

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

v92

Matthew

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Matthew

1 This 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*.
2 Abraham was the father of Isaac. Isaac was the father of
Jacob. Jacob was the father of Judah and Judah's *older and*
younger brothers. 3 Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah.
Their mother was Tamar. Perez was the father of Hezrom.
Hezrom was the father of Aram. 4 Aram was the father
of Amminadab. Amminadab was the father of Nahshon.
Nahshon was the father of Salmon. 5 Salmon 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.
6 Jesse was the father of King David.
David was the father of Solomon. Solomon's mother was
Bathsheba, who had been Uriah's wife. 7 Solomon was the
father of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was the father of Abijah.
Abijah was the father of Asaph. 8 Asaph was the father of
Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram. Joram was
an ancestor of Ozias. 9 Ozias was the father of Jotham. Jotham
was the father of Ahaz. Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah.
10 Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh. Manasseh was the
father of Amos. Amos was the father of Josiah. 11 Josiah 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.
12 After *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. 13 Zerubbabel
was the father of Abiud. Abiud was the father of Eliakim.
Eliakim was the father of Azor. 14 Azor was the father of
Zadok. Zadok was the father of Achim. Achim was the father
of Eliud. 15 Eliud was the father of Eleazar. Eleazar was the
father of Matthan. Matthan was the father of Jacob. 16 Jacob
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.
17 So 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). 19 Joseph,
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. 20 While 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. 21 She 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."
22 When 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." 24 After
Joseph woke up, he married Mary, which is what the angel
from the Lord had told him to do. 25 However, he did not
have sex with her before she gave birth to a male child.
Joseph named the child Jesus.

2 *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! 2 They 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."
3 When King Herod learned *what these men were asking*,
he was upset. Many people in the city of Jerusalem were
also upset. 4 So, 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.
5 They 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.'"

7 After 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. 8 After 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.
9 The 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. 10 When
they saw how the star moved and then stopped, they were
extremely happy. 11 They 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. 12 After 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.
13 After 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*."

14 Then Joseph woke up. During that night, he left for the
land of Egypt with the child and the child's mother*, his wife*.
15 They 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."

16 When *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*. 17 At
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! 20 The 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*." 21 Then Joseph woke up. He went
back to the country of Israel with the child and the child's
mother*, his wife*.
22 However, 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. 23 When 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."

3 While 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." 3 That 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!'"

4 As 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. 5 At 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. 6 Many
of these people agreed that they had sinned. Then, John
baptized them in the Jordan River.
7 In 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!* 8 You need to do the things
that show that you have truly rejected your previous sinful
way of living! 9 Do 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! 10 You 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.
11 I 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.*"
13 After *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. 14 However,
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!"
15 Jesus 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.
16 Right 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. 17 Then God
spoke from heaven! He declared, "This man is my Son, the
one whom I love dearly. What he does pleases me."

4 After that, the Holy Spirit took Jesus into a desolate
area. That way, the ruling evil spirit could try to make
him sin. 2 He did not eat any food for 40 days. After that,
he was hungry. 3 Then 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."
4 Jesus 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*.'"
5 After that, the ruling evil spirit transported Jesus to
Jerusalem, the sacred city. He made him stand on the highest
part of the temple. 6 Then, 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.'"

7 Jesus 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.’”
8 Then, 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. 9 He told Jesus, “Bow down and worship me. Then, I
will make you the ruler of all these countries.”
10 After 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*.’”
11 After *Jesus said that,* the ruling evil spirit went away.
Then, angels arrived and took care of Jesus!
12 Soon afterward, Jesus learned that *King Herod Antipas*
had put John *the Baptizer* in prison. So, Jesus went back to
the region of Galilee. 13 After 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. 14 So, 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.
16 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.”

17 After *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.”
18 One 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. 19 Jesus 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.” 20 As soon as *Jesus said this*, they stopped
working. They went with him and were his apprentices.
21 Jesus 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.”* 22 As 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.
23 Jesus 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.
24 Many 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. 25 Large 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.

5 When 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*. 2 Then 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.
4 It is very good for those who grieve.
That is because God will encourage them.
5 It is very good for those who are gentle.
That is because God will give them the
world *when he renews it*.
6 It 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.
7 It is very good for those who are merciful *to other people*.
That is because God will be merciful to them.
8 It is very good for those who desire what is good.
That is because they will be with God.
9 It 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.
10 It 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.

11 It 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.
13 You 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.*
14 You 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*. 15 Further, 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. 16 Just 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.

17 You 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. 18 Every 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. 19 So 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.
20 Here 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.

21 You 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.'
22 Now 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. 23 So
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. 24 You 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*. 25 Suppose 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.

27 You know that God said, 'Married people must remain
sexually faithful to their spouses.' 28 Now 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. 29 Suppose 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. 30 Suppose 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.

31 God said, 'Suppose that a man wants to divorce his wife.
He must present her with a document that states that he is
divorcing her.' 32 Now 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.

33 Here 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*.' 34 Now 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.
35 You 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. 36 You must not have your own head guarantee what
you promise. That is because you cannot even control the
color of one of your hairs. 37 When 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*.

38 You 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.' 39 Now 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. 40 Suppose
that someone wants to sue you for your shirt. You should
give that person your coat as well. 41 Suppose 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*. 42 Suppose 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.

43 You know that God said, 'Care for your fellow Jews.'
Some people add, 'Despise those who oppose you.' 44 Now
here is what I want to tell you: you should care for those who
oppose you. You should pray for those who mistreat you.
45 God 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.
46 Further, 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. 47 If 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. 48 So, you should always do what
is right, just as God, your Father, who rules from heaven,
always does what is right.

6 When 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.

2 Whenever 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. 3 Instead, when you give money to help

poor people, you should do it as privately as possible. 4 That
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.
5 Whenever 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. 6 In 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. 7 Further, 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. 8 So 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.
9 Here is how you should pray to God:

'*I pray to* God our Father, who rules from heaven.
May all people glorify you.
10 May you establish your kingdom.
May everyone do what you want
here on earth, just as *they already do* in heaven.
11 Please give us the food we need each day.
12 We 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.
13 Please protect us from everything that tries
to make us sin.
Please rescue us when Satan tries to harm us.'

14 God your Father, who rules from heaven, will forgive
you as long as you forgive the people who sin against you.
15 However, God your Father will not forgive you when you
sin against him as long as you do not forgive other people.
16 Whenever 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. 17 In contrast, when you do not eat in order to please
God, you should keep yourselves neat and clean. 18 That
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
19 You 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. 20 Rather, 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.
22 Your eyes are like a lamp since they enable you to see.
If your eyes are working properly, then your whole body will
benefit. 23 However, 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!
24 Servants 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.
25 So 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. 26 Think 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*. 27 You cannot
add even a minute to your life by worrying about it!
28 So, 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. 29 However, 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. 30 God
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! 31 So then, do not worry by asking about
whether you have anything to eat or drink, or whether you
have clothes to wear. 32 The 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. 33 You 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.
34 So 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*.

7 Do 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. 4 You should not tell another
believer, 'Let me help you correct your faults,' while you
have not yet dealt with your own faults. 5 If 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.

7 Keep 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. 9 Suppose one of you had a child who asked you for bread *to eat*. You certainly would not give your child a rock *to eat*! 10 Similarly, suppose that your child asked you for a fish *to eat*. You certainly would not give your child a poisonous snake *to eat*! 11 So, 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.

12 In 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.

15 Watch 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. 16 You 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. 17 Similarly, all healthy fruit trees produce fruit that is good to eat. All unhealthy fruit trees produce fruit that is bad to eat. 18 Healthy fruit trees cannot produce fruit that is bad to eat. Unhealthy fruit trees cannot produce fruit that is good to eat. 19 People 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.* 20 Therefore, 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.

21 Just 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*. 22 On 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!' 23 I will then respond to them, 'You were never part of my people. You do what is wrong. Leave me!'

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

28 When 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.

8 When Jesus went down from the hill, large groups of people went wherever he went. 2 Then, 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!"

3 Then 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. 4 Then 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*."

5 While Jesus was visiting the city of Capernaum, an important Roman officer came to him. He urged Jesus *to help him*. 6 He 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.*"

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

8 The 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."

10 What 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. 11 So, 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. 12 However, 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." 13 Then, 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.

14 After 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. 15 He touched her hand, and she recovered from the fever. Then she stood up and offered Jesus some food. 16 When 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. 17 So, 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."

18 When 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.”

20 Jesus 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!”

21 A 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*.”

22 Jesus responded, “Come with me and be my apprentice *now*. You cannot help anyone who has died.”

23 After 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. 25 So Jesus’ apprentices came over to wake him up. They said to him, “Lord, please help us! We are all going to die!”

26 Jesus 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!”

28 After 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*. 29 They 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*.” 30 Now there was a large herd of pigs grazing relatively far away from them. 31 The demons pleaded with Jesus, “When you drive us out *of these two men*, please allow us to control that herd of pigs!”

32 Jesus 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. 33 Then 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. 34 Then many people who lived in that town went to see Jesus! When they met him, they pleaded with him to leave their area.

9 After 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. 2 Some 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!”

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

4 Jesus realized what they were thinking. He said, “You should not be thinking what is wrong! 5 You 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*. 6 However, 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!” 7 Then, the man stood up and went home. 8 Once 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.

9 As 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.

10 Later, Jesus was feasting in Matthew’s home. Many people who collected taxes and other sinful people arrived! They feasted with Jesus and his apprentices. 11 When 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.”

12 Jesus learned what they said. He answered, “People who are well do not need a doctor. Rather, people who are sick need a doctor. 13 You 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*.”

14 Sometime 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?”

15 Jesus 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. 16 People do not place a piece of unshrunken 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! 17 Similarly, 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.”

18 As 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*.” 19 Jesus and his apprentices stood up, and they went with the man.

20–21 Now 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.

23 After 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.

24 He 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*. 25 After those people left, Jesus went *to*
where the girl was. He took hold of her hand, and she *became*
alive again and stood up. 26 After that, people throughout
that whole area heard about what Jesus had done.

27 When 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!”

28 After 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!”

29 After *they said that,* he touched their eyes. He declared,
“I will do for you what you have trusted me to do.” 30 Then,
they could see. Jesus sternly told them, “Do not tell anyone
about what just happened!” 31 However, after the two men
left, they told people throughout that whole area about what
Jesus had done.

32 While the two men were leaving, some people brought
a man to Jesus! A demon was controlling him and keeping
him from speaking. 33 Jesus 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!”

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

35 Jesus 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. 36 Jesus
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 sheepherder *to lead them and to take care*
of them. So, Jesus pitied them. 37 So 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. 38 So pray
to God*, who wants all of those people to believe,* and plead
with him for more people who can go and help them.”

10 Then, 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. 2 Here 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; 3 Philip; Bartholomew; Thomas; Matthew, a
man who collected taxes; James, Alphaeus’ son; Thaddaeus;
4 Simon the Zealot; and Judas Iscariot, who eventually helped
to arrest Jesus.

5 Jesus 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. 6 Instead, go to your
fellow Israelites. They are like sheep who have wandered off
and need help. 7 While you are traveling, proclaim *to people*,
‘God is about to establish his heavenly kingdom here.’ 8 Cure
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. 9 Do not pack any money to take
with you. 10 Do 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. 11 When
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. 12 When you go
into that person’s home, say hello to the people who live
there *and pray that God will make them peaceful*. 13 Suppose
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.
14 Whenever 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.

16 I 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. 17 Watch 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. 18 Because 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. 19 Whenever 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.

21 Men 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. 22 Because 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. 23 When 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.

24 Apprentices are not greater than their teacher. Similarly,
servants are not greater than their master. 25 Those 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*. 26 So then, do not be afraid of those
people. *I say that* because someday God will let everyone
know everything people are trying to hide. 27 You should
declare publicly everything I have said to you privately. You
should shout for everyone to hear what you have heard me
say quietly. 28 Do 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. 29 Think 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. 30 God even knows how many
hairs there are on your head. 31 So, do not be afraid, because
you are more precious *to God* than many sparrows.

32 If 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. 33 However, 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.
34 You 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. 35 In 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. 36 People
who are part of a person's family will be those who oppose
that person.
37 People 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. 38 People 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. 39 People 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.
40 When 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. 41 As 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. 42 As 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."

11 So, 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.
2 Meanwhile, John the Baptizer was in jail. People told
him about what *Jesus* the Messiah was doing. So, he sent
some of his apprentices 3 to ask Jesus, "Are you the one
whom *God promised* would come, or should we be waiting
for someone else?"
4 So Jesus answered John's apprentices, "Go back and
tell John what you have heard and seen. 5 People 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.
6 God will bless anyone who *sees what I do and hears what I
teach and* continues to believe in me."
7 When 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. 8 Surely 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*. 9 Surely 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. 10 He 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.'

11 Of 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. 12 From 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.
13 Further, before John *began to preach*, the laws that God
gave Moses and the things that the prophets wrote predicted
what is now happening. 14 In 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. 15 You 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!' 18 Similarly,
when John came to you and often did not eat or drink, people
rejected him and said, 'A demon is controlling him!' 19 But
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."
20 Now 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. 22 So 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. 23 I 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. 24 So 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."
25 Then 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. 26 That 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.

28 Many of you feel tired and are struggling. Become my
apprentices! I will enable you to rest. 29 I 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."

12 Some 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. 2 Some 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."

3 Jesus replied, "Consider the story in the Scriptures about
what King David did when he and the men who were with
him became very hungry. 4 As 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. 5 Likewise, 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. 6 However,
I want you to know that there is now something even more
important than the Jewish sanctuary. 7 Suppose 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!"

9 Then Jesus left the grain fields and visited one of the
Jewish meeting places. 10 Now 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?"

11 Jesus 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*! 12 Therefore, *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."
13 After *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. 14 Then the
Pharisees left *the Jewish meeting place*. They started planning
how they could kill Jesus.

15 Jesus 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*. 16 Jesus commanded them
strongly that they should not tell other people about him.
17 So, 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.
19 He will not quarrel with people. He will
not shout loudly.
He will not speak to many people in public areas.
20 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.
21 Non-Jewish people will confidently trust in him."

22 After 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. 23 What 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."

24 However, 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."

25 Jesus 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. 26 Suppose 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! 27 Further, 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. 28 Actually, the Holy Spirit enables me
to force out demons. That means that God is establishing
his kingdom among you. 29 Before 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.

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

31 So 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. 32 Further, 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.

33 You 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. 34 You
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. 35 Good people say good things because they think
good things. Evil people say evil things because they think
evil things. 36 Here 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. 37 In fact, God will declare
that you are either innocent or guilty based on what you
have said."

38 After *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*."

39 Then 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. 41 The 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. 42 Long 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.

43 Listen 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. 44 After
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. 45 Then 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.”

46 As 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.
47 A person told him, “Your mother and your *younger* brothers
are waiting outside. They want to talk with you.”

48 Jesus replied, “I will tell you whom I consider to be my
mother and my brothers.” 49 He pointed to his apprentices
and said, “These are the people whom I consider to be my
mother and my brothers! 50 In 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.”

13 That 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. 2 Then 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*.

3 Jesus began to use stories to instruct them about many
things. He said, “Listen to this: a farmer began to plant some
grain seeds. 4 As 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. 5 Other seeds fell on shallow soil on top
of a layer of rocks. Because they were growing in shallow
soil, the seeds sprouted very quickly. 6 However, the sun
shone on the new plants and dried them up. Then, because
they did not have good roots, the plants died. 7 Other seeds
fell onto an area full of thorny plants. These thorny plants
grew quickly and crowded out the grain plants. 8 Finally,
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*. 9 You should think carefully about what you
just heard me say!”

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

11 Jesus 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. 13 I
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. 14 What 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.’

16 However, it is very good for you, because you really see.
It is very good for you, because you really listen. 17 Indeed,
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.

18 So then, listen to *me explain* the story about the farmer
who planted grain seeds. 19 Some 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. 20 Other 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.
21 However, 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. 22 Other
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. 23 Other 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*.”

24 Then 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. 25 However, 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*. 26 Some 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. 27 So, 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!'

28 The 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?'

29 He 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. 30 Allow
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."'"

31 Then 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. 32 This 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."

33 Then 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."

34 Jesus 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. 35 So, 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."

36 After *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."

37 Jesus replied, "The farmer who planted some fertile
grain seeds is like me, the Son of Man. 38 The 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. 39 The 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. 40 The
workers collect the weed plants and burn them. That is like
what will happen when this time period ends. 41 I, 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.
42 Then, 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. 43 After 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!

44 Here 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*.

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

47 Here 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. 48 When 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. 49 That 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. 50 Then, 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.

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

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

52 Jesus 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."

53 So, Jesus completed telling these stories. Then, he left
that place. 54 Then 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. 55 He is
just the woodworker's son. His mother's name is Mary, and
his *younger* brothers are James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas.
56 All his sisters live here in our town. So, we do not know
how this man learned to do these things."

57 These 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."
58 Since the people did not trust in him, Jesus did very few
powerful things in that place.

14 While Jesus was teaching and doing powerful things,
King Herod Antipas*, the ruler over the region of Galilee,*
learned what he was doing. 2 He 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. 5 However, 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*.

6 Sometime later, during Herod's birthday party, Herodias'
daughter danced *for him and his guests*. Herod greatly enjoyed
her dancing. 7 So, he solemnly promised that he would give
her whatever she wanted. 8 Her 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!” 9 King 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. 10 He had the man go to the jail and cut off John’s head there. 11 Then, the man put John’s head on a plate and gave it to Herodias’ daughter. She gave it to her mother. 12 Later, 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.

13 After 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. 14 When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw a large group of people. He pitied them, and he cured those who were sick.

15 When 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.”

16 Jesus replied, “They do not need to leave *to buy food*. I want you to provide them with food to eat!”

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

18 Then Jesus said, “Bring those things to me.” 19 Jesus 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. 20 Everyone 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! 21 About 5, 000 men ate *the bread*, and there were women and children there too!

22 As 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. 23 After 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. 24 Meanwhile, 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. 25 Later, soon before morning, Jesus joined them. He was walking on top of the Sea of Galilee! 26 When 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. 27 As soon as *they shouted loudly*, Jesus said to them, “Do not worry! I am *Jesus*. Stop being afraid!”

28 Peter 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!”

29 Jesus said *to Peter*, “Walk to me!”

So, Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on top of the water toward Jesus. 30 However, 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!”

31 As 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!”

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

34 After they finished sailing across the Sea of Galilee, they landed on the shore in the region of Gennesaret. 35 The 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. 36 Those who were sick asked Jesus to allow them just to touch the hem of his robe. Everyone who did so became healthy.

15 After 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!”

3 Jesus replied, “Sometimes you use the teachings that you received to disobey the laws that God gave us. You should not do that! 4 For example, God gave this law: ‘Treat your parents respectfully.’ *He* also *gave this law*: ‘Execute anyone who insults his or her parents.’ 5 However, 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.’ 6 Then, 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. 7 You 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.
9 When you worship me, it is useless.
That is because you use only what humans have
commanded to instruct others.’”

10 Then 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*. 11 Whatever people eat cannot make them unclean. Rather, it is what people say that makes them unclean.”

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

13 Jesus 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. 14 Do 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.”

15 Peter replied, “Please tell us what that story means.” 16 Jesus answered, “You too have not yet learned what I mean. 17 I want you to realize that everything that people eat simply goes into their stomachs. Eventually, their bodies expel what they ate into toilets. 18 What actually makes people unclean is what they say, which shows what they think and care about. 19 In 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*. 20 It 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."

21 After that, Jesus *and his apprentices* left the region of Gennesaret. They traveled to the areas near the cities of Tyre and Sidon. 22 Then, 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."

23 However, 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."

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

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

26 Jesus 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.*"

27 The 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.*"

28 When *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.

29 After 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. 30 Large 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. 31 The 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.

32 After 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."

33 The 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!"

34 Jesus 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."

35 Then Jesus told the large group of people to sit down on the ground. 36 He 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. 37 Everyone 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! 39 After 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.

16 Some 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."

2 He answered them, "[When it is evening and the sky looks red, you know that there will be good weather *the next day*. 3 When 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.] 4 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." Then Jesus *and his apprentices* departed from the Pharisees and Sadducees.

5 They 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. 6 At that point, Jesus said to them, "Be alert and watch out for the yeast that the Pharisees and Sadducees use."

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

8 Jesus 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! 9 You 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. 11 I 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." 12 After *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.

13 Sometime 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?"

14 The 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."

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

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

17 Jesus 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. 18 I 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. 19 I 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." 20 After that, Jesus ordered the apprentices not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

21 From 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. 22 Then 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."

23 Then 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."

24 Next, 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. 26 Suppose 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.

28 Some 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."

17 Six 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. 2 Then, the three apprentices saw Jesus change how he appeared. His face became as radiant as the sun. His clothes became bright white. 3 After that, Moses and Elijah*, who were prophets from long ago,* appeared to the three apprentices! These prophets were speaking to Jesus.

4 Peter 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." 5 As 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."

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

9 While 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."

10 Then, 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*."

11 Jesus replied, "*They are right* that the prophet Elijah has to be here and that he will make everything as it should be. 12 Now 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." 13 After that, the three apprentices realized that Jesus was telling them *that the person he called Elijah was* John the Baptizer.

14 When the four of them returned to the large group of people, a man came up to Jesus and bowed down in front of him. 15 He 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. 16 I took him *here* to your apprentices *in order that they might cure him*. However, they were not able to do so."

17 Jesus 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!" 18 Then, 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.

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

20 He 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 [a] [Now you can only drive out this type of demon by praying and by not eating in order to please God.]"

22 Sometime 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. 23 They 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.

24 Later, 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?"

25 Peter 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?"

26 Peter 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.* 27 However, 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

[a] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 21.

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."

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

2 Jesus told a young child to come to him. He had the young child stand among them. 3 Then 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. 4 So 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. 5 Further, when people, because they are my apprentices, welcome a young child such as this one here, it is the same as welcoming me.

6 On 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. 7 How 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! 8 Suppose 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. 9 Suppose 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.

10 Do 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 [a] [I, the Son of Man, am here to rescue people who do not worship and obey God.] 12 Think 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! 13 Now 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! 14 God 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.

15 Suppose 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. 16 However, 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. 17 Suppose 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.* 18 When 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! 19 Also, 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."

21 After 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?"

22 Jesus replied, "I tell you that you must forgive others 77 times *and more*, not just seven times. 23 Given 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. 24 So, 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. 25 However, 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.'

26 After 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.'

27 The king pitied his servant. So, he did not require the servant to pay what he owed, and he let him go. 28 When 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!'

29 After 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*.' 30 However, 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.

31 When 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. 32 After 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. 33 I helped you. So, you should have helped the other servant.' 34 Then the king was angry. He had his men arrest and torture that servant until he paid all the money that he owed. 35 Whenever 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*."

19 So, 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. 2 Large groups of people went with him, and in that place, he cured those *who were sick*.

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[a] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 11.

3 Some 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?”
4 Jesus 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. 5 Then 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.’ 6 Consequently, 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.”
7 The 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.”
8 Jesus 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. 9 Now 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.”
10 Jesus’ apprentices responded, “If that is the only basis
on which a husband can divorce his wife, it is not beneficial
to get married!”
11 Jesus replied, “Many people do not accept what you
have said. Only people whom God enables *to accept it can do
so*. 12 Here 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.”
13 After 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. 14 However, 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.
16 After 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?”
17 Jesus 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.”
18 The 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. 19 Treat your
parents respectfully. Care for people you know as much as
you care for yourself.”
20 The young man replied, “I have done each of these
things *that God commanded*. What more do I need to do *to
truly live*?”
21 Jesus 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.” 22 After 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*.
23 After that, Jesus told his apprentices, “It is hard for
rich people to participate in God’s heavenly kingdom. What
I have said is true. 24 I 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.”
25 What Jesus said greatly surprised the apprentices. They
said, “So then, it must be that God does not actually rescue
anyone!”
26 Jesus looked directly at his apprentices. He said, “People
cannot rescue themselves. However, God can do anything!”
27 After *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?”
28 Jesus 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. 29 Some 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.

20 In 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. 2 He found some
people who agreed to work that day for one coin. Then, he
told them to take care of his grape vines. 3 At 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. 4 He told them, ‘Join the other people who are taking
care of my grape vines. I will pay you a fair wage.’ 5 They
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*. 6 At 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?’
7 They 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.*
8 When 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.’ 9 Then the people who started working

at about five o'clock in the afternoon came forward. The supervisor paid one coin to each of them. 10 Then 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.

11 After these workers took their money, they complained about how the man who managed the household was behaving. 12 They 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.'

13 The 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. 14 I 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*. 15 Our law allows me to do what I like with what I own. You should not be jealous because I am being generous!' 16 Similarly, people who are unimportant right now will become important. People who are important right now will become unimportant."

17 Sometime 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. 19 They 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."

20 After 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*. 21 Jesus 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."

22 Then 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*."

23 Then 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*."

24 When the ten other apprentices learned *what James and John had requested*, they were very upset with them. 25 So, 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. 26 You must not behave like that. Rather, when one of you wants to be important, that person must serve the others. 27 Likewise, 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*."

29 After that, Jesus and his apprentices left the city of Jericho*, which they had been visiting*. A large group of people went with them. 30 Now 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!"

31 Some 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!"

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

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

21 After 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*. 2 He 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. 3 People 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." 4 When 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.'"

6 The two apprentices went *to the village* and did what Jesus had told them to do. 7 They led the donkey and her colt to Jesus. They spread their coats on the animals, and Jesus sat on the coats. 8 Then, *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. 9 Large 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?"

11 The 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."

12 Later, 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. 13 Then 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'!"

14 Later, people who could not see and people who could not walk came to Jesus while he was in the temple area. Jesus cured them. 15 The 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.

16 They 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.'"

17 Then 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.

18 Early the next morning, when Jesus and his apprentices were going back to the city of Jerusalem, Jesus became hungry. 19 He 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.

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

21 Jesus 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. 22 Further, suppose that you trust God to do whatever you ask when you are praying. Then, he will do it for you."

23 Then 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*?"

24 Jesus 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. 25 Who 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. 26 On 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."

27 So, 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. 28 Think 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.'

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

30 After *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.

31 Which 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.

33 I 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. 34 When 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*. 35 However, 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. 36 After 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. 37 Finally, 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*.

38 However, 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.' 39 So, they grabbed the man's son and dragged him outside the vineyard. Then, they killed him. 40 After that, the man who owned the vineyard came back. How do you think he treated the people who were taking care of the vineyard?"

41 The 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."

42 Jesus 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.'

43 So 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. 44 Any 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."

45 The ruling priests and the Pharisees listened to the stories that Jesus told. They realized that Jesus was telling *the stories* about them. 46 They 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.*

22 Then 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*. 4 So, 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. 5 However, 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. 6 Other *people that the king had asked to attend the banquet* grabbed his servants. They abused some of them, and they killed some of them. 7 So, the king was very upset. He told his soldiers to kill the people who killed his servants and to burn down their town. 8 After 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. 9 So, *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. 10 So, 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. 11 The 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. 12 The 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. 13 After 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. 14 As that story illustrates, God summons many people *to participate in his kingdom*. However, he only chooses a few of them *to do so*."

15 After *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. 16 So, 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. 17 So, 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*?"

18 However, 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! 19 Hand me one of the coins that you use to pay taxes." Someone handed him a Roman coin.

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

21 They 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." 22 What Jesus said impressed the Pharisees' apprentices and the people who supported King Herod. They left where he was.

23 Later 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. 25 So, *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. 26 The 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.* 27 Finally, the widow died. 28 So 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*."

29 Jesus replied, "You do not realize what the Scriptures mean or how powerful God is. So, you believe what is wrong. 30 Here 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*. 31 Now 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!*" 33 The things that Jesus taught impressed the large groups of people.

34 The Pharisees heard that Jesus answered so well that the Sadducees could not respond. So, the Pharisees met together *and went to where Jesus was*. 35 Then, 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?"

37 Jesus 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. 38 That is the most important law. 39 The next most important law is similar. It is that we must care for people we know as much as we care for ourselves. 40 All the parts of the Scriptures depend upon these two laws."

41 While 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."

43 Jesus 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 44 that the Lord God said to David's Lord,

'Rule with me

while I defeat all of your enemies!'

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

23 After 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. 3 So
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. 4 They tell people to do many things
that are difficult. However, they do not do anything to help
those people. 5 Whenever 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. 6 They 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. 8 However, 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. 9 Further, 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. 10 You
have one instructor, I, who am the Messiah. So, you should
not allow people to speak to you as their instructors. 11 The
most important person in your group must serve the others.
12 God will cause people who think they are important to
be unimportant. God will cause people who think they are
unimportant to be important.

13 You 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.]

15 You 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!

16 You 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! 17 You
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. 18 Similarly, *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. 19 You 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. 20 So, when people have the altar
guarantee what they promise, they are having both it and
every sacrifice on it guarantee what they promise. 21 Further,
when people have the temple guarantee what they promise,
they are having both it and God, who dwells there, guarantee
what they promise. 22 When 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.

23 You 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! 24 You 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!

25 You 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! 26 You 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.

27 You 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! 28 Similarly, you seem to do what is right,
but really you usually do what is wrong while pretending to
do what is right.

29 You 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. 30 You declare that, had you
been alive when your ancestors were, you would not have
helped them murder the people who spoke for God. 31 When
you declare that, you admit that you are descendants of and
similar to the people who did murder those who spoke for
God. 32 As for you, think about what will happen if you do
what your ancestors did.

33 You are sneaky and dangerous like poisonous snakes!
You will not avoid God punishing you in hell. 34 Since 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.
35 So, 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. 36 God will consider *you people who live in* this

time period to be guilty of all those murders. What I have said is true.

37 Oh, 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. 38 Your
city will become a place where no one lives! 39 In 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!'"

24 After 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.
2 He responded, "Look at all these structures! Enemies will
completely destroy them. They will not leave anything
standing. What I have said is true."

3 Later, 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."

4 Jesus 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. 6 Whenever 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. 7 Further,
groups of people will attack each other. Many people will
not have enough food to eat, and earthquakes will happen in
many places. 8 Those 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.

9 While 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. 10 Also 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. 11 There will be many people who lie
when they claim to speak for God. They will deceive many
people. 12 Since more and more people will do what is wrong,
many people will stop caring *for each other*. 13 However, if
you persevere *in being my apprentices* while people harm you,
God will rescue you. 14 You, 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.

15 At 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.
17 Those of you who are outside your homes should not go
back into your homes to get anything. 18 Those of you who
are working in fields should not go back home to get your
coats. 19 When what I have described happens, how terrible it
will be for pregnant women and for nursing mothers! 20 Ask
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. 22 Suppose 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.

23–24 While 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*. 25 I have warned you about this
before it happens! 26 So, 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.
27 Here 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*.
28 Carrion birds assemble wherever there is a dead body.

29 Once 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. 30 After 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. 31 I
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.

32 Listen 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. 33 Similarly, whenever
you realize that what I have described is happening, you can
tell that I will act very soon. 34 Most of the people who are
alive right now will still be alive when what I have described
happens. What I have said is true. 35 Everything that God
has created will eventually change or disappear. However,
what I have said will never change or disappear.

36 However, 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. 37 So, when I, the Son of
Man, return *to this world*, it will be like what happened when
Noah was alive *long ago*. 38–39 Here 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*.
40 Consider 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*. 41 Consider 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*.

42 So 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*. 43 Now 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. 44 So then, since I, the Son of Man,
will return *to this world* when you do not expect me, you too
need to be ready.

45 To 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. 46 When 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. 47 The master will put that servant in charge of everything
that he owns. What I have said is true. 48 However, suppose
that the servant were wicked. Then, he would think that his
master was staying away for a long time. 49 So, he would
start hitting the other servants. He would feast with drunk
people. 50 However, then his master would return at a time
when the servant does not expect him. 51 The 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.

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

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

9 The 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.' 10 So,
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.

11 Later, 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!'

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

14 Even 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. 15 He 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. 16 Then, the servant
who had five bags of money went to invest the money. He
made five more bags of money. 17 Similarly, the servant who
had two bags of money *invested the money*. He made two
more bags of money. 18 However, the servant who had one
bag of money went to bury it in the ground *to keep it safe*.

19 Much later, the servants' master returned. He wanted
to know what they had done with the bags of money. 20 So,
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!'

21 His 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!'

22 Then, 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!'

23 His 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!'

24 Then, 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. 25 So, 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!'

26 His 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. 27 If 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.'

28 So *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. 30 Now *to punish* this useless servant,
cast him out into a dark place, where people will cry and
sorrowfully grind their teeth.'

31 When 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. 32 Then all groups of people will
assemble in front of me. I will divide them into two groups,
as a sheepherder divides his animals into a group of sheep
and a group of goats. 33 I 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*. 34 After 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.
36 You 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.'

37 After 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. 38 We 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. 39 We do not remember visiting you when you were
ill or in jail.’
40 I, 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.’
41 After 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. 43 You 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.’
44 After 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.’
45 He 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.’
46 As 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.”

26 So, 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.”
3 At that time, the ruling priests and the Jewish leaders
assembled outside the house of the ruling priest whose
name was Caiaphas. 4 They started to plan a clever way to
arrest Jesus and have others execute him. 5 However, they
agreed that they would not act during the Passover festival.
Otherwise, the people who were there in Jerusalem might
riot.
6 One 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. 7 While 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. 8 When the apprentices noticed *what the woman*
had done, they were very upset. They declared, “She wasted
the valuable ointment! 9 She could have sold it for a lot of
money! Then, she could have given *that money* to poor
people.”
10 However, 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. 11 There will always be poor
people with you. *So, you can help them whenever you want to*.
However, I will not always be with you. 12 When she poured
this ointment on me, she was getting me ready for when
someone buries me. 13 In 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.”
14 After that, one of Jesus’ 12 representatives visited the
ruling priests. This man’s name was Judas Iscariot. 15 He 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. 16 From that moment on, Judas tried to find
a good time to help *the ruling priests* arrest Jesus.
17 During 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?”
18 Jesus 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.’” 19 The apprentices did what Jesus told them
to do. They *went to that man’s house and* set up the meal for
the Passover celebration.
20 When it was evening, Jesus and his 12 representatives
began to feast. 21 As they ate, Jesus told them, “One of you
is going to help *my enemies* arrest me. What I have said is
true.”
22 The apprentices became very sad. Every one of them
told Jesus, “Lord, I will not do that!”
23 Jesus replied, “The one who will help *my enemies* arrest
me is eating food here with me. 24 I, 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.”
25 Judas, the one who was going to help *his enemies* arrest
him, replied, “Teacher, I will not do that!”
Jesus replied, “Yes you will.”
26 As 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.” 27 Then 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. 28 This 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. 29 Here
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.”
30 After they sang a song praising God, Jesus and his
apprentices walked to the Mount of Olives.
31 After 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! 32 However, once God
has made me alive again, I will go ahead of you to the region
of Galilee *and meet you there*.”
33 Peter replied, “Suppose that everyone else rejects you.
Despite that, I will never reject you!”
34 Jesus 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.”
35 Peter 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.
36 After 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*." 37 Jesus had Peter and Zebedee's two sons*, James and John*, go with him. Then, Jesus started to become very sad and upset. 38 He told those three apprentices, "I am so sad that I feel like I am dying. Stay here and stay awake with me!" 39 After 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."

40 Then 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! 41 You want to do what I say, but you are not strong enough. Stay awake and pray! That way, nothing can convince you to sin." 42 Then 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!"

43 Then he returned a second time *to the three apprentices*. He discovered that they, because they were so sleepy, had fallen asleep again. 44 So, Jesus walked a short distance away a third time. He prayed again what he had prayed before. 45 Then 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. 46 Stand up! We are going to leave *this place*. The person who is helping *my enemies* arrest me has arrived!"

47 While 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*. 48 Previously, 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."

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

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

After that, the large group of people arrested Jesus. 51 Then 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. 52 After 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. 53 You 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."

55 At 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! 56 However, as all these things have happened, what the prophets wrote has come true." After that, all of Jesus' apprentices deserted him and ran away.

57 The 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. 58 Peter 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.

59 The 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. 60 However, 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. 61 They said, "This man said that he could tear down God's temple and construct it again within three days."

62 Then 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?" 63 Despite 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."

64 Jesus 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."

65 When 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! 66 What should we decide to do?"

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

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

69 Meanwhile, 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."

70 However, 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!"

71 Then 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."

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

73 A 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."

74 After 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.

75 Then 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.

27 When it was morning, all the ruling priests and the Jewish leaders planned how they could have

someone execute Jesus. 2 They had their guards tie Jesus up
and take him from there to Pilate, the *Roman* local ruler.
They wanted Pilate to condemn him.
3 After 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. 4 He 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."
5 So 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.
6 Later, 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."
7 After 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*. 8 That is why people now
call that land Blood's Field. 9 At 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. 10 Then, the Israelites did what the
> Lord *God* had commanded me *to do*. They used
> those coins to buy the Potter's Field."

11 As 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."
12 Then the ruling priests and the *Jewish* leaders claimed
that Jesus had done *many bad things*. However, Jesus did not
respond. 13 After that, Pilate asked him, "Are you going to
respond to anything that they have accused you of doing?"
14 However, 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.
15 It 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. 16 It is
also important to know that a famous man whose name was
Barabbas was in jail. 17 So, 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*.
19 While 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!"
20 However, 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. 21 Then 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*!"
22 Pilate 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!"
23 Pilate replied, "But he has not done anything wrong!"
But they shouted even louder, "*Have your soldiers* kill him
by nailing him to a cross!"
24 Then 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."
25 All the people *who were there* replied, "We and our
children will be responsible for killing this man!" 26 Then
Pilate set Barabbas free. He had his soldiers whip Jesus and
take him away to kill him by nailing him to a cross.
27 After that, the soldiers who served the *Roman* local ruler*,*
Pilate, took Jesus into their headquarters. They assembled
all the soldiers who were there. 28 They pulled off his clothes
and put a red robe on him*, the kind that kings wear*. 29 They
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!" 30 Then, they spat on Jesus *to insult him*.
Also, they took the staff *from him* and kept hitting his head
with it. 31 After 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.
32 As 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. 33 Then, they
arrived at a place whose name is Golgotha. That name means
"Skull Place." 34 The 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. 35 After nailing Jesus to
the cross, the soldiers split up his clothes among them by
gambling for them. 36 Then, the soldiers stayed there to make
sure that Jesus died. 37 They 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.
38 After 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. 39 The people
who walked past Jesus insulted him by shaking their heads
at him. 40 They 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!"
41 Similarly, 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! 43 He 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." 44 The two bandits whom the soldiers
had nailed to crosses near Jesus also insulted him in similar
ways.
45 At noon, it became dark in that whole area. *It stayed dark*
until three o'clock in the afternoon. 46 At about three o'clock

in the afternoon, Jesus shouted, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?”
That means, “My God, my God, why did you abandon me?”
47 Some people who were there heard *what Jesus said and misunderstood it*. They said, “He is speaking to the prophet
Elijah!” 48 As 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.
49 Then the other people there said, “Do not do anything
else for him! We should wait to find out whether Elijah
appears to rescue him.” 50 After that, Jesus shouted loudly
again. Then, he died. 51 Then 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. 52 Also, graves opened, and God made
many of his people who had died alive again. 53 After God
made Jesus alive again, those people left their graves. They
went into *Jerusalem,* the sacred city. Many people saw them
there.
54 The 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. 56 These
women included Mary from the town of Magdala, another
Mary who was the mother of James and Joseph, and Zebedee’s
wife.
57 When 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. 58 Joseph 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*. 59 So Joseph
received Jesus’ body. He *prepared to bury it by* winding a
fresh sheet of cloth around it. 60 Then, 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.
62 The 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. 63 They 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.
64 So, 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.”
65 Pilate told them, “Take with you some soldiers. Walk *to the grave and* protect it as well as you can.” 66 So, 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*.

28 When 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. 2 Then 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. 3 This
angel looked as bright as lightning. His garments were pure
white. 4 The 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.
5 The 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! 6 God 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. 7 Then, 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*!”
8 So 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. 10 After 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.”
11 Then, 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*. 12 So, 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*. 13 They instructed them, “Tell people that his
apprentices arrived during the night while you were asleep
and stole his body. 14 Suppose 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.” 15 So, 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.
16 Meanwhile, Jesus’ 11 apprentices traveled to the region
of Galilee. They went to the hill to which Jesus had told
them to go. 17 When they met him *there*, they worshiped
him. However, they were unsure *that it really was Jesus*.
18 Then Jesus came up to them and said, “God my Father has
authorized me *to rule* over everything that God has created.
19 So 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. 20 Instruct 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.”