as my apprentices should. ³⁸People who are not willing to suffer or die, as if they were carrying their own crosses, when they come with me as my apprentices are not behaving as my apprentices should. ³⁹People who do anything to stay alive will not truly live. However, people who are willing to die because they are my apprentices will truly live.

⁴⁰When people welcome you, it is the same as welcoming me. When people welcome me, it is the same as welcoming {God the Father}, who sent me here. ⁴¹As for those who welcome someone because they know that person speaks for God, God will reward them in the same way that he rewards people who speak for him. As for

those who welcome someone because they know that person does what is right, God will reward them in the same way that he rewards people who do what is right. ⁴²As for those who offer an unimportant person cold water to drink just because they know that person is my apprentice, God will most certainly reward them. What I have said is true."

Chapter 11

¹So, Jesus completed instructing his 12 apprentices {about what they should do}. Then, he left that place in order to proclaim {the good news to people} in the towns throughout the area.

²Meanwhile, John the Baptizer was in jail. People told him about what {Jesus} the Messiah was doing. So, he sent some of his apprentices ³to ask Jesus, "Are you the one whom {God promised} would come, or should we be waiting for someone else?"

⁴So Jesus answered John's apprentices, "Go back and tell John what you have heard and seen. ⁵People who were blind are now seeing. People who could not walk are now walking. People who had skin diseases no longer have them. People who were deaf can now hear. People who were dead are alive again. I am proclaiming good news to poor people. ⁶God will bless anyone who {sees what I do and hears what I teach and} continues to believe in me."

⁷When John's apprentices left, Jesus started to talk to the large groups of people about John. He said, "Surely you did not travel to John in the desolate area to see someone who often changed his mind, who was like the thin stalk of a plant that the wind shakes. ⁸Surely you did not travel {to the desolate area} to see someone who wore fancy clothes. You know very well that the people who wear fancy clothes live in palaces{, not in desolate areas}. ⁹Surely you traveled {to the desolate area} to see a man who spoke for God. Yes{, that is who John is}! But I want to tell you that John is more significant than other people who speak for God. ¹⁰He is the one about whom a prophet wrote in the Scriptures: 'Listen, I am sending my messenger ahead of you. He will make things ready for when you come.'

¹¹Of all the people who have ever lived, there has been no one more important than John the Baptizer. However, the most insignificant people who participate in God's heavenly kingdom are more important than John. What I have said is true. ¹²From the time when John the Baptizer began to preach publicly until this time, people have attacked God's heavenly kingdom. Indeed, violent people try to conquer it. ¹³Further, before John {began to preach}, the laws that God gave Moses and the things that the prophets wrote predicted {what is now happening}.

¹⁴In fact, if you trust what I say, you can know that John is the one {whom God promised} would come, {the one who is like} the prophet Elijah. ¹⁵You should think carefully about what you just heard me say!

¹⁶{I will tell you} what {you people who live in} this time period are like. You are like children playing games in an open area. They call out to their friends, ¹⁷'We played happy music for you on the flute, but you did not dance! Then we sang sad funeral songs for you, but you did not grieve!' ¹⁸Similarly, when John came to you and often did not eat or drink, people {rejected him and} said, 'A demon is controlling him!' ¹⁹But when I, the Son of Man, came to you and I enjoyed food and drink, people {rejected me and} said, 'Look! This man eats too much food and drinks too much wine, and he associates with people who collect taxes and other sinful people!' But those who are wise themselves recognize that what John and I do is also wise."

²⁰Now people who lived in the towns where Jesus had done many powerful things did not stop doing what was wrong. So, Jesus began to scold them: ²¹"How terrible it will be for you people who live in the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida! I say this because I did powerful things while I was in your cities. If I had done those same powerful things in {the ancient cities of} Tyre and Sidon, the {wicked} people who lived there would have stopped doing what was wrong. They would have shown how sorry they were by wearing coarse clothing and putting ashes on their heads. ²²So I want to tell you that when God judges everyone, he will punish you more severely than {the wicked people who lived in} Tyre and Sidon. ²³I also have something to say to you people who live in the town of Capernaum. You may think that God is going to give you great rewards. No, God is not going to reward you at all! I say this because I did powerful things while I was in your town. If I had done those same powerful things in {the

city of} Sodom, the {wicked} people who lived there {would have stopped doing what was wrong, and} God would not have destroyed them. ²⁴So I want to tell you that when God judges everyone, he will punish you more severely than {the wicked people who lived in} the region of Sodom."

²⁵Then Jesus responded by praying, "God my Father, you are Lord over everything you have made. I praise you that you have prevented people who think they are smart from understanding things. Instead, you have revealed them to people who accept {what you say} as readily as little children do. ²⁶That is true, my Father, and you have done that because it pleased you to do so."

²⁷{Then Jesus told the people who were there,} "God, my Father, has given everything to me. Only my Father really knows me, his Son. And only I, his Son, really know my Father. But I do choose to show some people who he is.

²⁸Many of you feel tired and are struggling. Become my apprentices! I will enable you to rest. ²⁹I am not forceful or proud, and I will help you to rest. So, do what I command and listen to what I teach. ³⁰{I say that} because you can easily do what I command. Indeed, you can easily do what I ask you to do."

Chapter 12

¹Some time later, Jesus {and his apprentices} were walking through grain fields during one of the Jewish days of rest. His apprentices became hungry, so they started to pick some grain and eat it. ²Some Pharisees saw {the apprentices picking grain}. They said to Jesus, "Look! Your apprentices are working on the Jewish day of rest. Our law forbids us to do that."

³Jesus replied, "Consider the story in the Scriptures about what King David did when he and the men who were with him became very hungry. ⁴As you know, David entered the sacred tent. He ate some of the bread that had been on display before God, even though the law prohibited him and the men who were with him from doing that. Only priests could eat that bread. ⁵Likewise, consider the laws in the Scriptures that permit priests to work during the Jewish days of rest because they are serving in the Jewish sanctuary. ⁶However, I want you to know that there is now something even more important than the Jewish sanctuary. ⁷Suppose that you truly understood what God has said in the Scriptures: 'What I most want is that people treat each other mercifully, not that people present offerings to me.' Then, you would not have declared {my apprentices} guilty when they have actually not disobeyed {the laws about the Jewish day of rest}. ⁸{I say those things} because I, the Son of Man, can decide {what is right for people to do} during the Jewish day of rest!"

⁹Then Jesus left the grain fields and visited one of the Jewish meeting places. ¹⁰Now there was a man there who could not move his hand. The Pharisees wanted to accuse Jesus {of disobeying the laws about not working on the Sabbath}. So, they asked Jesus, "Does our law allow us to cure {people from their diseases} during Jewish days of rest?"

¹¹Jesus replied, "Suppose that one of you had a single sheep. Also suppose that this sheep fell into a deep hole on a Jewish day of rest. You would certainly pull it out of the hole{, even though this would be doing work on the Jewish day of rest}! ¹²Therefore, {since} people are more important than sheep{, you should help others even more than you help sheep on Jewish days of rest}. So then, the laws that God gave Moses allow people to do what is good on Jewish days of rest." ¹³After {saying that}, Jesus commanded the man, "Extend the hand {that you cannot move}!" The man extended his hand, and he could move it just as well as his other hand. ¹⁴Then the Pharisees left {the Jewish meeting place}. They started planning how they could kill Jesus.

¹⁵Jesus knew {that the Pharisees were planning to kill him}. So, he left that area. Many people went with him, and he cured all of them {who were sick}. ¹⁶Jesus commanded them strongly that they should not tell other people about him. ¹⁷So, what God said by speaking through the prophet Isaiah came true:

¹⁸"Consider the one who serves me, whom I selected.

I love him, and what he does pleases me.

I will empower him with the Holy Spirit.

He will declare to the non-Jews that I do what is right.

¹⁹He will not quarrel with people. He will not shout loudly.

He will not speak to many people in public areas.

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He will be gentle with weak people.

He will be kind to feeble people.

{He will do those things} until he successfully completes doing what is right.

²¹Non-Jewish people will confidently trust in him."

²²After that, some people brought a man to Jesus. A demon was controlling him and keeping him from seeing or speaking. Jesus cured the man, and he was able to speak and see. ²³What Jesus had done impressed all the large groups of people {who were nearby}. They declared {to each other}, "Perhaps this man is the special descendant of King David."

²⁴However, the Pharisees heard {them saying that}. They responded, "This man forces out demons only because Beelzebul, who rules the demons, enables him to do so."

²⁵Jesus realized what they were thinking. So he said to them, "When the people in one nation fight against each other, they will destroy their nation. When people who live in the same town or household fight against each other, that town or household will not last. ²⁶Suppose that Satan enabled people to force out his own demons. In that case, he would be fighting against himself. So, he would soon cease to rule over the demons! ²⁷Further, suppose that Beelzebul is enabling me to force out demons. Then, it must also be true that he is enabling your apprentices to force out demons. {But you know that is not true.} So your own apprentices prove that you are wrong. ²⁸Actually, the Holy Spirit enables me to force out demons. That means that God is establishing his kingdom among you.

²⁹Before thieves can break into the home of a strong man and take his belongings, they must first tie up the strong man. After that, they can take the belongings from his home.

³⁰Anyone who is not supporting me is opposing me. Anyone who is not bringing people to me is sending them away from me.

³¹So then, here is what I want to tell you: God will forgive many people who sin in many ways or say bad things {about God or others}. However, God will not forgive people who say bad things about the Holy Spirit. ³²Further, God will forgive people who say bad things about me, the Son of Man. However, God will not forgive people who say bad things about the Holy Spirit. {He will} not {forgive them} right now or at any later time.

³³You must decide either that both a tree and its fruit are healthy or that both a tree and its fruit are unhealthy. {I say that} because you can tell if a tree is healthy or unhealthy by what kind of fruit it produces. Similarly, you can tell what people are really like by the things that they do. ³⁴You people are sneaky and dangerous like poisonous snakes! Because you are wicked, you cannot say anything good. {I say that} because people speak based on what they are thinking about. ³⁵Good people say good things because they think good things. Evil people say evil things because they think evil things. ³⁶Here is what I want you to know: when God judges everyone, he will hold people responsible for all the useless things that they have said. ³⁷In fact, God will declare that you are either innocent or guilty based on what you have said."

³⁸After {Jesus said those things}, some teachers of the Jewish law and some Pharisees responded, "Instructor, we want to see you perform a miracle {that proves that God sent you}."

³⁹Then Jesus replied to them, “You people who are alive right now are wicked and faithless. You want me to do a miracle {that proves that God sent me}. However, the only miracle you will see is a miracle like the one that happened to the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰{A huge fish swallowed Jonah, and} he was inside this fish for three whole days. {Then, God had the fish spit him out.} Similarly, people will bury me, the Son of Man, and I will be in a tomb for three whole days. {Then, I will live again.} ⁴¹The people who lived in the ancient city of Nineveh stopped sinning when Jonah preached to them. And now there is something even more important than {the prophet} Jonah. {However, you have not stopped sinning.} Therefore, when God judges everyone, the people who lived in Nineveh will stand up and condemn the people who are alive right now. ⁴²Long ago the Queen of Sheba traveled a great distance to listen to the wise things that King Solomon said. And now there is something even more important than Solomon. {However, you have not really listened to what I say.} Therefore, when God judges everyone, she will stand up and condemn the people who are alive right now.

⁴³Listen to this story: an evil spirit leaves someone and wanders around in desolate areas looking for someone else to live in. However, it does not find anyone there. ⁴⁴After that, it says {to itself}, ‘I am going to go back to the person I used to live in!’ So it goes back and finds that the person is like a house that someone has cleaned and organized, but no one is living in it. ⁴⁵Then this evil spirit goes and gets seven other spirits that are even more evil than it is. They all enter that person and begin living in him. That person experienced bad things before, but now he will experience worse things. Something like that is what you wicked people who are alive right now will experience.”

⁴⁶As Jesus was saying those things to the large groups of people, his mother and his {younger} brothers {arrived and} waited outside {where he was}. They wanted to talk with him. ⁴⁷A person told him, “Your mother and your {younger} brothers are waiting outside. They want to talk with you.”

⁴⁸Jesus replied, “I will tell you whom I consider to be my mother and my brothers.” ⁴⁹He pointed to his apprentices and said, “These are the people whom I consider to be my mother and my brothers! ⁵⁰In fact, when a person does what God my Father, who rules from heaven, wants, I consider that person to be my brother or sister or mother.”

Chapter 13

¹That same day, Jesus left the house {where he had been teaching}. He {walked to the Sea of Galilee and} sat down {to teach} next to it. ²Then large groups of people came to where Jesus was. Because {there were so many people}, he got into a boat and sat down there {to teach}. All the people stood on the shore {of the Sea of Galilee to listen to him}.

³Jesus began to use stories to instruct them about many things. He said, “Listen to this: a farmer began to plant some grain seeds. ⁴As he was scattering them over the soil, some of the seeds fell on the path. Then some birds flew down and ate those seeds up. ⁵Other seeds fell on shallow soil on top of a layer of rocks. Because they were growing in shallow soil, the seeds sprouted very quickly. ⁶However, the sun shone on the new plants and dried them up. Then, because they did not have good roots, the plants died. ⁷Other seeds fell onto an area full of thorny plants. These thorny plants grew quickly and crowded out the grain plants. ⁸Finally, other seeds fell on fertile soil. {They sprouted,} and the plants produced a crop. Some plants produced 100 {grains of wheat each}, others produced 60 {grains each}, and others produced 30 {grains each}. ⁹You should think carefully about what you just heard me say!”

¹⁰Then, the apprentices came to Jesus and asked him, “Why do you use stories to instruct these people?”

¹¹Jesus replied, “God has revealed to you hidden things about his heavenly kingdom. However, he has not revealed {those things} to these people. ¹²{I say that} because God will reveal even more to people who already know some things {about God’s heavenly kingdom}. They will know many things. In contrast, God will cause people who know very little {about God’s heavenly kingdom} to know nothing about it at all. ¹³I use stories to instruct these people because they can look at things, but they do not really see them. They can hear what people say, but they do not really listen to it or learn from it. ¹⁴What God said by speaking through the prophet Isaiah has come true for them:

'You will hear things, but you will not learn from them.

You will look at things, but you will not really see them.

¹⁵{These people do not understand} because they have become stubborn;

their ears are almost deaf;

and they have closed their eyes because they do not want to see.

They do not want to listen

or try to understand,

for then they would come back to me,

and I would welcome and forgive them.'

¹⁶However, it is very good for you, because you really see. {It is very good} for you, because you really listen.

¹⁷Indeed, many people who spoke for God and other people who did what was right would have wanted to see the things that you are seeing me do. But they did not get to see them{, because they lived long ago}. They would have wanted to hear the things that I have said to you. But they did not get to hear them{, because they lived long ago}. What I have said is true.

¹⁸So then, listen to {me explain} the story about the farmer who planted grain seeds. ¹⁹Some people hear the message about God's kingdom, but they do not learn from it. Then Satan comes and takes the message they heard away from their minds. These people are like the seeds that fell on the path. ²⁰Other people are like the seeds that fell on shallow soil on top of a layer of rocks. When they hear the message {about God's kingdom}, they rejoice and quickly believe it. ²¹However, they are like plants without good roots, which do not live very long. In fact, when bad things happen or when people hurt them because they accepted the message {about God's kingdom}, they quickly stop believing it. ²²Other people are like the seeds that fell onto an area full of thorny plants. After they hear the message {about God's kingdom}, they continue to focus on things in this world and on becoming rich, even though being rich is not as helpful as they think it will be. Focusing on these things makes the message ineffective, just as thorny plants crowd out the good plants and keep them from producing a crop. ²³Other people are like the seeds that fell on fertile soil. When they hear the message {about God's kingdom}, they learn from it. They are like the plants that produced a crop. Some plants produced 100 {grains of wheat each}, others produced 60 {grains each}, and others produced 30 {grains each}."

²⁴Then Jesus told the people another story. He said, "Here is what God's heavenly kingdom is like: a farmer planted some fertile grain seeds in his field. ²⁵However, as the farmer and his workers were asleep, someone who hated the farmer went into the field and planted weed seeds among the grain seeds. Then, he left {before the farmer and his workers woke up}. ²⁶Some time later, the wheat plants sprouted and began to produce grain. At the same time, the weed plants also {sprouted, and the workers} noticed them. ²⁷So, the workers reported this to the farmer. They said, 'Sir, we know that you planted fertile seeds in your field. However, weed plants are growing there!'

²⁸The farmer replied, 'A person who hates me planted these weed plants.'

Then his servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go {to the field} and remove all the weeds plants?'

²⁹He answered, 'Do not do that. If you did, you might remove some of the wheat plants while you were removing the weed plants, since they are growing together. ³⁰Allow the wheat and weed plants to grow in the field together until we begin to harvest them. Then, I will command the people who are harvesting, "Pull up the weed plants first. Collect them in groups and burn them. After that, harvest the wheat plants and store the grain in my storehouse.'"

³¹Then Jesus told the people another story. He said, "Here is what God's heavenly kingdom is like: a man plants a tiny mustard seed in his field. ³²This kind of seed is smaller than other kinds of seeds. However, after it sprouts, the

plant becomes a tree that is bigger than other plants that people grow. In fact, birds land on its branches and make nests there."

³³Then Jesus told the people another story. {He said,} "Here is what God's heavenly kingdom is like: a woman measured out some yeast and mixed it with about 25 kilograms of flour. The yeast made the whole batch of dough swell up."

³⁴Jesus used stories to teach all these things to the large groups of people {who were standing on the shore of the sea}. In fact, he taught them by using stories only. ³⁵So, what God said by speaking through one of the prophets came true:

"I will speak by using stories.

I will reveal things that have been secret since {God} created everything."

³⁶After {speaking these stories}, Jesus departed from the large groups of people and entered the house {where he was staying}. His apprentices went to him and asked, "Please teach us what the story about the weed plants in the field means."

³⁷Jesus replied, "The farmer who planted some fertile grain seeds is like me, the Son of Man. ³⁸The field is like the world. The fertile grain seeds are like people who participate in God's kingdom. The weed plants are like people who obey Satan. ³⁹The person who hated the farmer and planted the weed seeds is like the devil. The time when the workers begin to harvest {the grain} is like when this time period will end. The people who are harvesting are like angels. ⁴⁰The workers collect the weed plants and burn them. That is like what will happen when this time period ends. ⁴¹I, the Son of Man, will have my angels collect everything that causes people to sin and everyone who does what is wrong. They will remove those things and people from my kingdom. ⁴²Then, the angels will cast those things and people into hell, which is like a burning oven. There people will cry and sorrowfully grind their teeth. ⁴³After that, the people who did what was right will live in God their Father's kingdom. They will be as glorious as the sun when it shines. You should think carefully about what you just heard me say!

⁴⁴Here is what God's heavenly kingdom is like: A man discovered a secret treasure in a field. He was very happy, but he put the treasure back into its secret place. He went home and sold everything that he owned. Then, he bought the field {so that he could have the treasure in it}.

⁴⁵Here is what God's heavenly kingdom is also like: a trader wanted some valuable pearls. ⁴⁶Eventually, he saw a very expensive pearl. He went home and sold everything that he owned. Then, he bought that pearl.

⁴⁷Here is what God's heavenly kingdom is also like: people used a net to catch fish in a lake. They caught many kinds of fish. ⁴⁸When the net was full {of fish}, the people pulled it onto the shore. They sat down {to sort through the fish that they had caught}. They put the edible fish into buckets and threw away the useless fish. ⁴⁹That is like what will happen when this time period ends. Angels will come, and they will divide people who do what is wrong from people who do what is right. ⁵⁰Then, the angels will cast the people who do what is wrong into hell, which is like a burning oven. There they will cry and sorrowfully grind their teeth.

⁵¹Do you know what all these things {that I have taught you} mean?"

The apprentices answered, "Yes{, we know what they mean}."

⁵²Jesus responded, "So then, consider teachers whose leader has trained them to participate in God's heavenly kingdom. They are like people who manage households. {That is because} both the teachers and the people who manage households offer old and new things that are valuable."

⁵³So, Jesus completed telling these stories. Then, he left that place. ⁵⁴Then Jesus traveled to {the city of Nazareth,} where he had grown up. He instructed the people there when they gathered in the Jewish meeting place. What he said impressed them, and they said {to each other}, "We do not know how this man became so wise and powerful.

⁵⁵He is just the woodworker's son. His mother's name is Mary, and his {younger} brothers are James, Joseph,

Simon, and Judas. ⁵⁶All his sisters live here in our town. So, we do not know how this man learned to do these things."

⁵⁷These people rejected Jesus. So, Jesus told them, "The only ones who do not respect people who speak for God are those from where they grew up and their own families." ⁵⁸Since the people did not trust in him, Jesus did very few powerful things in that place.

Chapter 14

¹While Jesus was teaching and doing powerful things, King Herod Antipas{, the ruler over the region of Galilee,} learned what he was doing. ²He told his attendants, "This man must be John the Baptizer. God has made him alive again, and that is why he does these powerful things."

³⁻⁴{Herod said that because John had already died.} Here is how that happened: Herod married Herodias, who had previously been the wife of Herod's brother Philip. John the Baptizer told Herod, "Our law forbids you to marry Herodias{, your sister-in-law}." So, Herod told his soldiers to arrest John. They tied him up and put him in jail. ⁵However, Herod was afraid of the large group of people who believed that John spoke for God. So, even though he wanted to have his soldiers execute John{, he did not do that}.

⁶Sometime later, during Herod's birthday party, Herodias' daughter danced {for him and his guests}. Herod greatly enjoyed her dancing. ⁷So, he solemnly promised that he would give her whatever she wanted. ⁸Her mother, Herodias, had already told her what to ask for. So, she said to Herod, "I want you to cut off John the Baptizer's head and bring it to me here on a plate!" ⁹King Herod was sad {about what she asked for}. However, because he had solemnly promised in front of all his guests {to give her what she asked for}, he told one of his men to do what she asked. ¹⁰He had the man go to the jail and cut off John's head there. ¹¹Then, the man put John's head on a plate and gave it to Herodias' daughter. She gave it to her mother. ¹²Later, John's apprentices went to the jail. They took John's dead body and buried it. Then, they went to Jesus and told him what had happened.

¹³After Jesus heard {that John was dead}, he sailed {with his apprentices} in a boat on the Sea of Galilee to a place where no one lived. Then, the large groups of people learned {that he had traveled there}. They left their towns and walked around the Sea of Galilee to join him. ¹⁴When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw a large group of people. He pitied them, and he cured those who were sick.

¹⁵When it was evening, the apprentices approached Jesus. They said to him, "This is a place where no one lives, and it is very late in the day. So, please tell the large groups of people to walk to the small towns that are nearby, where they can buy food to eat."

¹⁶Jesus replied, "They do not need to leave {to buy food}. I want you to provide them with food to eat!"

¹⁷The apprentices replied, "We have very little food! We only have five loaves of bread and two fish."

¹⁸Then Jesus said, "Bring those things to me." ¹⁹Jesus told the large groups of people to sit down on the ground. He picked up the five loaves of bread and the two fish. Then he thanked God for the food. After that, he tore the bread into pieces and gave the pieces to his apprentices. They distributed them to the large groups of people. ²⁰Everyone ate {the bread}, and they all had enough to eat. Then the apprentices gathered the food that was left. They filled 12 large containers with the leftovers! ²¹About 5, 000 men ate {the bread}, and there were women and children there too!

²²As soon as {everyone was done eating}, Jesus had his apprentices get into a boat and sail across {the Sea of Galilee} without him. He stayed behind to tell the large groups of people to go home. ²³After he told the large groups of people to go home, he climbed to the top of a hill to pray {to God} by himself. When it became dark, he was on top of the hill by himself. ²⁴Meanwhile, the apprentices were on the boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee. The wind was blowing from where they wanted to go, so many waves were striking the boat. ²⁵Later, soon before

morning, Jesus joined them. He was walking on top of the Sea of Galilee! ²⁶When the apprentices saw Jesus walking on top of the Sea of Galilee, it disturbed them. {They did not know that it was Jesus, so} they said {to each other} that he must be a dangerous spiritual being. They were so afraid that they shouted loudly. ²⁷As soon as {they shouted loudly}, Jesus said to them, "Do not worry! I am {Jesus}. Stop being afraid!"

²⁸Peter replied, "My Lord, please show me that it is really you. I ask that you tell me to walk on top of the water to you!"

²⁹Jesus said {to Peter}, "Walk to me!"

So, Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on top of the water toward Jesus. ³⁰However, Peter realized how powerful the storm was, and he was afraid. Then he started to sink into the water. He shouted {to Jesus}, "My Lord, please rescue me!"

³¹As soon as {Peter shouted}, Jesus reached out and lifted Peter up out of the water. Then he said to Peter, "You should not have been unsure {that I could make you walk on top of the water}. You should trust God more than you do!"

³²Then Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat. At that moment, the wind stopped blowing. ³³Then the apprentices who were in the boat worshiped Jesus. They declared, "You really are God's Son!"

³⁴After they finished sailing across the Sea of Galilee, they landed on the shore in the region of Gennesaret. ³⁵The men in that region recognized Jesus. So they sent people to the nearby areas {to say that Jesus had arrived}. Then people {from those areas} brought to Jesus many others who were sick. ³⁶Those who were sick asked Jesus to allow them just to touch the hem of his robe. Everyone who did so became healthy.

Chapter 15

¹After that, some Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law who were from the city of Jerusalem visited Jesus. They told him, ²"Your apprentices do not cleanse their hands before they eat. So, they are disobeying the teachings we received from our ancestors. They should not do that!"

³Jesus replied, "Sometimes you use the teachings that you received to disobey the laws that God gave us. You should not do that! ⁴For example, God gave this law: 'Treat your parents respectfully.' {He} also {gave this law}: 'Execute anyone who insults his or her parents.' ⁵However, you tell people that they can say to their parents, 'I have given to God everything that I could have used to provide for you.' ⁶Then, you tell these people that they cannot treat their parents respectfully {by providing for them}. In that way, you use the teachings that you received to ignore what God commanded. ⁷You say that you obey God, but you really do not! Isaiah {the prophet} was right when God spoke through him about you,

⁸"You people treat me respectfully when you talk,

but you do not really care about me.

⁹When you worship me, it is useless.

{That is because} you use only what humans have commanded to instruct others."

¹⁰Then Jesus told the large group of people to come to him. He told them, "Listen {to what I am about to say} and learn {from it}. ¹¹Whatever people eat cannot make them unclean. Rather, it is what people say that makes them unclean."

¹²Later, his apprentices went to him and asked him, "We want you to know that the Pharisees heard what you said and became very upset."

¹³Jesus replied, "{Those Pharisees are like} plants that God my Father, who rules from heaven, did not plant. {He will punish them in the same way that} he would tear up such plants. ¹⁴Do not listen to them. They do not know what they should be teaching. They are like blind people who guide other blind people right into a hole in the ground."

¹⁵Peter replied, "Please tell us what that story means." ¹⁶Jesus answered, "You too have not yet learned what I mean. ¹⁷I want you to realize that everything that people eat simply goes into their stomachs. Eventually, their bodies expel what they ate into toilets. ¹⁸What actually makes people unclean is what they say, which shows what they think and care about. ¹⁹In fact, it is because of what people think and care about that they think evil things, kill others, are sexually unfaithful to their spouses, have improper sex, steal things, speak what is untrue, and say bad things {about God or others}. ²⁰It is doing those things that makes people unclean. However, when people do not cleanse their hands before they eat, that does not make them unclean."

²¹After that, Jesus {and his apprentices} left the region of Gennesaret. They traveled to the areas near the cities of Tyre and Sidon. ²²Then, a non-Jewish woman who was from those areas visited Jesus. She called out to him, "My Lord, you who are a descendant of King David, help me! A demon is controlling my daughter and making her suffer."

²³However, Jesus did not say anything to her. Then his apprentices came to him and said, "This woman is {bothering us by} following us and calling out to you. Please tell her to go home."

²⁴Jesus answered them, "God told me to go only to my fellow Israelites. They are like sheep who have wandered off {and need help}."

²⁵Then the woman approached Jesus. She knelt down in front of him and pled, "My Lord, please help me!"

²⁶Jesus replied, "Suppose that someone takes food for children and gives it to dogs instead. That is not appropriate! {That is why I am not helping you.}"

²⁷The woman replied, "My Lord, what you say is correct. In fact, though, dogs do eat leftovers that their owners spill on the ground. {What I am asking you to do is like those leftovers.}"

²⁸When {he heard that,} Jesus told her, "You have impressed me because you trust me very much! I will do for you what you want me to do." At that very moment, Jesus cured her daughter.

²⁹After that, Jesus {and his apprentices} left {the areas near the cities of Tyre and Sidon}. They traveled to the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Then Jesus went up on a hill and sat down. ³⁰Large groups of people came to him. They brought people who could not walk, people who could not see, people who could not use their hands normally, people who could not speak, and people who were sick in many other ways. They set these people down in front of Jesus. Then, Jesus cured these people. ³¹The large group of people saw {what Jesus had done}. People who could not talk were now speaking. People who could not use their hands normally were now able to do so. People who could not walk were now walking. People who could not see were now seeing. What Jesus had done impressed the large group of people. They praised the God whom the Israelites worship.

³²After that, Jesus told his apprentices to come to him. He said to them, "I pity the large group of people. They have already spent three days with me, and they do not have any food to eat. Further, I do not want to tell them to go home while they are hungry, because then they might pass out while they are walking home."

³³The apprentices replied, "In this place where no one lives, we certainly do not have enough food for this large group of people to have enough to eat!"

³⁴Jesus asked them, "How many loaves of bread do you have with you?"

They replied, "We have with us seven loaves of bread and a few little fish."

³⁵Then Jesus told the large group of people to sit down on the ground. ³⁶He picked up the seven loaves of bread and the fish. Then he thanked God for the food. After that, he tore the bread into pieces and gave the pieces to his

apprentices. They distributed them to the large group of people. ³⁷Everyone ate {the bread}, and they all had enough to eat. Then the apprentices gathered the food that was left. They filled seven large containers with the leftovers! ³⁸{About} 4, 000 men ate {the bread}, and there were women and children there too! ³⁹After he told the large group of people to go home, Jesus climbed into a boat. He {and his apprentices} sailed to the areas near the town of Magadan.

Chapter 16

¹Some Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus in order to investigate him. They said to him, "We want you to perform a miracle that shows that God sent you."

²He answered them, "[When it is evening and the sky looks red, you know that there will be good weather {the next day}. ³When it is morning and the sky looks red and cloudy, {you know that} there will be storms that day. So, you realize what it means when the sky looks a certain way. However, you do not {realize} what God is doing right now.] ⁴You people who are alive right now are wicked and faithless. You want me to do a miracle {that proves that God sent me}. However, the only miracle you will see is a miracle like the one that happened to {the prophet} Jonah." Then Jesus {and his apprentices} departed from the Pharisees and Sadducees.

⁵They sailed to the other side {of the Sea of Galilee}. Then, the apprentices realized that they had not remembered to take any bread with them. ⁶At that point, Jesus said to them, "Be alert and watch out for the yeast that the Pharisees and Sadducees use."

⁷Then the apprentices told each other, "{He must have said that} because we did not take any bread with us."

⁸Jesus realized {what they were saying to each other}. He told them, "You should not be telling each other that you do not have bread. You should trust God more than you do! ⁹You should already remember and understand how I fed 5, 000 men with just five loaves of bread. Then you gathered the food that was left into {12} large containers. ¹⁰{You should also remember and understand} how I fed 4, 000 men with just seven loaves of bread. Then you gathered the food that was left into {seven} large containers. ¹¹I want you to understand that I am speaking about bread in a figurative way. So {I say again}, watch out for the yeast that the Pharisees and Sadducees use." ¹²After {Jesus said that}, the apprentices realized that {he was telling them to watch out for} what the Pharisees and Sadducees were teaching. He was not telling them to watch out for the yeast that people use to make bread.

¹³Sometime later, Jesus {and his apprentices} arrived in the area near the city of Caesarea Philippi. Then Jesus asked his apprentices, "Who do people say that I, the Son of Man, really am?"

¹⁴The apprentices replied, "People say that you are one of the prophets {who has come back to life}. {More specifically,} some people say that you are John the Baptizer. Other people say that you are the prophet Elijah. Other people say that you are the prophet Jeremiah."

¹⁵Jesus asked, "As for you, who do you say that I really am?"

¹⁶Simon Peter replied, "You are the Messiah! You are the Son of the only real God."

¹⁷Jesus responded, "Simon, descendant of Jonah, God my Father, who rules from heaven, has blessed you. He has made known to you what you said. In fact, no human could have made it known to you. ¹⁸I also want you to know that I will make you become like your name, Peter, which means 'rock.' I will make you like a foundation stone on which I will construct a building, which represents everyone who believes in me. Even when those people die, that will not destroy them. ¹⁹I will commission you to oversee God's heavenly kingdom. When you confirm something here on earth, God will confirm it in heaven. When you nullify something here on earth, God will nullify it in heaven." ²⁰After that, Jesus ordered the apprentices not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

²¹From then on, Jesus the Messiah began to teach his apprentices that he had to travel to the city of Jerusalem. There, the Jewish leaders, the ruling priests, and the teachers of the Jewish law would hurt him very much and have people kill him. During the third day after he died, God would make him alive again. ²²Then Peter spoke to Jesus privately. He began to scold Jesus, "My Lord, do not say those things! What you have spoken about will never happen to you."

²³Then Jesus faced Peter. He said, "Do not try to stop me. You are behaving as Satan does! You are thinking about what humans care about instead of thinking about what God cares about. Because of that, you are trying to make me do what is wrong."

²⁴Next, Jesus said to all his apprentices, "People who want to come with me and be my apprentices must refuse to do what they want to do. They must be willing to suffer or die, as if they were carrying their own crosses, when they come with me as my apprentices. ²⁵{That is} because people who are willing to do anything to stay alive will not truly live. However, people who are willing to die because they are my apprentices will truly live. ²⁶Suppose that some people acquire everything they could possibly want. However, they can no longer truly live. That is not worth it! People cannot acquire anything that is as valuable as truly living. ²⁷{That is important} because I, the Son of Man, will soon return with my angels. I will be as glorious as God my Father. At that time, I will {justly} reward or punish people for whatever they have done.

²⁸Some of you who are here with me will definitely see me, the Son of Man, ruling over my kingdom before you die. What I have said is true."

Chapter 17

¹Six days later, Jesus climbed up a tall mountain. He had Peter, James, and James' {younger} brother John go with him. No one else was with them. ²Then, the three apprentices saw Jesus change how he appeared. His face became as radiant as the sun. His clothes became bright white. ³After that, Moses and Elijah{, who were prophets from long ago,} appeared to the three apprentices! These prophets were speaking to Jesus.

⁴Peter responded by saying to Jesus, "My Lord, it is appropriate for all of us to be here. If you want me to, I will build three shelters. You, Moses, and Elijah can each use one." ⁵As Peter was talking, a radiant cloud covered all of them! Then God spoke from the cloud! He declared, "This man is my Son, the one whom I love dearly. What he does pleases me. Do what he says."

⁶After the three apprentices heard that, they became extremely afraid. They kneeled down to worship God. ⁷Then Jesus came close to them. He touched them and told them, "Stand up! Stop being afraid!" ⁸When they looked up, the only person whom they saw was Jesus.

⁹While they were walking down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Do not tell anyone about what you just saw until I, the Son of Man, live again."

¹⁰Then, those three apprentices asked Jesus, "The teachers of the Jewish law tell us that the prophet Elijah has to be here before {the Messiah gets here}. Are they right about that? {We ask because we just saw the prophet Elijah}."

¹¹Jesus replied, "{They are right} that the prophet Elijah has to be here and that he will make everything as it should be. ¹²Now here is what I want you to know: the prophet Elijah has been here already. However, people did not realize that it was Elijah. Instead, they treated him badly. Further, they are about to hurt me, the Son of Man, in similar ways." ¹³After that, the three apprentices realized that Jesus was telling them {that the person he called Elijah was} John the Baptizer.

¹⁴When the four of them returned to the large group of people, a man came up to Jesus and bowed down in front of him. ¹⁵He said {to Jesus}, "My lord, please help my son! He is very sick and has seizures. He frequently falls into

fires or bodies of water. ¹⁶I took him {here} to your apprentices {in order that they might cure him}. However, they were not able to do so."

¹⁷Jesus responded, "You people who are alive right now do not believe or think properly. It is hard for me to live here with you. It is difficult for me to be patient with you." {Then he said to them,} "Bring the man's son here to me!" ¹⁸Then, Jesus commanded the demon {who was controlling the man's son} to stop {doing so}. The demon obeyed and left him. At that very moment, Jesus cured the man's son.

¹⁹Later, the apprentices came to Jesus when they were alone. They asked him, "Why could we not drive out that demon?"

²⁰He answered, "{You could not drive it out} because you trust in God so little. Suppose that you trusted God even a little bit, as little as a tiny mustard seed. Then, you could tell the mountain {we just walked down} to go from one place to another, and it would do so. You could do anything! What I have said is true. ²¹^[1] [Now you can only drive out this type of demon by praying and by not eating in order to please God.]"

²²Sometime later, the apprentices met together in the region of Galilee. Jesus told them, "Soon somebody will help my enemies arrest me, the Son of Man. ²³They will have people kill me. Then, during the third day after I died, God will make me alive again." {When they heard that, the apprentices} became very sad.

²⁴Later, Jesus and his apprentices went to the city of Capernaum. Some people who collected taxes for the temple came up to Peter. They asked him, "Your instructor pays the tax for the temple, right?"

²⁵Peter answered, "Yes, he does pay it."

Then Peter went into the house {where Jesus was staying}. Before Peter could say anything, Jesus said to him, "Simon, tell me what you think. Who has to pay taxes to the kings who rule in this world? Do their own children have to pay taxes? Or do people whom the kings do not know have to pay taxes?"

²⁶Peter replied, "People whom the kings do not know {have to pay taxes}."

Then Jesus said to him, "So then, the children of kings do not have to pay anything. {That means that we do not have to pay anything either.} ²⁷However, we do not want to upset the people who collect taxes. So, go to the Sea of Galilee and prepare your fishing tools. Pick up the first fish that you capture. Look in its mouth, and you will see a silver coin {that is worth about twice the tax}. Take the coin to the people who collect taxes to pay for my tax and your tax."

17:21 ^[1]

Chapter 18

¹Immediately after that, the apprentices came to Jesus. They asked him, "So then, who will be the most important people in God's heavenly kingdom?"

²Jesus told a young child to come to him. He had the young child stand among them. ³Then he told them, "You need to change so that you are like young children. That is the only way to participate in God's heavenly kingdom. What I have said is true. ⁴So then, consider people who make themselves less important, so that they are as unimportant as this young child. It is those people who are the most important in God's heavenly kingdom.

⁵Further, when people, because they are my apprentices, welcome a young child such as this one here, it is the same as welcoming me.

⁶On the other hand, suppose that an insignificant person who trusts me sinned because of certain people. {God will punish those people so severely that} they would prefer to have someone tie a heavy stone around their necks and drop them into the middle of the ocean. ⁷How terrible it will be for people in this world because of the things that cause them to sin! Now those things have to exist. However, how terrible it will be for the people who cause

those things to exist! ⁸Suppose that you sinned because you touched something or went somewhere. You should never do that again, even if you have to chop off your hands or your feet to make sure of it! {You should respond that drastically because} it is better for you to truly live without hands or feet than to have both hands and feet but end up in hell. ⁹Suppose that you sinned because you looked at something. You should never do that again, even if you have to remove your eyes to make sure of it! {You should respond that drastically because} it is better for you to truly live with only one eye than to have both eyes but end up in hell.

¹⁰Do not consider even one insignificant person {who trusts me} to be unimportant. In fact, I want you to know that the angels that protect them are in heaven. They are continually with God my Father, who rules from heaven. ¹¹^[1] [I, the Son of Man, am here to rescue people who do not worship and obey God.] ¹²Think about this situation: A man owns 100 sheep, but one of them wanders away. The man will most certainly leave the 99 other sheep on the side of a hill by themselves and search for the one sheep that wandered away! ¹³Now suppose that he found the one sheep that wandered away. He would be much happier about this one sheep than about the 99 other sheep that did not wander away. What I have said is true! ¹⁴God your Father, who rules from heaven, is like that man. He does not want even one insignificant person {who trusts me} to end up in hell.

¹⁵Suppose that fellow believers sin against you. You should visit them and privately tell them what they did wrong. Suppose that they accept what you say. In that case, you have made things right with your fellow believers.

¹⁶However, suppose that those fellow believers do not accept what you say. In that case, bring one or two other believers with you {when you visit them again to tell them what they did wrong}. That way, {you are doing what Moses wrote in the law, that} two or three people must confirm what someone says. ¹⁷Suppose that those fellow believers reject what the people you brought with you say. In that case, tell the whole group of believers {about what happened}. Finally, suppose that those fellow believers reject what the group of believers says. In that case, treat those fellow believers as if they were {unbelieving} non-Jews or people who collect taxes. {Do not treat them as fellow believers any longer.} ¹⁸When you confirm anything here on earth, God will confirm it in heaven. When you nullify anything here on earth, God will nullify it in heaven. What I have said is true! ¹⁹Also, when at least two of you here on earth together request the same thing, God my Father, who rules from heaven, will do whatever it is that you request. What I have said is true! ²⁰{God will do that} because I am spiritually present whenever at least two or three of you come together as my apprentices."

²¹After that, Peter came to Jesus and asked, "My Lord, how many times do I need to forgive fellow believers when they keep sinning against me? {Do I need to forgive them} as many as seven times?"

²²Jesus replied, "I tell you that you must forgive others 77 times {and more}, not just seven times." ²³Given what I have told you, here is what God's heavenly kingdom is like: a king wished to have his servants pay him what they owed him. ²⁴So, the king began to find out {what his servants owed him}. Someone led in a servant who owed the king an extremely large sum of money. ²⁵However, the servant did not have enough money to pay what he owed. So, the king told his men, 'Sell as slaves the servant, the servant's wife, and the servant's children. Also, sell anything that the servant owns. Then, give me the money that you received.'

²⁶After he heard that, the servant knelt down in front of the king. He begged him, 'My lord, please wait patiently. I will eventually pay all the money that I owe.'

²⁷The king pitied his servant. So, he did not require the servant to pay what he owed, and he let him go. ²⁸When the servant left the king, he noticed another servant who owed him only 100 small coins. He grabbed that servant {around the throat} and began to squeeze it. He demanded, 'Pay me the money that you owe!'

²⁹After he heard that, the other servant knelt down {before him}. He begged him, 'Please wait patiently. I will eventually pay {the money that I owe}.' ³⁰However, that servant did not want {to wait}. When he left that place, he had someone put the other servant in jail and keep him there until he paid the money that he owed.

³¹When the rest of the servants learned what that servant had done, they became very sad. They went to the king and told him about everything that the servant had done. ³²After that, the king told that servant to come to him. The king told him, 'You are an evil servant! Since you asked me {to wait patiently}, I did not require you to pay any

of what you owed. ³³I helped you. So, you should have helped the other servant.' ³⁴Then the king was angry. He had his men arrest and torture that servant until he paid all the money that he owed. ³⁵Whenever any of you do not completely forgive a fellow believer, God my Father, who rules from heaven, will do to you what {that king did to his servant}."

18:11 ^[1]

Chapter 19

¹So, Jesus completed saying those things. Then, he {and his apprentices} left the region of Galilee. They traveled to the region of Judea on the other side of the Jordan River. ²Large groups of people went with him, and in that place, he cured those {who were sick}.

³Some Pharisees came to Jesus in order to investigate him. They asked, "Does our law allow a husband to divorce his wife whenever he wants to?"

⁴Jesus replied, "You have read {in the Law that God gave Moses} that when God first created everything, he created people to be male and female. ⁵Then God said, 'That is why men{, when they marry,} no longer live with their parents and instead live with their wives. Each husband and wife together become like one person.' ⁶Consequently, each husband and wife are not like two different people any longer. Rather, they are like one person. Since that is true, no one should divide people whom God has united."

⁷The Pharisees responded, "If that is true, why {did Moses instruct us in our law about how to divorce wives}? He required each husband to present his wife with a document that states that he is divorcing her. Then, he can divorce her."

⁸Jesus answered, "Moses knew that you were unwilling to obey. That is why {in the Law} he permitted you to divorce your wives. However, when God first created everything, that is not what he intended. ⁹Now here is what I want to tell you: a man may divorce his wife only if she has had improper sex. When a man divorces his wife for any other reason and marries another woman, he disobeys what God commanded about being sexually faithful to one's spouse. Further, any man who marries a woman whose husband has divorced her also disobeys what God commanded about being sexually faithful to one's spouse."

¹⁰Jesus' apprentices responded, "If that is the only basis on which a husband can divorce his wife, it is not beneficial to get married!"

¹¹Jesus replied, "Many people do not accept what you have said. Only people whom God enables {to accept it can do so}. ¹²Here is what I mean: Some men are impotent because they were already like that when their mothers gave birth to them. Other men are impotent because people castrated them. Other men are impotent because they chose to live that way in order to serve in God's heavenly kingdom. Anyone who can accept {what I am saying} should accept it."

¹³After that, some people took young children to Jesus. They wanted him to bless them by touching them and to pray {for them}. However, the apprentices told them to stop. ¹⁴However, Jesus told {the apprentices}, "Allow the young children to come here. Do not stop them! {I say that because} they and people like them are part of God's heavenly kingdom." ¹⁵{After saying that,} Jesus blessed the young children by touching them. Then, he left that place.

¹⁶After that, a person came to Jesus! He asked, "Instructor, what is a good thing I can do so that I will live with God forever?"

¹⁷Jesus replied, "You should not ask me about what would be a good {thing to do}. God is the only one who is good. Now {to answer your question}, since you desire to truly live, you should do what God has commanded."

¹⁸The man replied, "Which {things that God has commanded do you mean}?"

Jesus answered him, "Here are the ones I mean: Do not murder others. Do not be sexually unfaithful to your spouse. Do not steal things. Do not say what is untrue. ¹⁹Treat your parents respectfully. Care for people you know as much as you care for yourself."

²⁰The young man replied, "I have done each of these things {that God commanded}. What more do I need to do {to truly live}?"

²¹Jesus answered, "Since you desire to complete {doing what is good}, go {home} and sell what you own. Give {that money} to poor people. {If you do that,} God will reward you in heaven. Then, come with me as my apprentice."

²²After the young man listened to what Jesus said, he felt very sad and left. {He was very sad} because he was rich {and did not want to lose what he owned}.

²³After that, Jesus told his apprentices, "It is hard for rich people to participate in God's heavenly kingdom. What I have said is true. ²⁴I want you to understand that, so I will repeat it. Large animals like camels cannot fit into very small spaces. However, it is even harder for rich people to participate in God's kingdom."

²⁵What Jesus said greatly surprised the apprentices. They said, "So then, it must be that God does not actually rescue anyone!"

²⁶Jesus looked directly at his apprentices. He said, "People cannot rescue themselves. However, God can do anything!"

²⁷After {Jesus said} that, Peter replied, "We left behind everything we had and went with you as your apprentices! So then, how will God reward us?"

²⁸Jesus replied, "Someday God will renew everything that he has made, and I, the Son of Man, will sit down {to rule} from my great throne. When that happens, you too, since you have come with me as my apprentices, will sit down {to rule} from 12 thrones{, one for each of you}. You will decide whether people from the 12 Israelite clans are guilty or innocent. What I have said is true. ²⁹Some people leave behind houses, siblings, parents, wives, children, or fields. They do that because they want to be my apprentices. God will give those people many times {what they left behind}. Further, he will enable them to live with him forever. ³⁰{At that time,} many people who are important right now will become unimportant. Many people who are unimportant right now will become important.

Chapter 20

¹In fact, here is what God's heavenly kingdom is like: a man who managed a household left his house in the morning {to go to the town's open area}. He wanted to hire people to take care of his grape vines. ²He found some people who agreed to work that day for one coin. Then, he told them to take care of his grape vines. ³At about nine o'clock in the morning, the man arrived in the town's open area again. He noticed more people there who wanted to work. ⁴He told them, 'Join the other people who are taking care of my grape vines. I will pay you a fair wage.'
⁵They agreed to do so. At about noon and at about three o'clock in the afternoon, the man again arrived {in the town's open area}. He said the same thing {to the people he found there, and they too agreed to take care of his grape vines}. ⁶At about five o'clock in the afternoon, the man again arrived {in the town's open area}. He noticed that there were still people there who wanted to work. He asked them, 'Why have you been here waiting all day to work?'

⁷They replied, '{We are waiting here} because nobody has hired us.'

Then the man said, 'Join the other people who are taking care of my grape vines.' {They agreed to do so.}

⁸When it was evening, the man who managed the household spoke to the man who supervised the workers. He said, 'Tell the people who worked today to come here. Starting with the people that I hired latest in the day and

ending with the people that I hired earliest in the day, pay them what they earned.' ⁹Then the people who started working at about five o'clock in the afternoon came forward. The supervisor paid one coin to each of them. ¹⁰Then the people who started working first came forward. They expected that the supervisor would pay them more {than that}. However, he paid one coin to each of them also.

¹¹After these workers took their money, they complained about how the man who managed the household was behaving. ¹²They said to him, 'These people who started working last worked for just one hour. However, you are treating them as if they worked as much as we have! We worked the most and during the hottest parts of the day.'

¹³The man who managed the household spoke to one of the workers who was complaining, 'My friend, I am not treating you unfairly. You agreed {to take care of my grape vines} for one coin. ¹⁴I want to pay those who started working last as much as I pay you {who started working first}. So, take what I have paid you and go {home}. ¹⁵Our law allows me to do what I like with what I own. You should not be jealous because I am being generous!'

¹⁶Similarly, people who are unimportant right now will become important. People who are important right now will become unimportant."

¹⁷Sometime later, Jesus was walking toward the city of Jerusalem. He had his 12 apprentices come with him. No one else was with them. While they were walking, he told them, ¹⁸"We are walking toward the city of Jerusalem! There, somebody will help the ruling priests and the teachers of the Jewish law arrest me, the Son of Man. They will decide that I am guilty and that someone should kill me. ¹⁹They will bring me to the non-Jewish authorities. Those people will make fun of me, beat me, and kill me by nailing me to a cross. Then, during the third day after I died, God will make me alive again."

²⁰After that, Zebedee's wife came to Jesus with her two sons, James and John. She knelt before Jesus and asked him to do something {for her}. ²¹Jesus replied, "What do you want {me to do for you}?"

She said, "Please promise me that, when you rule, you will greatly honor my two sons by having one of them sit at your right side and the other one sit at your left side."

²²Then Jesus responded by speaking {to her two sons}, "You do not realize what you have actually requested. Are you willing to suffer as I will soon suffer?"

{Her two sons, James and John,} replied, "Yes, we are willing {to suffer}."

²³Then Jesus said to them, "You will certainly suffer as I will soon suffer. However, I am not the one who chooses whom to honor by having them sit at my right side and at my left side. Rather, God my Father has already chosen who {will sit in those places}."

²⁴When the ten other apprentices learned {what James and John had requested}, they were very upset with them.

²⁵So, Jesus told his apprentices to come to him. He said to them, "You understand that the people who govern the non-Jews dominate them. Further, important people among them control everyone else. ²⁶You must not behave like that. Rather, when one of you wants to be important, that person must serve the others. ²⁷Likewise, when one of you wants to be most important, that person must work for the others. ²⁸{You should be} like me, the Son of Man. I am here to serve other people. I am not here so that other people will serve me. Indeed, I am going to die in order to free many people {from their sins}."

²⁹After that, Jesus and his apprentices left the city of Jericho{, which they had been visiting}. A large group of people went with them. ³⁰Now two men who were blind were sitting down next to the path! Someone told them, "Jesus is walking by."

So, they were shouting, "Our Lord, you who are a descendant of King David, please help us!"

³¹Some people from the large group of people scolded them to keep them quiet. However, the men who were blind yelled even louder, "Our Lord, you who are a descendant of King David, please help us!"

³²Then, Jesus stopped walking. He spoke to the two men who were blind. He asked, "How would you like me to help you?"

³³They replied, "Our Lord, we want to be able to see!" ³⁴Jesus pitied them. He touched their eyes. As soon as he did that, they could see. Then, they went with Jesus as his apprentices.

Chapter 21

¹After that, Jesus and his apprentices continued to walk toward the city of Jerusalem, and they were getting closer. They were near the Mount of Olives, just outside the village of Bethphage. Then, Jesus told two of his apprentices to go {ahead of them}. ²He commanded them, "Enter the village of Bethphage, which you see ahead of you. As soon as you enter it, you will see a female donkey that someone has tethered. Her colt will be next to her. Remove the tether {from the female donkey} and lead her and her colt to me here. ³People might ask you about what you are doing. In that case, tell them, 'The Lord needs this donkey and colt.' As soon as you say that, those people will let you have the donkey and colt." ⁴When he said those things, what God said by speaking through one of the prophets came true:

⁵"Say to the people who live in the city of Jerusalem,

'Your king will soon be with you!

He is gentle. He sits on a donkey,

on a colt, {which is} a donkey's offspring.'"

⁶The two apprentices went {to the village} and did what Jesus had told them to do. ⁷They led the donkey and her colt to Jesus. They spread their coats on the animals, and Jesus sat on the coats. ⁸Then, {to honor Jesus,} a very large group of people laid their coats down on the path {in front of Jesus}. Other people cut small branches down from trees and laid them down on the path too. ⁹Large groups of people walked in front of Jesus and behind him. They were shouting,

"Praise this descendant of King David!

May God bless him who is here to represent the Lord!

May everything in heaven praise him!"

¹⁰{How people welcomed Jesus} when he went into the city of Jerusalem unsettled many people who lived there. They asked, "Who is this man?"

¹¹The large groups of people answered, "He is Jesus, from the town of Nazareth, which is in Galilee. He is a man who speaks for God."

¹²Later, Jesus visited the temple area. Some people were selling and buying things there. He forced them to leave. Other people were exchanging {regular} money {for special temple money}, and other people were selling small birds {for people to sacrifice}. Jesus flipped over their tables and chairs. ¹³Then Jesus told those people, "The prophets wrote in the Scriptures, 'People should say that my temple is a place where people pray.' However, you have turned it into 'a hideout for thieves!'"

¹⁴Later, people who could not see and people who could not walk came to Jesus while he was in the temple area. Jesus cured them. ¹⁵The ruling priests and the teachers of the Jewish law saw the amazing things that Jesus did. {They heard} young children in the temple area shouting, "Praise this descendant of King David!" {When they saw and heard those things}, they were very upset.

¹⁶They asked him, "Do you realize what those young children are saying {about you}?"

Jesus replied, "Yes, {I realize it}! {What they are doing fits with what} you have read {in the Scriptures}:

'You have appointed young children and little babies

to honor you.'"

¹⁷Then Jesus {and his apprentices} went away from the ruling priests and the teachers of the Jewish law. They left the city of Jerusalem and stayed overnight in the village of Bethany.

¹⁸Early the next morning, when Jesus and his apprentices were going back to the city of Jerusalem, Jesus became hungry. ¹⁹He noticed a fig tree near the path. So, he went over to it {to pick some figs to eat}. However, the tree only had leaves. Then Jesus spoke to the fig tree, "May you never again produce figs!" As soon as he said that, the fig tree died.

²⁰What the apprentices had just seen impressed them. They asked, "How did the fig tree die as soon as you spoke to it?"

²¹Jesus replied, "Suppose that you trusted {God} and were not unsure {about what he can do}. Then, you could do what I did to the fig tree. Even more, you could tell the hill we are near to leave {this place} and fall into the ocean, and it would happen. What I have said is true. ²²Further, suppose that you trust God to do whatever you ask when you are praying. Then, he will do it for you."

²³Then Jesus visited the temple area, and he was instructing people there. The ruling priests and the Jewish leaders came to him. They asked, "In what way did someone authorize you to do what you have done? Who was it that authorized you {to do these things}?"

²⁴Jesus replied, "I too will ask you a question. When you answer it, I too will answer your question about the way in which someone authorized me to do what I have done. ²⁵Who authorized John the Baptizer to baptize people? Did God {authorize him} from heaven, or did people {authorize him}?"

Then the ruling priests and the Jewish leaders told each other, "Suppose that we answer that {God authorized John} from heaven. Then, he will tell us that we should have listened to John. ²⁶On the other hand, suppose that we answer that people {authorized John}. Then, since the large group of people believe that John spoke for God, we are afraid of how they would react."

²⁷So, they answered Jesus, "We do not know {who authorized John}."

Jesus responded, "Because you did not answer my question, I will not tell you in what way someone authorized me to do what I have done. ²⁸Think about this situation: There was a man with two children. He went to the older one and told him, 'My child, go {to where my grape vines are} and take care of them today.'

²⁹His child replied, 'I will not {do that}!' However, later he regretted {what he had said}. He took care of the grape vines after all.

³⁰After {speaking with the older child}, the man went to the younger child and told him to take care of his grape vines.

His child replied, 'I will {do that}, my father!' However, he did not take care of the grape vines.

³¹Which of these two children did what their father wanted?"

The ruling priests and the Jewish leaders answered, "The older one."

Jesus replied, "Prostitutes and people who collect taxes are participating in God's kingdom before you are. What I have said is true. ³²{I say that} because, when John the Baptizer was with you, he did what was right. However, you did not trust him. In contrast, prostitutes and people who collect taxes did trust him. When you realized {that even they trusted John}, you did not regret how you were acting and trust him after all.

³³I will tell you another story. A man who managed a household planted a vineyard. He built a fence around it {in order to protect it}. He made a stone tank {to collect the grape juice that they would press out of the grapes}. He also built a tower {for someone to sit in to guard his vineyard}. He rented the vineyard to some people who would take care of it, and he left to travel to a different country. ³⁴When it was almost time to harvest the grapes, the man told some of his servants to go to the people who were taking care of the vineyard. He wanted them to give him his share of the grapes {that the vineyard had produced}. ³⁵However, the people who were taking care of the vineyard grabbed the man's servants. They beat up some servants. They executed other servants. They {killed} other servants by throwing stones at them. ³⁶After that, the man told an even greater number of his servants to go {to the people who were taking care of the vineyard}. However, those people treated these servants just as they had treated the other servants. ³⁷Finally, the man told his own son to go to them. He thought that they would treat his son well {and give him his share of the grapes}.

³⁸However, when the people who were taking care of the vineyard saw the man's son arriving, they told each other, 'This man is the one who will inherit the vineyard. We should kill him, and then we can take the vineyard for ourselves.' ³⁹So, they grabbed the man's son and dragged him outside the vineyard. Then, they killed him. ⁴⁰After that, the man who owned the vineyard came back. How do you think he treated the people who were taking care of the vineyard?"

⁴¹The ruling priests and the Jewish leaders replied, "He would kill those evil people! Then, he would rent the vineyard to other people who would give him his share of the grapes when it was time to harvest them."

⁴²Jesus responded, "{What I have said fits with what} you have read in the Scriptures:

'The people who were constructing a building refused to use a certain stone.

However, that stone is now the most important one in the building.

The Lord {God} did that,

and we think it is amazing.'

⁴³So then, here is what I want to tell you: God will stop you from participating in his kingdom. He will have a different group of people participate in his kingdom. They will do what he wants those in his kingdom to do. ⁴⁴Any people who trip over the stone {that is now the most important one} will injure themselves. Further, that stone will squash anyone on whom it drops."

⁴⁵The ruling priests and the Pharisees listened to the stories that Jesus told. They realized that Jesus was telling {the stories} about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest Jesus. However, since the large groups of people believed that Jesus spoke for God, they were afraid of how those people would react. {So, they did not arrest Jesus at that time.}

Chapter 22

¹Then Jesus used more stories to teach the chief priests and the Jewish leaders. He said, ²"Here is what God's heavenly kingdom is like: a king prepared a banquet to celebrate his son, who was getting married. ³{When it was time for the banquet,} the king told his servants to summon the people that he had asked to attend the banquet. However, those people refused to attend {the banquet}. ⁴So, the king told different servants to summon again the people he had asked to attend {the banquet}. He instructed them to say that the meal was ready, that his servants had prepared special cows to eat and everything else, and that they should attend the banquet. ⁵However, the people {that the king had asked to attend the banquet} ignored his servants. Instead, some of them left for other places, like their farms or workplaces. ⁶Other {people that the king had asked to attend the banquet} grabbed his servants. They abused some of them, and they killed some of them. ⁷So, the king was very upset. He told his soldiers to kill the people who killed his servants and to burn down their town. ⁸After that, the king told his servants that, although the feast for his son's wedding was ready, the people he had asked to attend did not

deserve to be there. ⁹So, {he told his servants} to walk to the intersections of the main roads and to tell the people they encountered to attend the feast for his son's wedding. ¹⁰So, his servants walked to {the intersections of} the roads. They brought all the people they encountered, whether those people did what was right or did what was wrong. Then, the wedding hall was full of people who were feasting. ¹¹The king went into the hall to see the people who were feasting. {While he was} there, he noticed that one person did not have on the proper clothing for a wedding. ¹²The king called him friend and told him that he should not have attended without having on the proper clothing for a wedding. The person had nothing to say in response. ¹³After that, the king told his servants to tie the person up and cast him out {of the wedding hall}. {He told them to punish him} in a dark place, where people will cry and sorrowfully grind their teeth. ¹⁴As that story illustrates, God summons many people {to participate in his kingdom}. However, he only chooses a few of them {to do so}."

¹⁵After {Jesus said those things}, the Pharisees left {that place}. They started to plan how they could cause him to make a mistake in what he said. ¹⁶So, the Pharisees told some of their apprentices and some people who supported King Herod to go to Jesus and say to him, "Our instructor, we realize that you say what is true. Further, you truthfully instruct people in what God wants them to do. You do not pay attention to how important or powerful people are. So, you do not care about what other people think. ¹⁷So, please tell us how you answer this question: Does our law allow us to pay taxes to the Roman government, or {does it} not {allow that}?"

¹⁸However, Jesus knew that they were trying to harm him. So, he replied, "You are trying to make me say something wrong. You pretend to respect me, but you really do not! ¹⁹Hand me one of the coins that you use to pay taxes." Someone handed him a Roman coin.

²⁰Then Jesus asked, "Whose picture and name are on this coin?"

²¹They replied, "{It is} Caesar's {picture and name}."

Then Jesus said, "In that case, give to the Roman government what belongs to it, and give to God what belongs to him." ²²What Jesus said impressed the Pharisees' apprentices and the people who supported King Herod. They left where he was.

²³Later that day, some Sadducees came to Jesus. They are a Jewish group that does not believe that God will make people who have died alive again. They asked Jesus, ²⁴"Our instructor, Moses wrote {in the Scriptures} about what should happen when a man with {a wife but} no children dies. When that happens, the man's brother should marry the dead man's wife. When they have a child, they should consider it to be the child of the dead man. ²⁵So, {consider this situation}: seven brothers lived here. One brother got married, but then he died before he had children. So, one of his brothers married his widow. ²⁶The same thing happened to the second brother, the third brother, and the other four brothers. {They each married the widow but died before they had children.} ²⁷Finally, the widow died. ²⁸So then, of those seven brothers, whose wife will she be when God makes people alive again? {We ask} because she got married to all seven of them {at different times}."

²⁹Jesus replied, "You do not realize what the Scriptures mean or how powerful God is. So, you believe what is wrong. ³⁰Here is what I mean: after God makes people alive again, they will not get married. Instead, they will be like angels who dwell in heaven {and do not get married}. ³¹Now I will speak about whether God makes people who have died alive again. You have read in the Scriptures that God said to you, ³²'I am the God whom Abraham worships, the God whom Isaac worships, and the God whom Jacob worships.' It is living people who worship God, not dead people. {So, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who all have died, must be alive again!}" ³³The things that Jesus taught impressed the large groups of people.

³⁴The Pharisees heard that Jesus answered so well that the Sadducees could not respond. So, the Pharisees met together {and went to where Jesus was}. ³⁵Then, one of the Pharisees, who was an expert in the Jewish law, decided to investigate Jesus. He asked him, ³⁶"Instructor, which of the laws that God gave us is the most important?"

³⁷Jesus replied: "We must love the Lord, the God whom we worship, with everything that we desire, everything that we do, and everything that we think. ³⁸That is the most important law. ³⁹The next most important law is similar. It is that we must care for people we know as much as we care for ourselves. ⁴⁰All the parts of the Scriptures depend upon these two laws."

⁴¹While those Pharisees were still all together {near Jesus}, he asked them, ⁴²"I want you to answer a question about the Messiah. Who is his ancestor?"

They replied, "His ancestor is King David."

⁴³Jesus replied, "In that case, why did the Holy Spirit cause King David to write that the Messiah was his Lord? {People do not describe their descendants as their lords. However,} King David wrote ⁴⁴that the Lord God said to David's Lord,

'Rule with me

while I defeat all of your enemies!'

⁴⁵So then, since King David wrote that the Messiah was his Lord, how is it possible for King David to be his ancestor?" ⁴⁶The people who were there could not answer his question. In fact, after that nobody was bold enough to ask him more questions.

Chapter 23

¹After that, Jesus said to the large groups of people and to his apprentices, ²"The Pharisees and the teachers of the Jewish law instruct you as Moses did. ³So then, you should do whatever they tell you {to do}. However, they themselves do not do what they tell {you to do}. So, do not act as they do. ⁴They tell people to do many things that are difficult. However, they do not do anything to help those people. ⁵Whenever they do anything, they do it so that people praise them for it. For example, when they tie boxes containing Scripture on their foreheads and arms, they make sure the boxes are large. They make the hems on their robes very long. ⁶They greatly enjoy sitting in the places for important people when they attend feasts or go to the Jewish meeting places. ⁷{They greatly enjoy it when} people greet them {respectfully} in the open areas of towns and speak to them as important teachers. ⁸However, you have only one teacher, me. Also, you are all fellow believers. So then, you should not allow people to speak to you as important teachers. ⁹Further, you have one Father, the one who rules from heaven. So, you should not honor people here on earth by using the title 'my father' for them. ¹⁰You have one instructor, I, who am the Messiah. So, you should not allow people to speak to you as their instructors. ¹¹The most important person in your group must serve the others. ¹²God will cause people who think they are important to be unimportant. God will cause people who think they are unimportant to be important.

¹³You Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law say that you obey God, but you really do not! You keep people from participating in God's heavenly kingdom. In fact, you yourselves do not participate in the kingdom. Further, you prevent people who want to participate in it from doing so. How terrible it will be for you!

¹⁴[You Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law say that you obey God, but you really do not! You steal the property of women whose husbands have died. To make other people think that you are righteous, you pray for a long time. How terrible it will be for you! God will punish you very severely.]

¹⁵You Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law say that you obey God, but you really do not! You travel to many places to convert even one person to the Jewish religion. However, once you have done that, you cause that person to deserve to end up in hell as much as you do. How terrible it will be for you!

¹⁶You do not know what you should be teaching. You say that when people have the temple guarantee what they promise, they do not need to do what they promised. However, you say that when they have the precious metal in

the temple guarantee what they promise, they must do what they promised. How terrible it will be for you! ¹⁷You do not understand what is true! You should realize that the precious metal {in the temple} is less important than the temple itself. It is the temple that makes the precious metal holy. ¹⁸Similarly, {you say that} when people have the altar guarantee what they promise, they do not need to do what they promised. However, you say that when they have the sacrifice on the altar guarantee what they promise, they must do what they promised. ¹⁹You do not understand what is true! You should realize that the sacrifice {on the altar} is less important than the altar itself. It is the altar that makes the sacrifice holy. ²⁰So, when people have the altar guarantee what they promise, they are having both it and every sacrifice on it guarantee what they promise. ²¹Further, when people have the temple guarantee what they promise, they are having both it and God, who dwells there, guarantee what they promise. ²²When people have heaven guarantee what they promise, they are also having God's throne and God himself, who rules from that throne, guarantee what they promise.

²³You Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law say that you obey God, but you really do not! You give one tenth of even your herbs and spices to God. However, you fail to obey the more important commands that God gave: to do what is right, to be merciful to others, and to be faithful to God. You should do these things as well as giving a tenth of everything to God. How terrible it will be for you! ²⁴You do not know what you should be teaching. You are like people who filter small flies out of their drinks without noticing large animals like camels in the same drinks!

²⁵You Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law say that you obey God, but you really do not! You seem to do what is right, just like dishes that you have washed on the outside. However, really you want what other people have and do not control yourselves, just like dishes that are still dirty on the inside. How terrible it will be for you! ²⁶You Pharisees do not understand what is true! You should focus on doing what is right. Once you do that, you will also seem to do what is right, just like dishes that are clean on both the inside and the outside.

²⁷You Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law say that you obey God, but you really do not! I compare you to graves that people have painted white. They look good, but they are dirty and have many corpses in them. How terrible it will be for you! ²⁸Similarly, you seem to do what is right, but really you usually do what is wrong while pretending to do what is right.

²⁹You Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law say that you obey God, but you really do not! How terrible it will be for you! You construct monuments to honor the people who spoke for God long ago. You decorate the graves of people who did what was right. ³⁰You declare that, had you been alive when your ancestors were, you would not have helped them murder the people who spoke for God. ³¹When you declare that, you admit that you are descendants of and similar to the people who did murder those who spoke for God. ³²As for you, think about what will happen if you do what your ancestors did.

³³You are sneaky and dangerous like poisonous snakes! You will not avoid God punishing you in hell. ³⁴Since you are like that, I will have people who speak for God, people who are wise, and teachers of the Jewish law go to you! You will murder some of them and kill some of them by nailing them to crosses. You will beat some of them in your meeting places. You will chase them from one town to another. ³⁵So, God will consider you to be guilty for murdering everyone who did what was right here on earth but whom someone murdered. I am referring to {Adam's son} Abel, who did what was right, and Barachiah's son Zechariah, whom your ancestors murdered in the temple area, and everyone in between. ³⁶God will consider {you people who live in} this time period to be guilty of all those murders. What I have said is true.

³⁷Oh, people of Jerusalem! You killed the people who spoke for God long ago. Then you killed others whom God sent to you. You killed them by throwing stones at them. Many times I have wanted to bring you together {to protect you}, as a chicken brings her offspring together under her wings. However, you did not want me to do that. ³⁸Your city will become a place where no one lives! ³⁹In fact, here is what I want to tell you: the next time you see me, you will be saying, 'May God bless him who is here to represent the Lord!'"

Chapter 24

¹After that, Jesus left the temple area. As he was walking, his apprentices came to him and pointed out the impressive structures that were in the temple area. ²He responded, "Look at all these structures! Enemies will completely destroy them. They will not leave anything standing. What I have said is true."

³Later, Jesus sat down on top of the Mount of Olives. His apprentices came to him. No one else was with them. They asked him, "Please explain to us when what you have described will happen. Also, {please explain to us} how we can tell when you are going to return {to this world} and when this current time period will end."

⁴Jesus replied, "Make sure that nobody deceives you! ⁵{I say that} because many people will meet you and say that God has authorized them as he has authorized me. They will say that they are the Messiah. {By doing that,} they will deceive many people. ⁶Whenever people tell you about wars that are happening and about wars that could happen, make sure that you are not afraid. Things like that have to happen. However, the current time period will not yet end. ⁷Further, groups of people will attack each other. Many people will not have enough food to eat, and earthquakes will happen in many places. ⁸Those events are like the first pains a pregnant woman feels when she is going to birth. They are bad, but many more bad things will still happen after them.

⁹While those things are happening, people will hurt you and kill you. Indeed, because you are my apprentices, many groups of people will be hostile to you. ¹⁰Also while those things are happening, many people will stop believing {in me}. They will have people arrest their fellow believers. They will be hostile to each other. ¹¹There will be many people who lie when they claim to speak for God. They will deceive many people. ¹²Since more and more people will do what is wrong, many people will stop caring {for each other}. ¹³However, if you persevere {in being my apprentices} while people harm you, God will rescue you. ¹⁴You, my apprentices, will proclaim the good news about God's kingdom throughout this world. That way, you will tell every group of people {about me}. After that, the current time period will end.

¹⁵At some point, you will realize that the detestable thing that destroys is in the temple building. Daniel, who spoke for God, already referred to this detestable thing." (So, anyone who has read what Daniel wrote should know what Jesus meant.) ¹⁶"When you realize that, those of you who are in the region of Judea should escape to the hilly areas nearby. ¹⁷Those of you who are outside your homes should not go back into your homes to get anything. ¹⁸Those of you who are working in fields should not go back home to get your coats. ¹⁹When what I have described happens, how terrible it will be for pregnant women and for nursing mothers! ²⁰Ask God to keep you from having to escape during the winter season or on the Jewish day of rest{, when it is difficult to travel}. ²¹{I say that} because people will suffer very severely when what I have described happens. People have not suffered that severely since God created the world up to now, and no one will ever suffer that severely again. ²²Suppose that God were to allow what I have described to continue. In that case, nobody would survive. However, because of the people whom he has chosen {to belong to him}, God will not allow what I have described to continue.

²³⁻²⁴While those things are happening, there will be people who lie when they claim to be the Messiah or to speak for God. They will perform amazing miracles. They will try to deceive the people whom God has chosen {to belong to him}, and they will almost succeed in doing so. Therefore, when people tell you that the Messiah is here or there, do not trust {what they say}. ²⁵I have warned you about this before it happens! ²⁶So, suppose someone says to you that the Messiah is in a place where no one lives. Do not go there. {Similarly, suppose that someone says to you that the Messiah} is in some private rooms. Do not trust what that person says. ²⁷Here is why I say that: lightning lights up the sky from one side to the other{, and everyone can see it}. Similarly, when I, the Son of Man, return {to this world}, {everyone will see it}. ²⁸Carrion birds assemble wherever there is a dead body.

²⁹Once people suffer in the ways I have described, immediately God will cause the sun to become dark. The moon will not shine. Stars will drop down from the sky. God will disrupt the angels in heaven. ³⁰After that, people will see something in the sky that shows that I, the Son of Man, {am about to act}. In response, many groups of people here on earth will grieve. They will see me, the Son of Man, arriving by means of clouds. I will be powerful and very

great. ³¹I will {have an angel} sound a loud trumpet. I will tell my angels to collect the people whom I have chosen. They will collect them from every place that exists.

³²Listen to this story about how fig trees grow. Whenever they begin to produce new branches and leaves, you can tell that it is almost the summer season. ³³Similarly, whenever you realize that what I have described is happening, you can tell that I will act very soon. ³⁴Most of the people who are alive right now will still be alive when what I have described happens. What I have said is true. ³⁵Everything that God has created will eventually change or disappear. However, what I have said will never change or disappear.

³⁶However, as for when this current time period will end, no human being knows that. The angels who dwell in heaven do not know that. Even I, the Son, do not know that. In fact, only God my Father knows that. ³⁷So, when I, the Son of Man, return {to this world}, it will be like what happened when Noah was alive {long ago}. ³⁸⁻³⁹Here is what I mean: at the time before God flooded the whole world, people did not realize what was going to happen. They did {normal things, like} eating, drinking, and getting married. They did those things right up to the moment when Noah went into the big boat {that he had built}. Then, God flooded the whole world and destroyed everyone {who was not in the boat}. That is what it will be like when I, the Son of Man, return {to this world}. ⁴⁰Consider what will happen to two men working on a farm when I return. God will bring one man {to be with him}. He will leave the other man behind {to punish him}. ⁴¹Consider what will happen to two women using a stone to prepare grain. God will bring one woman {to be with him}. He will leave the other woman behind {to punish her}.

⁴²So then, you cannot know at what moment I, your Lord, will return {to this world}. Because of that, you need to be ready {at all times}. ⁴³Now learn from this situation: Suppose that a man who managed a household learned at what time a robber was going to steal from the house. In that case, he would be ready for the robber. He would prevent him from stealing from the house. ⁴⁴So then, since I, the Son of Man, will return {to this world} when you do not expect me, you too need to be ready.

⁴⁵To further understand what I am saying, consider an important servant. His master has put him in charge of all the other servants, and he needs to feed them at the proper times. He should be trustworthy and act wisely.

⁴⁶When his master returns, it will be very good for that servant if his master learns that he has done what he put him in charge to do. ⁴⁷The master will put that servant in charge of everything that he owns. What I have said is true. ⁴⁸However, suppose that the servant were wicked. Then, he would think that his master was staying away for a long time. ⁴⁹So, he would start hitting the other servants. He would feast with drunk people. ⁵⁰However, then his master would return at a time when the servant does not expect him. ⁵¹The master will punish that servant severely. He will send him where he punishes people who pretend to obey but really do not. There, people will cry and sorrowfully grind their teeth.

Chapter 25

¹Here is what God's heavenly kingdom will be like at that time: Ten young women each took an oil lamp and prepared to escort a bridegroom {to his wedding celebration}. ²As for those young women, five of them were foolish, and the other five of them were wise. ³Here is how five of them were foolish: they each took an oil lamp, but they did not take any extra oil {for their lamps}. ⁴In contrast, here is how five of them were wise: they each took an oil lamp and also some extra oil {for their lamps}. ⁵Now the bridegroom did not arrive for a long time. So, all the young women became drowsy and then fell asleep. ⁶Later, sometime during the night, someone shouted, 'The bridegroom is almost here! You must escort him {to his wedding celebration}!' ⁷When they heard that, all the young women woke up and prepared their oil lamps.

⁸The foolish young women said to the wise young women, 'Our oil lamps no longer shine brightly. So, please share your oil with us.'

⁹The wise young women replied, '{We will not share our oil, because} there is not enough for all of us. You should find someone from whom to buy oil for yourselves.' ¹⁰So, the foolish young women left to buy oil. While they were gone, the bridegroom arrived. The wise young women, who were ready {to escort him}, went with him to the wedding hall. Then, people closed its doors.

¹¹Later, the other young women also arrived {at the wedding hall}. They asked {the bridegroom}, 'Sir, please open the door so that we can come in!'

¹²The bridegroom replied, '{I will not open the door, because} I do not recognize you. What I have said is true!' ¹³So then, you cannot know at what moment {I will return to this world}. Because of that, you need to be ready {at all times}.

¹⁴Even further, {here is what God's heavenly kingdom} is like: a man decided to travel to a different country. So, he summoned his servants and put them in charge of what he owned. ¹⁵He gave as much money to each servant as each one could manage. He gave five bags of money to one servant. He gave two bags of money to another servant. He gave one bag of money to another servant. As soon as he did that, he traveled to a different country.

¹⁶Then, the servant who had five bags of money went to invest the money. He made five more bags of money.

¹⁷Similarly, the servant who had two bags of money {invested the money}. He made two more bags of money.

¹⁸However, the servant who had one bag of money went to bury it in the ground {to keep it safe}.

¹⁹Much later, the servants' master returned. He wanted to know what they had done with the bags of money. ²⁰So, the servant who had five bags of money went to him. He brought {them and} the five more bags of money {that he had made}. He said, 'Master, you gave me five bags of money. I have made five more bags of money!'

²¹His master replied, 'I approve of what you have done. You are a trustworthy servant who does what is right! You were trustworthy when I put you in charge of only some money. Now I will put you in charge of many important things. Enjoy what I have with me!'

²²Then, the servant who had two bags of money went to him too. He said, 'Master, you gave me two bags of money. I have made two more bags of money!'

²³His master replied, 'I approve of what you have done. You are a trustworthy servant who does what is right! You were trustworthy when I put you in charge of only some money. Now I will put you in charge of many important things. Enjoy what I have with me!'

²⁴Then, the servant who had one bag of money went to him too. He said, 'Master, I realized that you are a demanding person. You are like a farmer who harvests crops that he did not plant. ²⁵So, because I feared you, I went to bury your bag of money in the ground {to keep it safe}. Now I am giving you back your money!'

²⁶His master replied, 'You are an evil servant who refuses to work! You claim that you realized that I am like a farmer who harvests crops that he did not plant. ²⁷If that were true about me, you should have given the bag of money to people who lend money. Then, when I returned, I would have gotten it back plus the interest it earned.'

²⁸So {the master said to his other servants,} 'Take the bag of money from him! Give it to the servant who has ten bags of money. ²⁹{I command that} because people give more to those who already have something. They will have many things. In contrast, people take everything from those who already have very little. ³⁰Now {to punish} this useless servant, cast him out into a dark place, where people will cry and sorrowfully grind their teeth.'

³¹When I, the Son of Man, return {to this world} with all the angels, I will be very glorious. At that time, I will sit down {to rule} from my great throne. ³²Then all groups of people will assemble in front of me. I will divide them into two groups, as a shepherd divides his animals into a group of sheep and a group of goats. ³³I will have some people, who are like sheep, go to the area to my right {to honor them}. I will have the other people, who are like goats, go to the area to my left {to shame them}. ³⁴After that, I, the king, will tell the people in the area to my right, 'You are people whom God my Father has blessed. Come with me! God will enable you to participate in the

kingdom that he set up for you when he created everything. ³⁵{You will do that} because you fed me when I was hungry. You gave me water when I was thirsty. You welcomed me when I arrived from a different place. ³⁶You gave me clothes when I did not have enough to wear. You took care of me when I was ill. You visited me when I was in jail.'

³⁷After that, the people who did what was right will reply, 'Lord, we do not remember feeding you when you were hungry. {We do not remember} giving you water when you were thirsty. ³⁸We do not remember welcoming you even though you were from a different place. {We do not remember} giving you clothes when you did not have enough to wear. ³⁹We do not remember visiting you when you were ill or in jail.'

⁴⁰I, the king, will respond, 'Whenever you do something to help an insignificant fellow believer, it is as if you did it to help me. What I have said is true.'

⁴¹After that, I will tell the people in the area to my left, 'You are people whom God has cursed. Leave me! {I send you} to hell, which God set up for Satan and his demons. ⁴²{You will go there} because you did not feed me when I was hungry. You did not give me water when I was thirsty. ⁴³You did not welcome me when I arrived from a different place. You did not give me clothes when I did not have enough to wear. You did not take care of me when I was ill and in jail.'

⁴⁴After that, those people will reply, 'Lord, we do not remember failing to help you when you were hungry or thirsty or came from a different place or did not have enough to wear or were ill or in jail.'

⁴⁵He will reply, 'I tell you truly that you did not do for me whatever you did not do for even the least important one among these people of mine.'

⁴⁶As for those people {who did what was wrong}, God will punish them forever. In contrast, the people who did what was right will live with God forever."

Chapter 26

¹So, Jesus completed saying all those things. Then, he told his apprentices, ²"As you know, two days from now, the Passover festival will begin. At that time, somebody will help the authorities arrest me, the Son of Man. They will have people kill me by nailing me to a cross."

³At that time, the ruling priests and the Jewish leaders assembled outside the house of the ruling priest whose name was Caiaphas. ⁴They started to plan a clever way to arrest Jesus and have others execute him. ⁵However, they agreed that they would not act during the Passover festival. Otherwise, the people who were there in Jerusalem might riot.

⁶One time, Jesus {and his apprentices} were in the village of Bethany. They were in the home of Simon, who used to have a skin disease. ⁷While Jesus was feasting {there}, a woman came to him. She brought with her a stone jar that contained a valuable, fragrant ointment. She poured the ointment on Jesus' head. ⁸When the apprentices noticed {what the woman had done}, they were very upset. They declared, "She wasted {the valuable ointment}! ⁹She could have sold it for a lot of money! Then, she could have given {that money} to poor people."

¹⁰However, Jesus realized {what they were saying}. He told them, "Do not bother this woman! {I say that} because what she did to me was right. ¹¹There will always be poor people with you. {So, you can help them whenever you want to}. However, I will not always be with you. ¹²When she poured this ointment on me, she was getting me ready for when someone buries me. ¹³In every place where my apprentices proclaim the good news, they will also tell what this woman just did. That way, people remember her. What I have said is true."

¹⁴After that, one of Jesus' 12 representatives visited the ruling priests. This man's name was Judas Iscariot. ¹⁵He said to them, "Suppose that I help you arrest Jesus. How much money would you pay me?" {In response,} they

offered Judas 30 silver coins. ¹⁶From that moment on, Judas tried to find a good time to help {the ruling priests} arrest Jesus.

¹⁷During the first day of the Celebration of Unleavened Bread, the apprentices came to Jesus. They asked him, "Where should we set up the meal for the Passover celebration?"

¹⁸Jesus told them, "Enter the city of Jerusalem and find a certain man. Tell him, 'Our instructor says that something important is about to happen to him. He wants to eat the meal for the Passover celebration with us, his apprentices, in your home.'" ¹⁹The apprentices did what Jesus told them to do. They {went to that man's house and} set up the meal for the Passover celebration.

²⁰When it was evening, Jesus and his 12 representatives began to feast. ²¹As they ate, Jesus told them, "One of you is going to help {my enemies} arrest me. What I have said is true."

²²The apprentices became very sad. Every one of them told Jesus, "Lord, I will not do that!"

²³Jesus replied, "The one who will help {my enemies} arrest me is eating food here with me. ²⁴I, the Son of Man, will die. That is what you can read in the Scriptures about me. Nevertheless, how terrible it will be for the man who helps {my enemies} arrest me, the Son of Man. In fact, that man would be better off if he had never existed."

²⁵Judas, the one who was going to help {his enemies} arrest him, replied, "Teacher, I will not do that!"

Jesus replied, "Yes you will."

²⁶As they ate, Jesus picked up a loaf of bread. He thanked God {for the loaf of bread}. Then, he tore it into pieces and handed the pieces to the apprentices {to eat}. He said, "This {bread} is my body. Receive it and eat it." ²⁷Then Jesus picked up a cup {of wine}. He thanked God {for the wine}. Then, he handed {the cup of wine} to the apprentices. He said, "All of you must drink wine from this cup. ²⁸This wine is my blood, which inaugurates the agreement {God is making with you}. My blood will flow from my body {when my enemies kill me}. That way, God will forgive the sins of many people. ²⁹Here is what I want to tell you: From this moment on, I will not drink any more wine until the time when I drink it again with you when we participate in God my Father's kingdom."

³⁰After they sang a song praising God, Jesus and his apprentices walked to the Mount of Olives.

³¹After that, Jesus told them, "{God had Zechariah} write in the Scriptures,

'I will kill the one who is like a shepherd.

Then, the people who are like sheep in his flock will flee.'

So, tonight all of you will reject me! ³²However, once God has made me alive again, I will go ahead of you to the region of Galilee {and meet you there}."

³³Peter replied, "Suppose that everyone else rejects you. Despite that, I will never reject you!"

³⁴Jesus replied, "Tonight before male chickens crow {at dawn}, you will say three times that you are not my apprentice! What I have said is true."

³⁵Peter told him, "I will always say that I am your apprentice, even if I die with you because of that!" The rest of the apprentices said the same thing.

³⁶After that, Jesus and his apprentices walked to a place whose name was Gethsemane. He told the apprentices, "Stay here. I will walk over there and pray {to God}." ³⁷Jesus had Peter and Zebedee's two sons{, James and John}, go with him. Then, Jesus started to become very sad and upset. ³⁸He told those three apprentices, "I am so sad that I feel like I am dying. Stay here and stay awake with me!" ³⁹After saying that, Jesus walked a little further. Then, he

kneeled down to pray. He said, "God my Father, if there is any way to do so, please prevent me from suffering terribly. However, please do what you want to do, not what I want you to do."

⁴⁰Then he returned to the three apprentices. He discovered that they were asleep. He {woke them up} and rebuked Peter, "It disappoints me that you {men} could not stay awake with me for just a short time! ⁴¹You want to do what I say, but you are not strong enough. Stay awake and pray! That way, nothing can convince you to sin." ⁴²Then Jesus walked a short distance away a second time. He prayed, "God my Father, there may be no way to prevent me from suffering terribly. So, please do what you want to do!"

⁴³Then he returned a second time {to the three apprentices}. He discovered that they, because they were so sleepy, had fallen asleep again. ⁴⁴So, Jesus walked a short distance away a third time. He prayed again what he had prayed before. ⁴⁵Then he returned to the three apprentices. He {woke them up and} rebuked them, "It disappoints me that you continue to sleep! The time {when I will suffer} is about to begin! Someone is about to help sinful people arrest me, the Son of Man. ⁴⁶Stand up! We are going to leave {this place}. The person who is helping {my enemies} arrest me has arrived!"

⁴⁷While Jesus was still talking {to the three apprentices}, Judas arrived. He was one of the 12 men whom Jesus had chosen to represent him. {He brought} with him a large group of people carrying swords and clubs. The ruling priests and the Jewish leaders had sent them {to arrest Jesus}. ⁴⁸Previously, Judas, who was helping {Jesus' enemies} arrest him, told the group of people how they would know which man was Jesus. He instructed them, "The man you should arrest is the one whom I will greet affectionately."

⁴⁹As soon as he arrived, Judas went to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Teacher!" Then he greeted Jesus affectionately.

⁵⁰Jesus told him, "My friend, I know why you are really here."

After that, the large group of people arrested Jesus. ⁵¹Then one of the men who were with Jesus pulled his sword {out of its sheath}! He attacked a man who served the ruling priest, but he {only} cut off that man's ear. ⁵²After that, Jesus told him, "Put your sword back in its sheath! {I say that} because someone will kill with a sword every person who tries to kill another person with a sword. ⁵³You should realize that I could ask God my Father to protect me, and he would immediately send more than 12 armies of angels to do so! ⁵⁴{However, if I did that,} then what people wrote in the Scriptures would not come true. They wrote that what is happening to me has to occur."

⁵⁵At that time, Jesus told the groups of people {who were arresting him}, "You did not need to treat me like a dangerous bandit by arming yourselves with swords and clubs to arrest me. Each day I was peacefully instructing people in the temple area. You did not arrest me then! ⁵⁶However, as all these things have happened, what the prophets wrote has come true." After that, all of Jesus' apprentices deserted him and ran away.

⁵⁷The people who had arrested Jesus took him to {the house where} Caiaphas, the ruling priest{, lived}. The teachers of the Jewish law and the Jewish leaders had {already} assembled there. ⁵⁸Peter followed Jesus, but he stayed a safe distance away. He went into the area just outside {the house where} the ruling priest {lived}. He sat there with the servants. That way, he could see what was going to happen.

⁵⁹The ruling priests and all {the rest of} the Jewish council tried to find {people who would say} what was untrue about Jesus. That way, they could have {the Roman authorities} execute him. ⁶⁰However, even though many people said what was untrue about Jesus, the Jewish council did not find {anything that they could tell the Roman authorities about}. Finally, two people came forward. ⁶¹They said, "This man said that he could tear down God's temple and construct it again within three days."

⁶²Then the ruling priest stood up. He asked Jesus, "Are you going to reply? How do you respond to what these people have said about you?" ⁶³Despite that, Jesus kept quiet. Then the ruling priest told him, "I want you to have the only real God guarantee that you will say truthfully whether you are the Messiah, God's Son."

⁶⁴Jesus replied, "What you have called me is right. In fact, here is what I want to tell you: From this time on, you will see me, the Son of Man, ruling powerfully with God. {You will see me} arriving by means of clouds."

⁶⁵When he heard that, the ruling priest was so upset that he ripped his outer garments. He said, "This man has insulted God! We certainly do not need anyone else to say anything about him. You all just heard him insult God!

⁶⁶What should we decide to do?"

The Jewish council replied, "Someone should execute him because of what he has said!"

⁶⁷After that, some of the people there spit in Jesus' face {to insult him}. They struck him {with their fists}. They slapped him ⁶⁸and demanded, "{You who claim to be the} Messiah, prove to us that you speak for God! Name the people who just struck you!"

⁶⁹Meanwhile, Peter was sitting down in the area just outside the {ruling priest's} house. A female servant came up to him and said, "{I can tell that} you were an apprentice of Jesus, that man from the region of Galilee."

⁷⁰However, while everyone there was listening, he told them that he was not Jesus' apprentice. He said, "I do not understand what you are talking about!"

⁷¹Then Peter walked to the entrance {into the area just outside the house}. Another female servant noticed him there. She told the people who were standing nearby, "This man was an apprentice of Jesus, that man from the town of Nazareth."

⁷²Peter again said that he was not Jesus' apprentice. He solemnly promised, "I have never met that man!"

⁷³A little later, some people who were there came up to Peter. They told him, "When you talk, you sound like {you are from where Jesus is from}. So, you must really be one of his apprentices."

⁷⁴After they said that, Peter asked God to punish him if he was lying. Then he solemnly promised, "I have never met that man!" As soon as he said that, a male chicken crowed.

⁷⁵Then Peter remembered what Jesus had told him. He had said, "Before male chickens crow {at dawn}, you will say three times that you are not my apprentice." Peter left {the area just outside the ruling priest's house} and cried very sorrowfully.

Chapter 27

¹When it was morning, all the ruling priests and the Jewish leaders planned how they could have someone execute Jesus. ²They had their guards tie Jesus up and take him from there to Pilate, the {Roman} local ruler. They wanted Pilate to condemn him.

³After that, Judas, the man who had helped {Jesus' enemies} arrest him, realized that the ruling priests and Jewish leaders had decided that Jesus was guilty. He regretted {what he had done}. So, he gave the 30 silver coins {that they had paid him} back to them. ⁴He told them, "I have done what is wrong by helping you arrest someone who is not guilty."

They replied, "We do not care {what you think}! That is your problem."

⁵So Judas took the silver coins {that they had paid him} and threw them into the temple. Then he left {the temple area}. After that, he hanged himself and died.

⁶Later, the ruling priests picked up the silver coins {that Judas had thrown}. They declared, "This is money that we paid so that a man would die. So, our laws prohibit us from adding these coins to the money for the temple."

⁷After planning what to do, they used the coins to buy some land that people called the Potter's Field. That way, they could bury on that land people who came from a different place {but who died in Jerusalem}. ⁸That is why people now call that land Blood's Field. ⁹At that time, what God said by speaking through the prophet Jeremiah came true: "They took the 30 silver coins, which was what some of the Israelites had decided that he was worth. ¹⁰Then, the Israelites did what the Lord {God} had commanded me {to do}. They used those coins to buy the Potter's Field."

¹¹As for Jesus, {the Jewish council} had him stand in front of {Pilate,} the {Roman} local ruler. Pilate asked him, "Do you claim to be king over the Jewish people?"

Jesus replied, "What you are calling me is right."

¹²Then the ruling priests and the {Jewish} leaders claimed that Jesus had done {many bad things}. However, Jesus did not respond. ¹³After that, Pilate asked him, "Are you going to respond to anything that they have accused you of doing?" ¹⁴However, Jesus did not respond to even one of the things that they accused him of doing. How Jesus was acting greatly impressed {Pilate,} the {Roman} local ruler.

¹⁵It is important to know that whenever the Passover festival began, the {Roman} local ruler{, Pilate,} usually set free one person who was in jail. He allowed the group of people {who were in Jerusalem} to decide who it would be. ¹⁶It is also important to know that a famous man whose name was Barabbas was in jail. ¹⁷So, when the people {who were in Jerusalem} assembled, Pilate told them, "I will set free one person who is in jail. Whom do you want it to be? {Do you want it to be} Barabbas? Or {do you want it to be} Jesus, whom people call the Messiah?" ¹⁸{Pilate asked that question} because he realized that the Jewish council had arrested Jesus and brought him to Pilate because they were jealous {of Jesus}.

¹⁹While Pilate was sitting where he did when he was deciding whether people were guilty or innocent, his wife sent a message to him: "Today I dreamed about that man, and it upset me very much. So, do not do anything with that man. He is a man who does what is right!"

²⁰However, the ruling priests and the {Jewish} leaders convinced the groups of people {who were there} to ask Pilate {to set} Barabbas {free}. Also, {they convinced the groups of people} to have Pilate execute Jesus. ²¹Then the {Roman} local ruler{, Pilate,} told the groups of people {who were there}, "Choose one of these two men, and I will set that man free."

They replied, "{We want you to set} Barabbas {free}!"

²²Pilate replied, "So what do you want me to do with Jesus, whom people call the Messiah?"

All the people {who were there} replied, "{Have your soldiers} kill him by nailing him to a cross!"

²³Pilate replied, "But he has not done anything wrong!"

But they shouted even louder, "{Have your soldiers} kill him by nailing him to a cross!"

²⁴Then Pilate realized that he was not accomplishing anything {by asking those questions}. Rather, the group of people {who were there} were starting to riot. So, while they were watching, he washed his hands in water {to indicate that he was not guilty}. He declared, "I am not guilty of killing this man! That is your problem."

²⁵All the people {who were there} replied, "We and our children will be responsible for killing this man!" ²⁶Then Pilate set Barabbas free. He had his soldiers whip Jesus and take him away to kill him by nailing him to a cross.

²⁷After that, the soldiers who served the {Roman} local ruler{, Pilate,} took Jesus into their headquarters. They assembled all the soldiers who were there. ²⁸They pulled off his clothes and put a red robe on him{, the kind that kings wear}. ²⁹They took some branches with thorns and laced them together to make a crown. They put it on Jesus' head and had him hold a staff. Then they bowed down in front of him and made fun of him. They said, "Greetings, you who are king over the Jewish people!" ³⁰Then, they spat on Jesus {to insult him}. Also, they took the

staff {from him} and kept hitting his head {with it}. ³¹After the soldiers made fun of Jesus, they pulled the robe off of him. They put his own clothes back on him. Then, they took him {from there to the place where} they were going to kill him by nailing him to a cross.

³²As they were on their way, they passed a man who was from the city of Cyrene. His name was Simon. The soldiers forced this man to carry the cross for Jesus. ³³Then, they arrived at a place whose name is Golgotha. That name means "Skull Place." ³⁴The soldiers offered Jesus a drink that they had made out of wine and a bitter liquid. After he took a sip of it, Jesus refused to drink it. ³⁵After nailing Jesus to the cross, the soldiers split up his clothes among them by gambling for them. ³⁶Then, the soldiers stayed there to make sure that Jesus died. ³⁷They wrote on a sign why {they were executing Jesus}. On the sign were these words: "This man is Jesus. He was king over the Jewish people." The soldiers placed the sign above Jesus' head.

³⁸After that, the soldiers nailed two bandits to crosses near Jesus. They put one bandit on one side of Jesus. They put the other bandit on the other side of Jesus. ³⁹The people who walked past Jesus insulted him by shaking their heads {at him}. ⁴⁰They said {to him}, "You said that you could tear down God's temple and construct it again within three days. So, rescue yourself! Show us that you really are God's Son. Get down from that cross!"

⁴¹Similarly, the ruling priests, the teachers of the Jewish law, and the {Jewish} leaders made fun of Jesus. They declared, ⁴²"He has rescued other people. However, he cannot rescue himself! He {says that he} is king over the people of Israel. So, he should get down now from that cross. Then we will trust him!" ⁴³He says that he is God's Son and that he relies on God. However, if God really wanted to do so, he would protect him right now." ⁴⁴The two bandits whom the soldiers had nailed to crosses near Jesus also insulted him in similar ways.

⁴⁵At noon, it became dark in that whole area. {It stayed dark} until three o'clock in the afternoon. ⁴⁶At about three o'clock in the afternoon, Jesus shouted, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" That means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"

⁴⁷Some people who were there heard {what Jesus said and misunderstood it}. They said, "He is speaking to the prophet Elijah!" ⁴⁸As soon as they said that, one person quickly went to get a sponge. He soaked it in sour wine and attached it to the top of a staff. Then, he held it up to Jesus so that Jesus could suck {the sour wine} from it.

⁴⁹Then the other people there said, "Do not do anything else for him! We should wait to find out whether Elijah appears to rescue him." ⁵⁰After that, Jesus shouted loudly again. Then, he died. ⁵¹Then the drape hanging {in front of the Most Holy Place} in the temple ripped in half. It tore from the top down to the bottom. Also, the earth quaked, and rocks broke apart. ⁵²Also, graves opened, and God made many of his people who had died alive again. ⁵³After God made Jesus alive again, those people left their graves. They went into {Jerusalem,} the sacred city. Many people saw them there.

⁵⁴The Roman officer and his soldiers, who were making sure that Jesus died, saw the earth quaking and the other things that happened. They became extremely afraid. They declared, "This man really was God's Son."

⁵⁵{While all that was happening,} many women were there. They had come with Jesus from the region of Galilee. They were the ones who had taken care of him. These women observed {what was happening} from farther away.

⁵⁶These women included Mary from the town of Magdala, another Mary who was the mother of James and Joseph, and Zebedee's wife.

⁵⁷When it was evening, a wealthy man arrived. His name was Joseph, and he was from the city of Arimathea. He too was one of Jesus' apprentices. ⁵⁸Joseph went to Pilate. He asked Pilate to allow him to take the body of Jesus {to bury it}. So, Pilate told {his soldiers} to give {him the body}. ⁵⁹So Joseph received Jesus' body. He {prepared to bury it by} winding a fresh sheet of cloth around it. ⁶⁰Then, Joseph put Jesus' body into Joseph's own fresh grave. Joseph's workers had made it by digging into a rock cliff. After that, Joseph rolled a huge flat stone to block the entrance to the grave. Then he left. ⁶¹{While Joseph was doing those things}, Mary from the town of Magdala and the other woman whose name was Mary were there in front of the grave.

⁶²The next day was {the Jewish day of rest,} the day after Preparation Day. {On that day,} the ruling priests and the Pharisees assembled {to meet} with Pilate. ⁶³They said, "Sir, we can recall something that {Jesus,} that man who deceived {others,} said while he was still alive. He claimed that during the third day {after he died}, God would make him alive again. ⁶⁴So, please tell your soldiers to protect Jesus' grave for the next three days. That way, his apprentices cannot go there, remove his corpse, and tell people that God had made him alive again. If they succeed in deceiving people {in this way}, it will be more dangerous than how Jesus himself deceived people."

⁶⁵Pilate told them, "Take with you some soldiers. Walk {to the grave and} protect it as well as you can." ⁶⁶So, they went {to Jesus' grave and} protected it. They marked the huge flat stone {that blocked the entrance. That way, they would know if anyone moved it}. Also, they left some soldiers there to make sure {that no one opened the grave}.

Chapter 28

¹When the Sabbath ended, at dawn on Sunday morning, Mary from the town of Magdala and the other woman whose name was Mary went to observe Jesus' tomb. ²Then the earth quaked violently! {That happened} because an angel from the Lord descended from heaven. He went to {Jesus' grave}. He rolled the flat stone away {from the entrance to the grave}. Then, he sat down on the stone. ³This angel looked as bright as lightning. His garments were pure white. ⁴The soldiers who were protecting {the grave} trembled because they were afraid of the angel. {They were so afraid that} they looked like they had died.

⁵The angel told the two women, "I realize that you are looking for Jesus, whom people killed by nailing him to a cross. So, you should stop being afraid! ⁶God made him alive again, which is what he told you {would happen}. So, he is no longer in this place! If you walk with us, we will show you where his body was. ⁷Then, hurry to his apprentices and tell them that God has made Jesus alive again. {Tell them that} they should listen, and that Jesus is going ahead of them to the region of Galilee. {Tell them that} Jesus will meet them there. I have told you {what to say}!"

⁸So the two women hurried away from the grave. They were afraid and also very happy. They ran {to where Jesus' apprentices were} to tell them {what had happened and what the angel had said}. ⁹{As they were running,} Jesus came up to them! He said, "Greetings!" The two women went to him and {bowed down to} hold his feet {to honor him}. Also, they worshiped him. ¹⁰After that, Jesus told them, "You should stop being afraid! Go to my apprentices and tell them to leave for the region of Galilee. I will meet them there."

¹¹Then, the two women went to meet {Jesus' apprentices}. Meanwhile, some of the soldiers {whom the Jewish leaders had told to make sure that no one opened Jesus' grave} entered the city of Jerusalem. They told the ruling priests about everything that had happened {at Jesus' grave}. ¹²So, the ruling priests and the {Jewish} leaders assembled and planned what to do. They paid those soldiers a large number of silver coins {to bribe them}. ¹³They instructed them, "Tell people that his apprentices arrived during the night while you were asleep and stole his body. ¹⁴Suppose that the {Roman} local ruler{, Pilate,} learns what you are telling people. In that case, we will convince {him to refrain from punishing you}. You will not have to worry about anything." ¹⁵So, the soldiers accepted the silver coins. They told people what {the ruling priests and Jewish leaders} had instructed them {to say}. In fact, even now Jewish people continue to repeat the story that the soldiers told.

¹⁶Meanwhile, Jesus' 11 apprentices traveled to the region of Galilee. They went to the hill to which Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷When they met him {there}, they worshiped him. However, they were unsure {that it really was Jesus}. ¹⁸Then Jesus came up to them and said, "God my Father has authorized me {to rule} over everything that God has created. ¹⁹So then, go {from here}. Help all groups of people become my apprentices. Baptize them so that they belong to {God} the Father, me his Son, and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰Instruct them so that they do everything that I have told you {to do}. Finally, I will be with you at all times, even up to the point when this current time period ends."

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