

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

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Luke

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Table of Contents

Luke 1
- Chapter 1 1
- Chapter 2 2
- Chapter 3 4
- Chapter 4 5
- Chapter 5 6
- Chapter 6 7
- Chapter 7 8
- Chapter 8 9
- Chapter 9 10
- Chapter 10 12
- Chapter 11 13
- Chapter 12 14
- Chapter 13 15
- Chapter 14 16
- Chapter 15 17
- Chapter 16 18
- Chapter 17 19
- Chapter 18 19
- Chapter 19 20
- Chapter 20 21
- Chapter 21 22
- Chapter 22 23
- Chapter 23 24
- Chapter 24 26

Luke

1 Many people have already been writing about the things
that happened among us. 2 They have been recording
what the people who saw these things happen told us
about them. Those people were there from the time when
everything first started happening, and they have been sharing
the story ever since. 3 I myself have carefully investigated
everything that happened from the very beginning. So I
decided that I should also write an accurate account for you.
Your Excellency, Theophilus, 4 I want you to know that what
people have told you about Jesus is true.

5 When Herod was the ruler of Judea, there was a Jewish
priest named Zechariah. He was a descendant of Abijah, and
so he took his turn serving in the temple with other priests
who were also descendants of Abijah. His wife was named
Elizabeth. She was a descendant of Aaron*, and so she was also
from the priestly line*. 6 God considered that both of them were
righteous because they always obeyed everything that the
Lord had commanded. 7 But they did not have any children,
because Elizabeth had been unable to bear children. And
now she and her husband were too old to have children.

8 The time came for Zechariah's group of priests to take
its turn *serving in Jerusalem*. So Zechariah was there working
as a priest for God. 9 The priests chose Zechariah to go into
the Lord's temple and burn incense there. They chose him
in their usual way, by casting lots *to determine whom God
wanted to perform a particular task*. 10 When it was time to
burn the incense, many people were praying *in the courtyard*
outside *the temple*. 11 Just then, an angel of the Lord came to
Zechariah. He stood at the right side of the altar where he
was burning incense. 12 When Zechariah saw the angel, he
became agitated and terrified. 13 But the angel said to him,
"There is no reason to be afraid *of me*, Zechariah. You have
been praying, and God is going to answer your prayer. Your
wife Elizabeth will give birth to a son for you. Give him
the name John. 14 You will be very happy, and many other
people will also be happy when he is born. 15 You and they
will be happy because your son will be very influential for
God. He must never drink wine or any other alcoholic drink.
The Holy Spirit will begin to influence him even before he
is born. 16 Your son will persuade many of the Israelites to
stop sinning and to start obeying the Lord their God again.
17 Your son will go in advance of the Lord and he will be
powerful in his spirit like the prophet Elijah was. He will
cause parents to love their children again. He will cause
many people who do not obey God to want to obey him and
to live wisely and righteously. He will do this so that the
Lord's people will be ready for him when he comes."

18 Then Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure
that the things you have said will really happen? I am very
old, and my wife is also very old*, so it is difficult for me to
believe that they will happen*."

19 Then the angel replied to him, "I am Gabriel! I stand in
God's presence! God sent me to tell you this good news about
what will happen to you. 20 Now listen! What I have told
you will certainly happen at the time that God has decided.
But since you did not believe my message, God will keep
you from talking. You will not be able to speak until the day
that your son is born!"

21 *While Zechariah and the angel were talking in the temple,*
the people in the courtyard were waiting for Zechariah to
come out. They wondered why he was staying in the temple
for such a long time. 22 Then he came out of the temple, but
he was not able to speak to them. Because he could not talk,
he made motions with his hands to try to explain what had
happened. This made the people conclude that he had seen
a vision from God while he was in the temple.

23 When Zechariah finished the time he needed to work
as a priest in the temple, he left Jerusalem and went back to
his home.

24 Some time after this, his wife, Elizabeth, became
pregnant, and she did not go out in public for five months.
She said to herself, 25 "The Lord has enabled me to become
pregnant. In this way, he has shown compassion to me.
Thanks to him, I no longer have to feel ashamed around
other people."

26 When Elizabeth had been pregnant for six months,
God sent the angel Gabriel to a town called Nazareth in the
district of Galilee. 27 God sent him there to speak to a virgin
whose name was Mary. *Her parents had promised that* she
would marry a man named Joseph, who was a descendant
of King David. 28 The angel came to where Mary was and
said to her, "Hello, blessed one! You are very special to the
Lord!" 29 But when he said this, she was confused. She had
to try to understand what this greeting could mean. 30 Then
the angel said to her, "God desires to bless you, Mary, so
do not be afraid! 31 Now listen. You will become pregnant,
and you will give birth to a son. Give him the name Jesus.
32 He will be great, and he will be the Son of God Most High.
God the Lord will make him king over his people, just as his
ancestor David was. 33 He will always be the king over the
people of Israel. He will rule over them forever!"

34 Then Mary said to the angel, "But I am a virgin. So how
can this happen?" 35 The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will
come upon you. The power of God Most High will be like a
shadow falling on you. So the baby you give birth to will be
holy. He will be the Son of God. 36 Also listen to this. Your
relative Elizabeth is also pregnant, and she is going to have
a son. Because she is very old, people thought that she could
not bear children. But she has been pregnant now for almost
six months. 37 So you see, God can do anything!" 38 Then
Mary said, "All right. I am willing to obey the Lord. God can
make the things you have described happen to me." Then
the angel left her.

39 Very soon after that, Mary got ready and traveled as
quickly as she could to the city where Zechariah lived, which
was in the highlands of Judea. 40 She entered Zechariah's
house and greeted Elizabeth, his wife. 41 As soon as Elizabeth
heard Mary greet her, the baby inside Elizabeth suddenly
moved. Immediately the Holy Spirit inspired Elizabeth to
speak. 42 She exclaimed loudly to Mary, "God has blessed
you more than he has blessed any other woman, and he has
blessed the baby you will bear! 43 I am not worthy of this,
that you, the mother of my Lord, should come to visit me!
44 I know all of this because as soon as I heard you greet
me, the baby in my womb started moving around because
he was so excited! 45 You are blessed because you believed
that what the Lord told you would come true."

46 Then Mary praised God by saying:

"Oh, how I praise the Lord

47 and I feel very joyful about God,
the one who saves me!
48 I am happy because he was gracious to me, even
though I was not very important.
Just imagine this—from now on, people living
at all times in the future will say
that God has blessed me.
49 They will say this because God, the Powerful and Holy
One, has done great things for me.
50 He acts mercifully throughout all time periods
to the people who revere him.
51 He has shown people that he is very powerful.
He has routed those who think proudly
within themselves.
52 He has made rulers stop ruling,
but he has honored people who are lowly.
53 He has let people who were hungry eat good
food until they were full,
but he has sent rich people away without
giving them anything.
54–55 He has helped Israel, the people who serve him.
Long ago he promised our ancestors that he
would be merciful to them.
He has kept that promise and has always acted
mercifully toward Abraham and all
who descended from him."

56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months. After that, she went back home.

57 When it was time for Elizabeth to give birth to her child, she bore a son. 58 When her neighbors and relatives heard about how kind the Lord had been to her by giving her a son, they were very happy along with Elizabeth. 59 Eight days later, people gathered together for the ceremony to circumcise the baby *to show that he belonged to God*. *This was also the time to give the baby a name.* The people wanted to name the baby Zechariah because that was his father's name. 60 But his mother said, "No, *his name will not be Zechariah.* His name will be John!" 61 So they said to her, "But John is not the name of any of your relatives!" 62 Then they made motions with their hands to his father, asking him to indicate what name he wanted to give to his son. 63 So he signaled that they should give him a tablet to write on. *When they gave him one,* he wrote on it, "His name is John." This amazed all of the people who were there! 64 Immediately, Zechariah was able to speak again, and he began praising God. 65 *When* the people who lived nearby *heard about these things, they* felt a deep reverence for God. *They told many other people about what had happened,* and this news spread to people throughout the highlands of Judea. 66 Everyone who heard about these things kept thinking about them. They thought, "Certainly this child will grow up to be someone very special!" *They thought this* because *they could see that* the Lord was present in his life in a powerful way. 67 After the child's father, Zechariah, could speak again, the Holy Spirit inspired Zechariah and he spoke these words from God:

68 "Praise the Lord, the God whom we people
of Israel worship,
because he has come to set us, his people, free.
69 He has sent someone who will powerfully save us,
someone who is descended from David, whom
he chose to be king.
70 (Long ago God inspired his prophets to say that
he would do these things.)
71 *God is sending this deliverer* to save us from our enemies,
and *he will rescue us* from the power of
everyone who hates us.
72 God has done this because he is faithful to our
ancestors and so he is keeping the holy
promise that he made to them.
73 This is the promise that he solemnly swore to
our ancestor Abraham about what
he would do for us.
74 He promised that he would rescue us from the
power of our enemies
so that we could serve him without being
afraid of them.
75 As a result, we could live in the right way, as
people who completely belong to him,
for as long as we live."

76 *Then Zechariah said to his baby son,*

"And as for you, my child, you will be a prophet
of the Most High God.
You will begin your work before the Lord comes
so that you can prepare the people to be ready for him.
77 You will tell God's people that he wants to save
them by forgiving their sins.
78 God wants to save us because he is compassionate
and merciful.
That is why he is sending this Savior from
heaven to help us.
79 This Savior will show the truth to those who do not
know it, even to those who do not know
it at all. He will show us how to live
in a way that pleases God."

80 Over time, Zechariah and Elizabeth's baby boy grew up and became spiritually strong. Then he went to live in a desolate region. He was still living there when he began to preach publicly to God's people, Israel.

2 Also during that time, Caesar Augustus*, who ruled over the whole Roman Empire,* commanded that every person living in his empire had to register *his name in an official list of the people who lived there*. 2 This was the first time that the Romans recorded the names of everyone living in their empire. They did this during the time when Quirinius was the governor of the province of Syria. 3 So everyone had to go to his family's hometown to register. 4–5 Joseph also traveled to his family's hometown, along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. Because Joseph was a descendant of King David, they left the town of Nazareth in the region of Galilee and traveled to the region of Judea, to the town of Bethlehem, which is also known as the city of David. Joseph and Mary went there to be registered in the public record. 6–7 When they arrived in Bethlehem, there was no place for them to stay in a place where visitors usually stayed. So they had to stay in a place where animals slept overnight. While they were there the time came for Mary to give birth and she gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him in wide strips of cloth and laid him down where the food was kept for the animals inside the barn.

8 There were some shepherds camping out in the open country near Bethlehem that night. They were there taking

care of their sheep. 9 Suddenly they saw an angel from the
Lord standing in front of them. A glorious light from the
Lord shone all over them. They became very afraid. 10 But
the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid! Listen carefully,
because I have come to tell you very good news! This news is
for all people, and should make everyone rejoice! 11 They will
rejoice because today, in Bethlehem, King David’s hometown,
the person was born who will save you *from your sins*! He is
the Messiah, the Lord! 12 And here is a sign for you. *If you
go to Bethlehem,* you will find a baby there wrapped in strips
of cloth and lying in a feeding place for animals.”
13 Suddenly a large group of angels from heaven appeared
with the other angel. They were all praising God by saying,

14 “In the highest heaven may all the angels praise
God! And on the earth may all the
people who please God be peaceful
with God and each other!”

15 When the angels left them and returned to heaven, the
shepherds said to each other, “We should go right now to
Bethlehem and see this wonderful thing that has happened,
which the Lord has told us about!” 16 So they went quickly,
and when they had found *the place where* Mary and Joseph
were staying, they saw the baby lying in a feeding place for
animals. 17 After they had seen him, they told everyone what
the Lord had revealed to them about this baby. 18 All the
people who were listening thought that what the shepherds
told them was amazing. 19 But Mary carefully remembered
all of these things and thought about them continually. 20 The
shepherds returned *to the fields where their sheep were*. They
kept talking about how great God is and praising him for all
of the things that they had heard and seen. Everything had
been exactly as the angel had told them it would be.
21 On the eighth day after the baby was born, they
circumcised him and gave him the name Jesus. This was the
name that the angel had told them to give him even before
Mary had become pregnant with him.
22 Mary and Joseph waited the number of days that the law
of Moses required for her to become ceremonially clean again
after having a baby. Then they brought him to Jerusalem
so that they could dedicate him to the Lord *in the temple*.
23 They did this to obey the law of the Lord, which says,
“You must set apart for the Lord every male offspring who
is the first to be born.” 24 There they offered the sacrifice
that the law of the Lord told the parents of a newborn son
to offer, “two turtledoves or two young pigeons.”
25 At that time there was a man in Jerusalem whose
name was Simeon. He did what was pleasing to God and
obeyed God’s laws. He was eagerly waiting for God to send
the Messiah to encourage the people of Israel. The Holy
Spirit was directing him. 26 The Holy Spirit had previously
revealed to him that before he died, the Lord would send
the Messiah and he would get to see him. 27 So the Holy
Spirit led Simeon to go into the temple courtyard. He was
there when Joseph and Mary brought in the baby Jesus so
that they could perform the ceremony for him that God had
commanded in the law. 28 *When Simeon saw Jesus,* he picked
him up in his arms and thanked God, and then he said,

29 “Lord, you have kept your promise to me, and now
I am content for you to let me die.
30 Because I have seen the one whom you have
sent to save people,
31 the one whom you have prepared for all people to see.
32 He will be like a light that will reveal your truth to the
other nations. He will show how glorious
your plan is for Israel, your people.”

33 Jesus’ father and mother marveled at what Simeon said
about him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Jesus’
mother, Mary, “Note well what I say: God has determined
that, because of this child, many people in Israel will reject
God and many will submit themselves to God. He will be a
sign *from God* that many people will oppose. 35 As for you,
*the cruel things that people will do to him will make you so sad
that* it will feel as if a sword is piercing through your very
soul. *But this is necessary* so that he can reveal the secret
thoughts of many people.”
36 A prophetess named Anna was also there *in the temple
courtyard*. She was very old. She was the daughter of Phanuel,
who was from the tribe of Asher. As a young woman, she had
been married for seven years*, and then her husband had died*.
37 After that, she had lived as a widow for 84 more years. It
seemed as if she was always in the temple, worshiping God
by fasting and praying, *at all times of the* night and day. 38 At
that same time, Anna approached *Joseph and Mary and the
baby*. Anna began thanking God *for the baby*. Afterwards, she
kept speaking about Jesus to many other people who were
also expecting *God to send* the Messiah who would set the
people of Israel free.
39 After Joseph and Mary had finished doing everything
that the law of the Lord required *for parents of a first son*,
they returned to their own town, Nazareth, in the district of
Galilee. 40 As the child grew up, he became strong and very
wise, and God was present in his life.
41 Every year Jesus’ parents traveled to Jerusalem to
celebrate the Passover festival. 42 So when Jesus was 12
years old, they all traveled to Jerusalem together when
it was time for the *Passover* festival. 43 When the days for
celebrating the festival ended, Jesus’ parents started to return
home, but their son, Jesus, stayed behind in Jerusalem. His
parents did not know *that he was still there*. 44 They thought
that he was with the other people who were traveling with
them. But after walking for one day, they started to look
for him among their relatives and friends. 45 When they did
not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him.
46 Three days after *Mary and Joseph had left Jerusalem*, they
found Jesus at the temple. He was sitting among the Jewish
religious teachers. He was listening to them teach and he was
asking them questions. 47 All the people who heard what he
said were amazed at how much he understood and how well
he answered *the questions that the teachers asked*. 48 When his
parents saw him, they were very surprised. His mother said
to him, “My son, you should not have done this to us. Listen
to me! Your father and I have been very worried as we have
been searching for you!” 49 He said to them, “I am surprised
that you needed to search for me. I thought you would know
that I needed to be at my Father’s house*, learning about him*.”
50 But they did not understand the meaning of what he said
to them. 51 Then he returned with them to Nazareth, and he
always obeyed them. His mother kept thinking deeply about
all the things that had happened.
52 As the years passed, Jesus continued to become wiser,
and he grew taller. God and people continued to approve of
him more and more.

3 *This next part of the history happened* when Tiberius Caesar had been ruling *the Roman Empire* for about fifteen years. At that time, Pontius Pilate was the governor of the province of Judea, Herod Antipas was ruling the district of Galilee, his brother Philip was ruling the regions of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanius was ruling the region of Abilene. 2 The high priests *at the temple in Jerusalem* were Annas and Caiaphas. During that time, God spoke to Zechariah's son John *while he was living* out in the desolate area. 3 John traveled all around the area near the Jordan River. He kept announcing *to the people who came to hear him*, "If you want God to forgive your sins, you must reject wrong ways of living. Then I will baptize you!" 4 *When John preached like this,* the words came true that the prophet Isaiah wrote on a scroll long ago:

"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!'
5 *When an important person is going to arrive by a
certain road,* people fill in all the ravines
and level off all the steep places in it.
They make the road straight wherever it is crooked,
and they smooth out all the bumps. *In the same way,
God will make sure that there will be people
who are ready for the Messiah.*
6 Then everyone will recognize God's way
of saving people."

7 Large groups of people were coming out *to the desolate place where John was* so that he would baptize them. So John said 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! And do not even begin to say 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! 9 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." 10 Then *several of the people in* the crowd asked him, "What kinds of things, then, does God want us to do?" 11 He answered them, "If any of you has two shirts, you should give one of them to someone who does not have a shirt. If any of you has plenty of food, you should give some to those who do not have food." 12 Some tax collectors also came, wanting John to baptize them. They asked him, "Teacher, what *does God want us* to do?" 13 He said to them, "Do not collect more money *from the people* than the Roman government tells you to collect!" 14 There were also some men there who were soldiers. Even they asked him, "And what about us? What does God want us to do?" He said to them, "Do not force people to give you money by threatening to harm them or by falsely accusing them *of doing something wrong*. Be content with the amount of money that you earn as a soldier." 15 People had been waiting *for a long time for the Messiah to come. But now they were getting very hopeful about John*. They thought that he might be the Messiah. 16 But John said to all of them, "*I am not the Messiah.* He is coming, and he is far greater than I am. He is so great that I am not worthy even to be like the slave who would untie the straps of his sandals *when he comes in the house*! When I baptized you, I used only water. But *when the Messiah comes,* he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit, who will judge and purify you. 17 *The Messiah is ready to do this, 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. *That represents how the Messiah will gather up the people who are pleasing to God, and he will punish the people who are displeasing to God.*" 18 In many different ways like this, John urged the people *to stop sinning and to submit themselves to God*, as he kept telling them the good news *from God*. 19 John even rebuked King Herod for all of the many evil things that Herod had done. But when John rebuked Herod for marrying his brother's wife, Herodias, while his brother was still alive, 20 Herod did another evil thing. He had his soldiers put John in prison. 21 But before Herod did that, while John was still baptizing many people, John also baptized Jesus. Afterwards, while Jesus was praying, the sky opened. 22 Then the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, came down and landed on Jesus. Then God spoke *to Jesus* from heaven. He said, "You are my Son, the one whom I love dearly. I am very pleased with you!" 23 At that time Jesus began his work for God. He was about 30 years old. This is Jesus' lineage: People considered Jesus to be the son of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Heli. 24 Heli was the son of Matthat. Matthat was the son of Levi. Levi was the son of Melchi. Melchi was the son of Jannai. Jannai was the son of Joseph. 25 Joseph was the son of Mattathias. Mattathias was the son of Amos. Amos was the son of Nahum. Nahum was the son of Esli. Esli was the son of Naggai. 26 Naggai was the son of Maath. Maath was the son of Mattathias. Mattathias was the son of Semein. Semein was the son of Josech. Josech was the son of Joda. 27 Joda was the son of Joanan. Joanan was the son of Rhesa. Rhesa was the son of Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel was the son of Shealtiel. Shealtiel was the son of Neri. 28 Neri was the son of Melchi. Melchi was the son of Addi. Addi was the son of Cosam. Cosam was the son of Elmadam. Elmadam was the son of Er. 29 Er was the son of Joshua. Joshua was the son of Eliezer. Eliezer was the son of Jorim. Jorim was the son of Matthat. Matthat was the son of Levi. 30 Levi was the son of Simeon. Simeon was the son of Judah. Judah was the son of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Jonam. Jonam was the son of Eliakim. 31 Eliakim was the son of Melea. Melea was the son of Menna. Menna was the son of Mattatha. Mattatha was the son of Nathan. Nathan was the son of David. 32 David was the son of Jesse. Jesse was the son of Obed. Obed was the son of Boaz. Boaz was the son of Salmon. Salmon was the son of Nahshon. 33 Nahshon was the son of Amminadab. Amminadab was the son of Admin. Admin was the son of Arni. Arni was the son of Hezron. Hezron was the son of Perez. Perez was the son of Judah. 34 Judah was the son of Jacob. Jacob was the son of Isaac. Isaac was the son of Abraham. Abraham was the son of Terah. Terah was the son of Nahor. 35 Nahor was the son of Serug. Serug was the son of Reu. Reu was the son of Peleg. Peleg was the son of Eber. Eber was the son of Shelah. 36 Shelah was the son of Cainan. Cainan was the son of Arphaxad. Arphaxad was the son of Shem. Shem was the son of Noah. Noah was the son of Lamech. 37 Lamech was the son of Methuselah. Methuselah was the son of Enoch. Enoch was the son of Jared. Jared was the son of Mahalalel. Mahalalel was the son of Cainan. 38 Cainan was the son of

Enos. Enos was the son of Seth. Seth was the son of Adam. Adam came from God.

4 After John baptized him, Jesus came back out of the Jordan River. The Holy Spirit was fully empowering him. Then the Holy Spirit led him into the wilderness. 2 Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days. While he was there, the devil kept tempting him. During that entire time, Jesus did not eat anything. So when the 40 days were over, he was very hungry. 3 Then the devil said to Jesus, "If you really are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread *for you to eat*!" 4 Jesus replied, "*No, I will not do that, because* the Scriptures say, 'People need more than just food in order to live.'" 5 Then the devil took Jesus up *to the top of a high mountain* and showed him all the nations of the world in an instant. 6 Then the devil said to Jesus, "I will make you the ruler over all of these nations and you will possess all of their wealth. I can do this because God has permitted me to control all of them, and so I can give them to whomever I wish. 7 All you have to do is bow down and worship me. Then I will let you rule them all!" 8 But Jesus replied, "*No, I will not worship you, because* the Scriptures say, 'You must only worship the Lord your God. He is the only one you may serve!'"

9 Then the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem. He set him on the highest part of the temple and said to him, "If you really are the Son of God, jump down from here. 10 You will not be hurt, because the Scriptures say,

> 'God will command his angels to protect you.'
> 11 And the Scriptures also say,
> 'The angels will hold you up in their hands when you are falling, so that you will not get hurt.'" 12 But Jesus replied, "*No, I will not do that, because* the Scriptures also say: 'Do not test the Lord your God'."

13 Then, after the devil had finished trying to tempt Jesus in all of these ways, the devil left Jesus to wait until another time *when he could try to tempt Jesus again*.

14 After this, Jesus *left the desolate area and* returned to the district of Galilee. The Holy Spirit was empowering him. Throughout that whole region, people heard about Jesus and told others about him. 15 He taught people in their Jewish meeting places. *As a result,* all of the people praised him.

16 Then Jesus went to Nazareth, the town where he had grown up. As he usually did on the Jewish day of rest, he went to the Jewish meeting place. *At the appropriate time,* he stood up to read *something aloud from the Scriptures*. 17 *Jesus wanted to read some of the words that* the prophet Isaiah *had spoken long ago. So he asked for* the scroll that contained these words, and a synagogue attendant handed it to him. Jesus unrolled the scroll and found the place from which he wanted to read. *He read these words:*

> 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is empowering me,
> because he has specially appointed me to declare God's good news to people who are poor.
> He has sent me to declare to people who are in prison that they will go free,
> and to tell those who are blind that they will see again.
> He has sent me to release people whom others are oppressing,
> 19 and to announce that now is the time when the Lord will act favorably toward people."

20 Then he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant, and he sat down *to teach the people*. Everyone in the Jewish meeting place was looking intently at him. 21 He began to teach them by saying, "I have made this Scripture passage come true right now, as you heard me read it." 22 Everyone there approved of him and they were amazed at the wonderful things that he said. Many of them said to each other, "*It is surprising that he can speak like this!* This man is only Joseph's son!" 23 He said to them, "Surely some of you will quote to me the proverb that says, '"Doctor, heal yourself!" *What you will mean by it is, People told us that* you did miracles in the town of Capernaum. *If you want us to believe that you are a prophet, then* do the same kind of miracles here in your hometown!'" 24 Then he said, "It is certainly true that the people in a prophet's own hometown do not accept that he is a prophet. 25 Think about this: There were many widows in Israel during the time when the prophet Elijah lived. At that time there was no rain for three and a half years. This caused a great famine throughout the whole country. 26 And yet God did not send Elijah to help any of the widows in Israel. Instead, God sent him to the town of Zarephath near the city of Sidon, to help a *non-Israelite* widow there. 27 There were also many lepers in Israel during the time when the prophet Elisha lived. But Elisha did not heal any of them. Instead, he healed only Naaman, *a non-Israelite man* from the country of Syria." 28 When all the people in the Jewish meeting place heard him say those things, they became very angry. 29 So they stood up, grabbed Jesus, and dragged him out of the city. They took him to the edge of the cliff outside of their city in order to throw him off of the cliff and kill him. 30 But Jesus simply walked through the crowd and went away.

31 From there Jesus went down to Capernaum, a city in the district of Galilee. On each Jewish day of rest, he taught the people *in the Jewish meeting place there*. 32 The things that Jesus taught the people amazed them, because he spoke as someone who knew what he was talking about. 33 Now in that Jewish meeting place there was a man whom an evil spirit controlled. He shouted very loudly, 34 "Aah! Jesus, from Nazareth! What do you want with us? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are! You are the Holy One from God!" 35 But Jesus spoke sternly to the evil spirit. He said, "Be quiet and come out of him!" The evil spirit threw the man down on the ground in the middle of the people. But then he came out of the man, without harming him. 36 All of the people *in the Jewish meeting place* were amazed. Many of them said to each other, "We have never seen anything like this! His words are so powerful! He commands the evil spirits as if they must obey him, and *when he commands them,* they come out *of people*!" 37 In every place throughout the surrounding region, people kept talking about what Jesus had done.

38 Then Jesus left the Jewish meeting place and went to the house of a man named Simon. His mother-in-law was there. She was sick and had a high fever. The people there asked Jesus to heal her. 39 So Jesus went over to where she was and stood next to her. He commanded the fever to leave her, and it did! She immediately got up and served them some food.

40 When the sun was setting*, which ended the Jewish day of rest*, many people whose friends or relatives were sick with

various diseases brought them to Jesus. He put his hands on each one of them and healed them. 41 *As Jesus put his hands on the sick people,* evil spirits also came out from many of them. *As the evil spirits came out,* they shouted *to Jesus*, "You are the Son of God!" But he commanded those evil spirits not to tell people about him, because they knew that he was the Messiah.

42 Early the next morning, Jesus went out to an uninhabited place. Crowds of people went looking for him. When they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them. 43 But Jesus said to them, "I must also tell people in other cities the good news that they can have God rule their lives, because that is what God sent me here to do." 44 So he went on preaching in the Jewish meeting places throughout the province of Judea.

5 One day while many people were crowding around Jesus and listening to him teach God's message, he was standing next to Lake Gennesaret. 2 He saw two fishing boats there at the edge of the lake. The fishermen had left the boats and were washing their fishing nets. 3 Jesus stepped into one of the two boats, the one that belonged to Simon. Jesus asked him to move the boat out a short distance away from the shore. Then Jesus sat down in the boat and continued to teach the crowds from there. 4 After he finished teaching them, he said to Simon, "Take the boat out to deeper water and let your nets down into the water to catch some fish." 5 Simon replied, "Master, we worked hard through the whole night and yet we did not catch any fish. But I will let down the nets again because you told me to." 6 So Simon and his crew let down their nets and they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 They motioned to their fishing partners in the other boat to come and help them. So they came and filled both boats so full with fish that the boats began to sink. 8 Seeing this, Simon Peter bowed down before Jesus and said, "Please leave me, because I am a sinful man, Lord." 9 *He said this* because he marveled at the huge number of fish that they had caught. All the men who were with him also marveled. 10 James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners, were just as amazed. But Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid! *Until now you gathered in fish, but* from now on you will gather in people to become my disciples." 11 So after the men brought the boats to the shore, they left their fishing business and everything else and went with Jesus.

12 Jesus went to one of the towns nearby. There was a man there who was covered with a skin disease. When he saw Jesus, he bowed down to the ground in front of him. He pleaded with him, "Lord, *please heal me!* I know that you are able to heal me if you are willing!" 13 Then Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. He said, "I am willing to heal you, and I heal you now!" Immediately the man was healed. He no longer had leprosy! 14 Then Jesus told him, "Do not tell anyone that I healed you. First, go and show yourself to a priest so that he can examine you and see that you no longer have leprosy. Bring the sacrifice that Moses commanded you to offer to become ceremonially clean again." 15 But instead even more people heard *about how Jesus had healed the man*. As a result, large crowds came to hear *Jesus teach* and to have him heal them from their sicknesses. 16 But he would often go away from them to isolated areas and pray.

17 One day when Jesus was teaching, some men from the Pharisee sect and some expert teachers of the Jewish law were sitting nearby. They had come from many villages in the district of Galilee and also from Jerusalem and other cities in the province of Judea. At that same time, the Lord was giving Jesus the power to heal people. 18 While Jesus was there, several men brought him a man who was paralyzed. *They were carrying the man* on a sleeping pad and trying to bring him into the house to lay him down in front of Jesus. 19 But because there was such a large crowd of people in the house, they were not able to bring him in. So they went up *the outside steps* onto the flat roof. *They removed some of the tiles from the roof to make an opening.* Then they lowered the man on his sleeping pad through the opening into the middle *of the crowd*. He came down right in front of Jesus. 20 When Jesus perceived that they believed that he could heal the man, he said to him, "Friend, I forgive your sins!" 21 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees began to think to themselves, "This man insults God by saying that! Nobody except God can forgive sins!" 22 Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said to them, "You should not question what I said within yourselves! 23 Here is something I want you to think carefully about. Which is easier to say, 'I forgive your sins,' or, 'Get up and walk'? *You might think that saying 'I forgive your sins' is easier because it does not require any visible proof.* 24 But I want you to know that God has given me, the Son of Man, authority to forgive people on earth their sins. *To demonstrate that, I will also tell this man to get up.*" Then he said to the man who was paralyzed, "To you I say, get up, pick up your sleeping pad, and go home!" 25 Immediately *the man was healed!* He got up in front of them all. He picked up the sleeping pad on which he had been lying, and he went home, praising God. 26 All the people there were astonished! They praised God and were completely amazed *at what they had seen Jesus do*. They kept saying, "We have seen wonderful things today!"

27 Then Jesus left that place and saw a man named Levi who collected taxes *for the Roman government*. He 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 disciple!" 28 So Levi left his work and went with Jesus.

29 Later on Levi prepared a big feast in his own house for Jesus *and his disciples*. There was a large group of tax collectors and others eating together with them. 30 Then some men who belonged to the Pharisee sect, including some of them who taught Jewish laws, complained to Jesus' disciples. They said, "You should not be having a banquet with tax collectors and *other* sinners." 31 Then Jesus said to them, "People who are well do not need a doctor. People who are sick need a doctor. 32 Similarly, I did not come from heaven to invite those who think they are righteous to come to me. On the contrary, I came to invite those who know that they are sinners to turn from their sinful behavior and come to me."

33 Those Jewish leaders responded to Jesus, "The disciples of John the Baptizer often abstain from food and pray. The disciples of the Pharisees do that too. But your disciples keep on eating and drinking! Why do they not fast like the others?" 34 Jesus answered, "No one tells the friends of the bridegroom to fast while the wedding celebration is still going on! 35 But some day the bridegroom will no longer be with his friends. Then, at that time, they will abstain from food."

36 Then Jesus gave other examples to explain what he meant. He said, "People never tear a piece of cloth from a new garment and attach it to an old garment to mend it. If

they did that, they would ruin the new garment by tearing it, and the piece of cloth from the new garment would not match the old garment. 37 And no one puts newly squeezed wine into old skin bags *to store it*. If anyone did that, the skin bags would tear open *because they would not stretch when the new wine fermented and expanded*. Then the skin bags would become useless, and the wine *would also become useless because it* would spill out. 38 On the contrary, new wine must be put into new skin bags.

39 Those who have only drunk old wine do not want to try new wine, because they think, 'The old wine is good enough!'"

6 One Sabbath day, as Jesus and his disciples were walking through some grain fields, the disciples picked some heads of grain. They rubbed them in their hands to separate the grain from the husks. Then they ate the grain. 2 Some Pharisees *were watching this. They* said *to them*, "You should not be doing work like that! Our law forbids us to do work on the Sabbath day!" 3 Jesus replied to the Pharisees, "Consider what the Scriptures say about what David did when he and the men who were with him were hungry. 4 As you know, David entered the tabernacle *and asked for some food*. The priest gave him the bread that had been on display before God. David ate some, and he also gave some to the men who were with him, even though the law said they could not do that. Only priests could eat that bread." 5 Jesus also said to them, "I, the Son of Man, have the authority *to determine what is right for people to do* on the Sabbath!"

6 On another Sabbath day Jesus went to the synagogue and taught *the people*. A man was there who could not move his right hand. 7 Some teachers of the Jewish laws and some Pharisees *were there. They* were watching Jesus closely. They wanted to see whether he would heal the man. If he did, then they would accuse him *of disobeying their laws about not working on the Sabbath*. 8 But Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come and stand here in front of everyone!" So the man got up and stood there. 9 Then Jesus said to them, "I want to ask you a question. Do the laws that God gave Moses command people to do good on the Sabbath, or to do harm? Do they command people to save a life on the Sabbath, or to destroy it?" 10 *No one answered him, so* he looked around at them all and then said to the man, "Stretch out your withered hand!" The man did that, and his hand became completely well again! 11 But the religious leaders were very angry, and they discussed with one another about what they could do to *get rid of* Jesus.

12 Around that time, Jesus went up into the hills to pray. He prayed to God all night there. 13 The next day he called all his disciples to come to him. From among them he chose 12 men and made them his representatives. 14 *These are their names:* Simon, to whom Jesus gave the new name Peter; Andrew, Peter's brother; James and his brother, John; Philip; Bartholomew; 15 Matthew*, whose other name was Levi*; Thomas; another man named James whose father was named Alphaeus; Simon the Zealot; 16 Judas, the son of a different man named James; and Judas Iscariot, who later betrayed Jesus.

17 Jesus came down from the hills with his disciples and stood on a level area. There was a great crowd of his disciples there. There was also a large group of people who had come from Jerusalem and from many other places in the region of Judea, and from the coastal areas near the cities of Tyre and Sidon. 18 They came to hear Jesus *teach them* and heal them from their diseases. He also healed those whom evil spirits had troubled. 19 Everyone in the crowd tried to touch him, because he was healing everyone by his power. 20 Then he looked at his disciples and said, "It is very good for you who are poor, because God is ruling you. 21 It is very good for you who are hungry now, because God will give you everything you need.

It is very good for you who are grieving now, because God will someday make you laugh with joy.

22 It is very good when other people hate you, when they reject you and insult you and say that you are bad because you follow me, the Son of Man. 23 When that happens, rejoice! Jump up and down because you are so happy! Keep in mind that God is going to give you a great reward in heaven! Do not forget that the ancestors of the people who are treating you this way did similar things to God's prophets *long ago*.

24 But how sad it is for you who are rich. You have *already* received all the comfort you are going to get *from your riches*. 25 How sad it is for you who can stuff yourselves with food now. Later you will go hungry.

Woe to the ones who are laughing now. Later you will be very unhappy. 26 How sad it is for you when everyone says good things about you. In the same way, their ancestors used to say good things about people who falsely claimed to be God's prophets.

27 But I say this to each of you who are listening to what I say: Love your enemies*, not only your friends*! Do good things for those who hate you! 28 Ask God to bless those who curse you! Pray for those who treat you badly! 29 If someone *insults you by* striking you on one of your cheeks, turn your face so that he can strike the other cheek also. If someone wants to take away your coat, let him also have your shirt. 30 Give something to everyone who asks you. If someone takes things that belong to you, do not make him return them. 31 In whatever way you want others to act toward you, that is the way that you should act toward them.

32 If you love *only* those who love you, do not expect God to reward you for doing that. Even sinners love those who love them. 33 Do not expect God to reward you because you do good things for people who do good things for you. After all, even sinners do that. 34 If you lend *money or property* only to those who will give it back to you, do not expect God to reward you for doing that. Even sinners lend to other sinners who will give everything back to them. 35 Instead, love your enemies! Do good things for them! Lend to them, and do not expect them to pay anything back! Then God will give you a great reward. And you will be children of God the Most High, since God is kind even to people who are unthankful and wicked. 36 So you should act mercifully toward other people, just as God, your Father, acts mercifully toward people.

37 Do not harshly criticize *other people*. Then God will not harshly criticize you. Do not condemn *other people*. Then God will not condemn you. Forgive *others for the wrong things they have done to you*. Then God will forgive you. 38 Give *to others*. Then God will give to you. It will be as if he is trying to give you as much grain as possible in a container you have. He will press the grain down. He will shake it together. He will keep filling the container until it overflows. So when you give to others, it should be as if you are using a big scoop, because God will use the same size scoop to give to you."

39 He also gave his disciples this example: "A blind person should not try to lead another blind person *down the road*. If

he did, they both would fall into the ditch *on the side of the road*! 40 A disciple is not greater than his teacher. But once the teacher has finished training him, he will become like his teacher.

41 *None of you should be concerned about the small faults of another person. You should be concerned about 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. 42 You should not tell another believer, 'Friend, let me help you correct your faults,' when you have not dealt with your own faults yet. 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.

43 Everyone knows that healthy trees do not produce bad fruit and unhealthy trees do not produce good fruit. 44 You can tell what a person is like inside by the things that they do. *Then you know what to expect from them. You would not look for kindness or good advice from someone who does bad things.* That would be like looking for figs on a thornbush or looking for grapes on a bramble vine. 45 Good people do good things because they think good things. Evil people do evil things because they think evil things. This is because people speak and act based on what they are thinking about."

46 *Jesus said to the people,* "Why do you call me 'Lord' when you do not obey what I tell you to do? 47 Let me tell you what people are like who come to me, hear my teachings, and obey them. 48 Such people are like a person who dug deep into the ground to prepare to build his house. He made sure to build the foundation *for the house* on solid rock. Then there was a flood. A torrent of water was beating against that house. But it could not destroy it, because the person had built the house on a solid foundation. 49 But some people who hear my teachings do not obey them. They are like a person who built a house on top of the ground without digging a foundation first. When the floodwaters came, it collapsed immediately. The waters destroyed that house completely."

7 After Jesus finished saying all these things to the people who were listening, he went to the town of Capernaum. 2 In that town there was a centurion in the Roman army who had a slave who was dear to him. This slave was so sick that he was about to die. 3 When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to Jesus to ask him to come and heal his slave. 4 When they came to Jesus, they earnestly asked him *to help the centurion's slave*. They said, "He deserves to have you do this for him, 5 because he loves our people and he built our synagogue for us." 6 So Jesus went with them *to the officer's house*. When he was almost there, the officer sent some friends to give this message to Jesus: "Lord, do not go to the trouble *of coming here*, since I am not worthy to have you come into my house. 7 That is why I did not feel that I was worthy to come to you in person. I knew that you could heal my dear slave just by speaking *a command*. 8 *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!' he goes. When I say to another one, 'Come!' he comes. When I say to my slave, 'Do this!' he does it." 9 When Jesus heard what the officer had said, he was amazed at him. Then he turned to the crowd that was with him and said, "Let me tell you, I have not met any Israelite who trusts me as much as this Gentile does!" 10 When the friends who had come from the centurion returned to his house, they found that the slave was in good health again.

11 Soon after that Jesus traveled to the town of Nain. His disciples and a large crowd went with him. 12 As Jesus came near to the town gate, he saw a large crowd coming out of the town. A man had just died, and they were carrying him out to bury him. His mother was in the crowd. She was a widow, and he had been her only son. *He had taken care of her while he was alive.* 13 When Jesus saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not cry!" 14 Then he came close *to them* and touched the stretcher *on which the body was lying*. The men carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" 15 Then the man who had died sat up and began to talk! And Jesus led him back to his mother. 16 Everyone there was awestruck. They praised God and said *to each other*, "A great prophet has come among us!" and "God has come to care for his people!" 17 Then this news about *what* Jesus *had done* spread throughout the region of Judea and all the other areas nearby.

18–19 The disciples of John the Baptizer told him about all these things. So John called for two of his disciples and told them to go to the Lord and ask him: "Are you the one whom God promised would come, or should we be expecting someone else?" 20 When those two men came to Jesus, they told him, "John the Baptizer sent us to ask you, 'Are you the one whom God promised would come? Or should we wait for someone else?'" 21 At that same time Jesus was healing many people from sicknesses and serious diseases, and he was delivering them from evil spirits. He also gave many blind people the ability to see again. 22 So he answered those two men, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard. People who were blind are now seeing. People who were lame are now walking. People who had skin diseases no longer have them. People who were deaf can now hear. People who were dead have come back to life. I am proclaiming good news to poor people." 23 *And also tell him,* "God will bless anyone who *sees what I do and hears what I teach and* continues to believe in me."

24 When the men whom John had sent left, Jesus began to talk to the crowd of people about John. He said, "What did you go into the wilderness to see? A thin stalk of a plant shaken by the wind? 25 But what did you go out to see? A man wearing fancy clothing? Listen, those who wear splendid clothes and who have the best of everything live in kings' palaces. 26 Then what did you go out there to see? A prophet? Yes*, that is who John is*! But I tell you that John is more significant than an ordinary prophet. 27 He is the one about whom the prophet wrote long ago: 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare people for your coming.'

28 I tell you that of all the people who have ever lived, there is no one greater than John. Yet the most insignificant people whose lives God is ruling are greater than John."

29 When all the people whom John had baptized heard what Jesus said—including the tax collectors—they agreed that God had done the right thing *by sending John*. 30 But the Pharisees and the experts in the Jewish law, whom John had not baptized, rejected God's will for them.

31 *Then Jesus also said,* "*I will tell you* what you people living in this time period are like. 32 You are like children playing games in an open area. They call out to each other, saying, '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 cry!' 33 Similarly, when John came to you and did not eat ordinary food or drink wine, you *rejected him and* said, 'A demon is controlling him!' 34 But when the Son of Man came to you and he ate *ordinary food* and drank *wine as others do*, then you *rejected him and* said, 'Look! This man eats too much food and drinks too much wine, and he associates with tax collectors and other sinners!' 35 But those who are wise themselves recognize that what John and I do is also wise."

36 One day a certain Pharisee named Simon invited Jesus to eat a meal with him. So Jesus went to the man's house and reclined at a table to eat. 37 There was also a woman in that city who had a bad reputation. When she heard that Jesus was eating in the Pharisee's house, *she went there,* bringing a stone jar that contained perfume. 38 *As Jesus was reclining to eat, the woman stood behind him at his feet.* She was crying, and her tears fell on Jesus' feet. She continually wiped his feet with her hair. She kept kissing them and anointing them with the perfume. 39 When the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw *what the woman was doing*, he thought, "If this man really were a prophet, he would have known who this woman is who is touching him. He would have known what kind of person she is, that she is a sinner." 40 In response, Jesus said to him, "Simon, there is something I want to tell you." He replied, "Teacher, what is it?" 41 *Jesus told him this story:* "Two people owed money to a man who had a business lending money. One of these people owed him 500 silver coins. The other one owed him 50 silver coins. 42 Neither of them was able to pay back what he owed, so the man very kindly said that they both did not have to pay back anything. So, which of those two men will love that man more?" 43 Simon replied, "I assume that the one who had owed him the larger amount will love him more." Jesus said to him, "You are correct." 44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Think about what this woman has done! When I entered your house*, you did not do what hosts usually do to welcome their guests.* You did not give me any water to wash my feet. But this woman has washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair! 45 You did not greet me with a kiss. But from the moment I came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet! 46 You did not anoint my head with olive oil, but she has anointed my feet with fragrant perfume. 47 So I tell you that God has forgiven her many sins, and that is why she loves me very much. But a person who thinks that God has only had to forgive him for a few sins will love me only a little bit." 48 Then Jesus said to the woman, "I have forgiven your sins." 49 Then those who were eating with him said among themselves, "Who is this man who says that he can even forgive sins?" 50 But Jesus said to the woman, "Because you have believed in me, God has saved you. May God give you peace as you go!"

8 After that, Jesus and his 12 representatives traveled around through various cities and villages. As they went, Jesus preached to people, telling them the good news that they could have God rule their lives. 2 *Also traveling with them were* several women whom he had delivered from evil spirits and healed from sicknesses. These included Mary from the village of Magdala. Jesus had forced seven evil spirits to leave her. 3 *Another of these women was* Joanna. She was the wife of Chuza, who was a manager for King Herod. *These women also included* Susanna and many others. They were using their own money to support Jesus and his disciples.

4 One day a very large crowd was gathering. People were traveling from many different towns to see Jesus. He told them this story: 5 "A farmer went out to plant some grain seeds. As he was scattering them over the soil, some of the seeds fell onto the hard pathway. People stepped on those seeds, and birds ate them all up. 6 Some of the seeds fell on *shallow soil above a layer of* rock. As soon as those seeds grew, the plants dried up because their roots could not get past the rock to reach to the moisture. 7 Some of the seeds fell on ground where thorn plants had left their own seeds. The new thorn plants grew up together with the young grain plants. The *stronger* thorns crowded out the grain plants, so that the grain did not grow well. 8 But some of the grain seeds fell on fertile soil. They grew so well that they produced a crop that had a hundred times as many seeds." After saying these things, Jesus called out to the crowd, "You should think carefully about what you just heard me say!"

9 Then Jesus' disciples asked him, "What does that story mean?" 10 And he said, "God has given you the privilege of knowing hidden things about how God will rule as king. But *I speak* to everyone else only in parables, so that,

> 'Although they see, they may not perceive,
> and although they hear, they may
> not understand.'

11 Now, this is what the story means: The seeds represent what God wants people to understand. 12 The seeds that fell on the pathway *show what happens when* people understand the message from God only superficially. This makes it easy for the devil to come and take that message away from their minds. As a result, they do not believe it, and so God does not save them. 13 The seeds that fell on the rocky ground *show what happens when* people hear the message from God and receive it joyfully, but they do not commit themselves seriously. They only believe for a short time. As soon as difficult things happen to them, they stop trusting in God. 14 The seeds that fell among the thorny plants *show what happens to some other* people who hear the message from God. As they go on in life, they allow the worries, riches, and pleasures of this life to occupy all their attention. As a result, they do not become spiritually mature. 15 But the seeds that fell on the fertile ground *show what happens when* people hear the message about God and accept it with great sincerity. They make a firm commitment, and because they keep this commitment, they become spiritually mature.

16 Think about this. When people light a lamp, they do not cover it with a basket. They do not put it under a bed. Instead, they put it on a lampstand. That way everyone who enters the room can see by its light. 17 This illustrates that someday everyone will be able to see everything that is now hidden. And someday everyone will see in the open everything that is now secret. 18 So make sure that you are listening carefully *to what I tell you*, because if someone believes God's truth, God will enable him to understand even more. But if someone does not believe God's truth, God will cause him not to understand even *the little* he thinks he has understood."

19 One day Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they could not get near him because there was *such* a *large* crowd *around him in the house where he was*. 20 Then people told him, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." 21 But he replied to them,

"Those who hear the message from God and obey it are as dear to me as my mother and my brothers."

22 On another day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples. He said to them, "I would like us to go across to the other side of the lake." So they started to sail across the lake. 23 But as they were sailing, Jesus fell asleep. Then a powerful windstorm began on the lake. Soon the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. 24 So Jesus' disciples came over to wake him up. They said to him, "Master! Master! We are all going to die!" He woke up and scolded the wind and the violent waves. The wind stopped blowing, the waves stopped hitting the boat, and everything became calm. 25 Then he said to them, "You acted as if you had no faith!" The disciples were alarmed and amazed *because of what had just happened*. They kept asking each other, "Who could Jesus be? He is able to command even the winds and the waves, and they obey him."

26 Jesus and his disciples continued sailing and came to the region where the Gerasene people lived. It was on the opposite side of the lake from the district of Galilee. 27 When Jesus came out of the boat onto the land, a certain man from the town in that area met him. This man had demons in him. For a long time this man had not worn clothes and had not lived in a house. Instead, he lived in the burial caves.

28 When the man saw Jesus, he cried out and lay facedown before him. He shouted, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me!" 29 *The man said this because* Jesus had just commanded the evil spirit to come out of him. In the past, people had bound him with chains and shackles and kept a close watch on him. Even so, many times the evil spirit would suddenly seize him by force. Then the man would break free, and the demon would make him go out into deserted places. 30 Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" The demon replied, "*My name is* Thousands." He said that because many demons had entered the man. 31 The demons kept begging Jesus not to command them to go into the deep pit where God punishes demons. 32 There was a large herd of pigs grazing on the hillside nearby. The demons begged Jesus to allow them to enter the pigs, and he allowed them. 33 So the demons left the man and entered the pigs, and the herd of pigs rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

34 When those who were taking care of the pigs saw what happened, they ran away! They reported what they had seen to all the people who lived around them. 35 Then the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to where Jesus was, they saw that the man from whom the demons had gone out was sitting at the feet of Jesus. They saw that he had clothes on and his mind was normal again. *They realized how powerful Jesus must be,* and they became afraid. 36 Those who had seen what had happened told the people who had just arrived how Jesus had rescued the man who had been controlled by demons. 37 Then many people from that place where the Gerasenes lived asked Jesus to leave their area, because they were very afraid. So Jesus and his disciples got into the boat to go back across the lake. 38 Before they left, the man from whom the demons had gone out begged Jesus, saying, "Please, let me go with you!" But instead, Jesus sent him away by saying to him, 39 "No, go back to your home and tell *everyone* how much God has done for you!" So the man went away and told people throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

40 And when Jesus and his disciples got back across the lake to Capernaum, a crowd of people welcomed them. They had all been waiting for him there. 41 Just then a man named Jairus, who was one of the leaders of the synagogue there, came near to Jesus, and he lay facedown before him. He pleaded with Jesus to come to his house. 42 He did this because he had an only daughter, who was about 12 years old, and she was dying. *He wanted Jesus to heal her.*

Now as Jesus went *with him*, many people were crowding around him. 43 Now in the crowd there was a woman who had been suffering for 12 years from a disease that caused continual bleeding. She had spent all her money[a] to pay doctors to help her, but none of them was able to heal her. 44 She came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his robe. At once her bleeding stopped. 45 Jesus said, "Who touched me?" Everyone *around Jesus* said that they had not touched him. Peter said, "Master, there are many people crowding around you and pressing up against you. *So any one of them might have touched you!*" 46 But Jesus said, "I know that someone *deliberately* touched me, because power has gone out from me *to heal that person*." 47 Then the woman realized that she could not hide. She came trembling to Jesus and *respectfully* lay facedown on the ground before him. As the other people were listening, she explained why she had touched Jesus and how she gotten better immediately. 48 And Jesus said to her, "My dear woman, because you believed *that I could heal you*, you are now well. Now go on your way, and may God's peace be with you."

49 While Jesus was still speaking *to the woman*, a man from Jairus' house came and said to Jairus, "Your daughter has died. So do not take up any more of the teacher's time." 50 But when Jesus heard that, he said to Jairus, "Do not be afraid. Just believe *in me*, and she will live again." 51 When he arrived outside the house, Jesus did not allow anyone to go in the house with him except for Peter, John, and James, and the girl's father and mother. 52 And all the people there were loudly demonstrating how sad they were that the girl had died. But Jesus said to them, "Stop crying! She is not dead! She is only sleeping!" 53 And the people laughed at him because they knew that the girl was dead. 54 But Jesus took hold of her hand and called *to her*, saying, "Child, get up!" 55 And immediately she came back to life and she got up. Jesus told them to give her something to eat. 56 And her parents were amazed, but Jesus told them not to tell anyone else *yet* what had happened.

9 Then Jesus called together his 12 representatives and gave them the right and power to drive out all kinds of demons and to heal *people's* diseases. 2 He sent them out to announce *the good news about* how God would rule as king. He told them to heal people who were sick. 3 *Before they left,* he said to them, "Do not take anything with you for your journey. Do not take a walking stick or a traveler's bag or food or money. Do not bring an extra tunic. 4 Whatever house you enter, stay in that house until you leave that area. 5 If the people in any town do not welcome you, you should not stay there. Instead, leave that town and, as you go, shake its dust off your feet. That will be a warning to them *for rejecting you*." 6 Then Jesus' disciples left and traveled through many

[a] Scholars are divided whether the phrase*[She] had spent all her money* should be included here.

villages. Everywhere they went, they talked to people about the good news from God, and they healed sick people.

7 Herod, the ruler over the district of Galilee, heard about everything that was happening, and he was perplexed. Some people were saying that John the Baptizer had become alive again. 8 Other people were saying that the prophet Elijah had appeared again. Still others were saying that one of the other prophets from long ago had become alive again. 9 But Herod said, “It cannot be John, because I had his head cut off. So who is this man? I keep hearing such amazing things about him!” And he kept looking for a way to see Jesus.

10 When Jesus’ representatives returned from their trip, they told Jesus everything that they had done. Then he took them aside to go by themselves with him to the town of Bethsaida. 11 But when the crowds learned where Jesus had gone, they followed him there. He welcomed them and spoke to them about how God was going to rule as king. He also healed those who were sick.

12 Now it was getting late in the day, so Jesus’ 12 representatives came to him and said, “Please send this large crowd of people away so that they can go to the surrounding villages and farms to get some food and find places to stay, since we are out here in this isolated place.” 13 But he said to them, “You must give them something to eat!” They replied, “All we have are five small loaves of bread and two small fish. We could never go buy enough food for all these people!” 14 *They said this* because there were about 5,000 men there. Then Jesus said to the disciples, “Have the people sit down in groups. Put about 50 people in each group.” 15 So the disciples did that, and the people all sat down. 16 Then Jesus took the five loaves of bread and the two fish. He looked up toward heaven and praised God for them. Then he divided the bread and fish into pieces and gave them to the disciples for them to distribute to the people. 17 They all ate, and everyone had enough to eat. Then the disciples collected the leftover pieces of food, which filled 12 baskets!

18 One day while Jesus was praying in private, with his disciples nearby, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” 19 They replied, “*Some people say that you are* John the Baptizer, but others say that you are the prophet Elijah, and still others say that you are one of the other prophets from long ago who has come back to life again.” 20 He asked them, “What about you? Who do you say that I am?” Peter replied, “You are the Messiah, who has come from God.” 21 Then Jesus warned them strongly not to tell that to anyone yet. 22 Then he said, “I, the Son of Man, must suffer many things: The elders, chief priests, and teachers of the Jewish laws will reject me and kill me. Then, on the third day after that, I will come back to life again.”

23 Then he said to them all, “If any one of you wants to be my disciple, you must not do only what you want to do. Rather, every day you must be willing to suffer, even to the point of giving up your life. That is how to be my disciple. 24 *You must do that* because those who try to save their own lives will lose them eternally, but those who give up their lives in order to become my disciples will save their lives eternally. 25 After all, how does it benefit you if you gain everything in this world but you then end up losing, or even destroying, your own self? 26 Suppose someone is afraid to say that they believe in me and that they follow my teaching. Then, I, the Son of Man, will say that such a person does not belong to me. This will happen when I come back in my glory and in the glory of God the Father and of the holy angels. 27 But you can be sure of this: Some of you who are standing here now will not die until you see God ruling as king!”

28 About eight days after Jesus said those things, he took Peter, John, and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray *there*. 29 While he was praying, the appearance of his face became very different, and his clothes began to shine brightly. 30 All at once, two *prophets from long ago* were there talking with Jesus. They were Moses and Elijah. 31 These men appeared surrounded in glory. They spoke with Jesus about how he was going to die. This was something that was going to happen soon in Jerusalem. 32 Peter and the other disciples who were with him were very sleepy. But when they woke up fully, they saw how brightly Jesus was shining. They also saw Moses and Elijah standing with him. 33 As Moses and Elijah were starting to leave Jesus, Peter said to him, “Master, it is good for us to be here! We should make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah!” But he really did not realize what he was saying. 34 As he was saying these things, a cloud formed and covered them. The disciples were afraid as the cloud surrounded them. 35 God’s voice spoke to them from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him!” 36 When the voice had finished speaking, *the three disciples saw that* only Jesus was there. They kept all this to themselves. For a long time they did not tell anyone what they had seen.

37 The next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a large crowd of people met Jesus. 38 Suddenly a man from the crowd called out, “Teacher, I plead with you, do something to help my son! He is my only child. 39 Here is what is happening. An evil spirit suddenly seizes him and causes him to scream. It shakes him violently and causes him to foam at the mouth. This spirit hardly ever leaves my child and, when it does, it injures him severely. 40 I pleaded with your disciples to command the evil spirit to come out of him, but they were not able to do it!” 41 In response, Jesus said, “This generation of people does not believe, and so its thinking is corrupt! How much longer must I be with you before you believe?” *Then he said to the boy’s father,* “Bring your son here to me!” 42 While they were bringing the boy to him, the demon threw the boy down to the ground and shook him severely. But Jesus rebuked the evil spirit and healed the boy. Then he returned him to his father. 43 Then all the people there were completely amazed at the great power God had shown.

While they were all still marveling at all the miracles Jesus was doing, he said to his disciples, 44 “Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you, because someone will soon hand me, the Son of Man, over to my enemies.” 45 But the disciples did not understand what he meant by this. God prevented them from understanding it so that they would not know yet what he meant, and they were afraid to ask him about what he had said.

46 Sometime later, the disciples began to argue among themselves about which one of them would be the most important. 47 But Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he brought a young child over and had the child stand beside him. 48 He said to them, “If someone welcomes a little child like this one because of me, it is the same as welcoming me. And if someone welcomes me, it is the same as welcoming God, who sent me. Remember that those among you who seem to be the least important are the ones whom God considers to be most important.”

49 John replied to Jesus, “Master, we saw a man who was using your name to command demons to come out of

people. But we told him to stop doing that, because he was not working closely with you the way we are." 50 But Jesus told John, "Do not stop him from doing that! If someone is not doing something that is harmful to you, then what he is doing is helpful to you!"

51 When it was getting close to the time when God would take him back up to heaven, Jesus firmly resolved to go to Jerusalem. 52 He sent some messengers ahead of him. They traveled on and went into a village in the region of Samaria to try to arrange for him to stay there. 53 But the Samaritans would not let Jesus stay in their village, because he was on his way to Jerusalem. 54 Two of his disciples, James and John, *got angry when they* saw *that the Samaritans were not going to welcome them*. So they asked Jesus, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and destroy these people?" 55 But Jesus turned *to them* and sternly told them they were wrong to say that. 56 So they went to a different village.

57 As Jesus and the disciples were walking along the road, someone said to him, "I will go with you wherever you go!" 58 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes in the ground to live in, and birds have nests, but I, the Son of Man, do not have a home to sleep in!" 59 Jesus said to a different person, "Come with me!" But that person said, "Lord, let me first go home and bury my father." 60 But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead. I want you to go and tell people everywhere that they can have God rule their lives." 61 Someone else said, "Lord, I will come with you and be your disciple, but first let me go home to say goodbye to my family." 62 Jesus said to him, "Anyone who is like a farmer who tries to plow his field while looking behind him is not able to serve God as his ruler."

10 After that, Jesus appointed 72 other disciples *to go and prepare people to hear him*. He sent them out in pairs to go ahead of him to every town and village where he was intending to go himself. 2 He said to them, "Many people are ready to believe in me, but there are only a few of you whom I can send out to help them. So pray to God*, who wants all of those people to believe,* and plead with him for more disciples who can go and help them. 3 Go now, but remember that I am sending you out to tell my message to people who will be hostile to you. 4 Do not bring along any money. Do not bring *a lot of things with you in* a pack. Do not bring *extra shoes*. Do not *stop and* talk with people along the way. 5 Whenever you enter a house, first say to the people who live there, 'May God bless everyone in this house with peace!' 6 If the people who live there desire God's peace, then they will experience the peace you are offering them. But if they do not desire God's peace, then you will experience that peace yourselves. 7 Stay in that same house until you leave that village. Do not move around from one house to another. Eat and drink whatever they provide for you, because a worker deserves to receive payment for his work. 8 If you enter any town and the people there welcome you, eat whatever food they provide for you. 9 Heal the people in that city who are sick. Tell everyone, 'You are seeing close up what it will be like when God rules everywhere as king.' 10 But if you enter any town and the people there do not welcome you, go into its main streets and say, 11 '*As a warning* against you, we will wipe off even the dust that sticks to our feet *as we are leaving your town*. But you must realize that you have seen close up what it will be like when God rules everywhere as king!' 12 I want you to know that at the time when God judges everyone, God will punish the people of that town even more severely than the wicked people who lived long ago in the city of Sodom!

13 How terrible it will be for you people who live in the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida! I say this because I did great miracles while I was in your cities. If I had performed those same miracles in *the ancient cities of* Tyre and Sidon, the *wicked* people who lived there would have been very sorry for their sins. They would have shown this by sitting on the ground wearing coarse clothing and putting ashes on their heads. 14 So when God judges everyone, he will punish you more severely than the wicked people who lived in Tyre and Sidon. 15 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!"

16 *Jesus also said to the disciples,* "Whoever listens to your message is*, in effect,* listening to me. Whoever rejects your message is*, in effect,* rejecting me. And whoever rejects me is*, in effect,* rejecting God who sent me."

17 The 72 people whom Jesus appointed *went and did what he told them to do.* When they returned, they were very joyful. They said, "Lord, even the demons obeyed us when, by your authority, we commanded them to leave people!" 18 Jesus told them, "*While you were away doing that,* I saw Satan lose a position of advantage as suddenly and quickly as lightning comes down! 19 Listen! I have given you the power to defeat evil spirits. I have even given you enough power to defeat our enemy, Satan. Nothing will hurt you at all. 20 But do not *only* rejoice that the evil spirits must obey you. You should rejoice *even more* that God has written your names in heaven*, because that means you will be with God forever*."

21 Right then, the Holy Spirit gave Jesus great joy. He said, "God my Father, you are Lord over everything in heaven and on earth. 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 your truth as readily as little children do. Yes, Father, you have done that because it pleased you to do so. 22 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."

23 Then Jesus said, just to his disciples, "God has given you a great gift by letting you see the things that I am doing! 24 I want you to know that many prophets and kings would have liked 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 liked to hear the things that you have been hearing me say. But they did not get to hear them*, because they lived long ago*."

25 A man who taught Jewish laws was there. He wanted to test Jesus *by asking him a difficult question*. So he stood up and asked, "Teacher, what do I have to do in order to live with God forever?" 26 Jesus said to him, "You have read what Moses wrote in the laws that God gave him. What do those laws say?" 27 The man replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as much as you love yourself." 28 Jesus told him, "You have answered correctly. If you do all that, you will live *with God forever*."

29 But the man wanted to show that God would approve of him. So he said to Jesus, "Which people are my neighbors

whom I should love?" 30 Jesus replied, "One day, a Jewish man was traveling along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Some bandits attacked him. They took away most of the man's clothes and everything else that he had. They beat him until he was almost dead. Then they left him there. 31 It happened that a *Jewish* priest was going along that road. When he saw that man, *instead of helping him,* he passed by on the other side of the road. 32 Similarly, a Levite *who worked in God's temple* also came to that place and saw the man. But he too passed by on the other side of the road. 33 Then a man from the region of Samaria came along that road to where the man was lying. When he saw that man, he pitied him. 34 He went over to him and put some olive oil and wine on his wounds *to help heal them*. He wrapped strips of cloth around the wounds. Then he put the man on his own donkey and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next morning he gave two silver coins to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of this man. If you need to spend more than this amount to care for him, I will pay you back when I return.'" 36 *Then Jesus asked,* "Three people found the man whom the bandits had attacked. Which one of them would you say was a true neighbor to that man?" 37 The teacher of the law replied, "The one who acted mercifully toward him." Jesus said to him, "*That is correct.* So you should go and act like that toward anyone who needs your help."

38 As Jesus and his disciples continued to travel, they entered a certain village. There a woman whose name was Martha invited them to come to her house. 39 Her sister, whose name was Mary, sat near Jesus' feet and listened to what he was teaching. 40 But Martha was worrying about preparing the meal for all of them. She went to Jesus and said, "Lord, my sister has left me to prepare everything by myself. You must know that is not fair. Please tell her to help me!" 41 But Jesus replied to her, "Martha, Martha, you are very worried about many things. 42 But the one thing that is really important *is to listen to what I am teaching*. Because Mary has chosen the best thing to do, I will not tell her to do something else."

11 One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us how to pray. John the Baptist did that for his own disciples, and we would like you to do that for us." 2 He said to them, "When you pray, say *things like this*: 'Father, may all people honor your name as holy. May you soon rule all people everywhere. 3 Please give us the food we need each day. 4 Please forgive us for the wrong things that we have done. We ourselves will forgive people for the wrong things they have done to us. Help us to not sin when something tempts us.'"

5 Then he said to them, "Suppose that one of you goes to the house of a friend at midnight. You *stand outside and* call to him, 'My friend, please lend me three loaves of bread! 6 Another friend of mine who is traveling has just arrived at my house. But I do not have any food ready to serve him!' 7 And suppose that he responds from inside the house, 'Do not bother me! I have already locked the door, and my whole family is in bed. It would be too hard for me to get up and give you something!' 8 I tell you, he may not want to get up and give his friend any food just because he is his friend. But if he keeps on asking, the man inside will certainly get up and give him everything he needs. 9 So I tell you: 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. 10 You should do this because anyone who keeps asking God for the things he needs will receive them. Anyone who seeks those things from God will receive them. If anyone asks God to make things possible for him, God will act on his behalf. 11 Suppose one of you fathers had a son who asked you for a fish to eat. You certainly would not give him a poisonous snake instead! 12 Suppose he asked you for an egg. You certainly would not give him a scorpion instead! 13 Even though you people are sinful, you still know how to give good gifts to your children. So it is even more certain that your Father in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him."

14 One day Jesus was forcing out a demon who was keeping a man from speaking. After Jesus forced the demon out, the man began to talk. This amazed the crowd of people that was there. 15 But some of them said, "It is Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons, who enables this man to force out demons!" 16 Other people there questioned his authority. They demanded that he perform a miracle to prove that God had sent him. 17 But he knew what they were thinking. So he said to them, "If the people in one nation fight against each other, they will destroy their nation. If the people in one household oppose each other, they will destroy their family. 18 Similarly, if Satan and his demons were fighting against each other, his rule over them would certainly not last! I say this because you are saying that I force out demons by the power of the ruler of demons! 19 If it is true that Beelzebul is enabling me to force out demons, it must also be true that he is enabling your disciples to force out demons. *But you know that is not true.* So your own disciples prove that you are wrong. 20 I must actually be forcing out demons by the power of God. This means that God has begun to rule over you."

21 *Jesus continued,* "When a strong man who has many weapons guards his own house, no one can steal the things inside. 22 But when someone else who is stronger attacks that man and subdues him, he takes away the weapons that the man was depending on. Then he can steal anything he wants from that man's house. 23 Anyone who is not supporting me is opposing me. Anyone who is not bringing people to me is sending them away from me."

24 *Then Jesus said,* "An evil spirit might leave someone and wander around in desolate areas looking for someone else to live in. If it does not find anyone there, it may say, 'I am going to go back to the person I used to live in!' 25 So it goes back and finds that the person is like a house that someone has swept clean and put in order*, but which has no one living in it*. 26 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's condition was bad before, and it becomes even worse."

27 When Jesus said that, a woman in the crowd *who was listening* called out to him loudly, "God is pleased with the woman who gave birth to you and who nursed you!" 28 Then he replied, "God is even more pleased with those who hear his message and obey it!"

29 More and more people were coming to join the crowd around Jesus. He said, "The people living at this time are evil people. They want me to do a miracle *to prove that I have come from God*. But the only proof they will see is a miracle like the one that happened to Jonah. 30 Long ago God did a miracle for Jonah to show the people living in the city of Nineveh that he had sent him. In the same way,

God will do a similar miracle for me, the Son of Man, to show the people living now that he has sent me. 31 Long ago the Queen of Sheba traveled a great distance to hear the wise things that Solomon said. Now someone greater than Solomon is right here with you. *But you have not really listened to what I am saying.* Therefore, at the time when God judges all people, she will stand up and condemn the people who are living now. 32 The people who lived in the ancient city of Nineveh turned from their sinful ways when Jonah preached to them. And now I, who am greater than Jonah, have come and preached to you. *But you have not turned from your sinful ways.* Therefore, at the time when God judges all people, the people who lived in Nineveh will stand up and condemn the people who are living now.

33 People who light a lamp do not hide it or put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so that those who enter the room can see the light. 34 Your eye lets light into your body. If your eye is working right, then your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is not working right, then your body will not get any light. 35 Therefore, be careful not to think that your eye is working right and letting in light if it is actually not working right and not letting in any light. 36 So if light is getting into every part of your body, so that no part of it is in the dark, then all of your body will be full of light. Bright light will shine all over you inside, just as the bright light of a lamp shines all over you outside."

37 After Jesus finished saying those things, a Pharisee invited him to eat a meal with him. So Jesus went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table to eat. 38 The Pharisee was surprised when he saw that Jesus did not ritually wash his hands first before eating. 39 Jesus said to him, "You Pharisees wash the outside of cups and dishes before you eat, but within yourselves you are very greedy and wicked. 40 You foolish people! Surely you know that God not only made the outside, but also made the inside! 41 *Instead of worrying about dishes being ritually clean, be merciful and* give whatever is inside the dishes to people in need. Then both the inside and outside of you will be acceptable to God.

42 But how terrible it will be for you Pharisees! You carefully give to God a tenth of all you have, including even the herbs that you grow in your gardens. But then you do not show God's love or fairness toward others. You should make sure that you do that, in addition to giving to God. 43 How terrible it will be for you Pharisees, because you like to sit in the most important seats in the synagogues, and you like people to greet you *with special honor* in the marketplaces. 44 How terrible it will be for you, because you are like unmarked graves that people walk over without realizing it and so become ceremonially unclean."

45 One of the teachers of the Jewish laws who were there complained to Jesus, "Teacher, when you say things like that, you are criticizing us too!" 46 But Jesus responded, "How terrible it will also be for you who are teachers of the Jewish laws! I say this because you tell people to follow so many rules, yet you will not do even the smallest thing to help them. 47 How terrible it will be for you, because you construct buildings to mark the graves of the prophets, but your ancestors are the ones who killed them! 48 So when you build these buildings, you are declaring that you approve of what your ancestors did when they killed the prophets. 49 So God, who is very wise, also said, 'I will send prophets and messengers to guide my people. But they will cause them to suffer greatly. They will even kill some of them.' 50 As a result, the people living at this time will be punished for the murder of all the prophets whom people have killed since the world was created. 51 They will be punished for every murder from that of *Adam's son* Abel*, whose brother Cain killed him,* right through to the murder of *the prophet* Zechariah, whom the king's agents killed *in the temple* between the altar and the holy place. 52 How terrible it will be for you teachers of the Jewish laws. You are keeping people from knowing about God! You do not know God yourselves, and you make things difficult for other people who want to know God better."

53 *After Jesus finished saying those things,* he left the Pharisee's house. Then the teachers of the Jewish laws and the Pharisees began to act in a very hostile way toward him. They questioned him intensely about many things. 54 They kept listening for him to say something wrong so that they could accuse him of false teaching.

12 Meanwhile, many thousands of people gathered *around Jesus*. There were so many that they were stepping on each other. The first thing he said to his disciples was, "Be careful that you do not become like the Pharisees, who act religious in public but do evil things in secret. 2 It is useless for people to try to keep their sins a secret. Someday God will let everyone know everything people are trying to hide. 3 Someday people will hear publicly everything you have said privately. Someday someone will shout for everyone to hear what you have whispered in your room.

4 My friends, listen carefully! Do not be afraid of people. They can kill you, but they cannot do anything more to you after that! 5 I will tell you whom you should truly be afraid of. You should be afraid of God. Not only does he have the right to cause people to die, he also has the right to throw them into hell afterward! Yes, I tell you, God is the one you should truly be afraid of! 6 Think about the sparrows. *They have so little value that* you can buy five of them for only two small coins. And yet God never forgets any of them! 7 God even knows how many hairs there are on your head. Do not be afraid, because you are more valuable *to God* than many sparrows.

8 I tell you also that if people tell others that they are my disciples, then I, the Son of Man, will say to God's angels that those people are my disciples. 9 But if they tell others that they are not my disciples, then I will say to God's angels that those people are not my disciples. 10 I also tell you that if people say bad things about me, the Son of Man, God will forgive them for that. But if people say bad things about the Holy Spirit, God will not forgive them for that. 11 So when people bring you into the synagogues *to question you before the religious leaders there* and to other people who have power in the country, do not worry about how you will answer them or about what you should say, 12 because the Holy Spirit will tell you at that very time what you should say."

13 Then one of the people in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide our father's property with me!" 14 But Jesus replied to him, "Man, no one made me a judge to settle arguments that people have about property!" 15 Then he said to the whole crowd, "Be careful not to be greedy in any way! What matters about a person's life is not how many things he owns."

16 Then Jesus told the crowd this story: "The lands of a certain rich man produced abundant crops. 17 He thought to himself, 'I do not know what to do, because I do not have any place *big enough* to store all my crops!' 18 Then he thought to himself, 'I know what I will do! I will tear down my grain

bins and build larger ones! Then I can store all my grain and other things in the big new bins. 19 Then I will say to myself, "Now I have stored up enough things to last many years. So I will take life easy. I will eat and drink and be happy"' 20 But God said to him, 'You foolish man! Tonight you will die! Then all the things you have saved up for yourself will belong to someone else, not to you!'"

21 Then Jesus ended this illustration by saying, "That is what will happen to those who store up things just for themselves and do not value the things that God considers valuable."

22 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Here is something you should learn from the story. Do not worry about whether you will have enough food to eat to stay alive or enough clothes to wear to stay warm. 23 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. 24 Think about the birds. They do not plant seeds, and they do not harvest crops. They do not have rooms or buildings in which to store crops, but God provides food for them. And you are certainly much more valuable than birds. 25 None of you can add even a minute to his life by worrying about it! 26 So since you cannot even do that small thing, you certainly should not worry about anything else. 27 Think about the way that flowers grow. They do not work to earn money, and they do not make their own clothes. But I tell you that King Solomon, who *lived long ago and* wore glorious clothes, never dressed as beautifully as a single flower. 28 God makes the 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. 29 As for you, do not wonder about what you will eat and drink, and do not keep worrying *about those things*. 30 While the people who do not know God all worry about such things, *you can be confident that* your Father in heaven knows that you need them. 31 Instead, concentrate on what you can do for the kingdom of God. When you do, you can trust God to provide everything you need.

32 So you should not be afraid, my friends. Your Father in heaven wants you to be part of his kingdom *and receive all of its benefits*. 33 So sell the things you own and give the money to people who need food or clothing or a place to live. Get yourselves wallets that do not wear out. I mean store up treasure in heaven where it will always be safe. There no thief can steal anything and no moths will destroy your clothing. 34 After all, whatever it is that you treasure, that is what you will think about and spend your time on.

35 *Always* be *ready for doing God's work,* like people who have put on their work clothes and are keeping the lights on all night. 36 Be *ready for me to return,* like servants who are waiting for their master to return after being at a wedding feast. They are waiting to open the door for him as soon as he arrives and knocks at the door. 37 It will be very good for those servants if they are awake when their master returns. Let me tell you this: He will reward them by dressing like a servant, telling them to sit down, and serving them a meal. 38 Even if he comes home late in the evening or in the middle of the night, if he finds that his servants are awake and ready for him, he will be very pleased with them. 39 And I want you to consider this: If the owner of a house knew that a thief was coming, and at what time, he would stay awake and not let the thief break into his house. 40 So be ready, because I, the Son of Man, will come again at a time when you do not expect me."

41 Peter asked, "Lord, are you giving this illustration only for us, your disciples? Or is it for the crowd too?" 42 Jesus replied, "I am saying it for everyone who is like a faithful and wise servant who is a manager in his master's house. His master puts him in charge of his other servants, to make sure they get their food at the proper time. 43 If his master comes home and sees that he is doing that work, he will reward that servant. 44 Let me tell you this: The master will put that servant in charge of all he owns. 45 But that servant who was put in charge might say to himself, 'My master is going to be away for a long time.' Then he might start to beat the other servants. He might also start to eat and drink a lot and get drunk. 46 If he does that, his master might return at a time when the servant does not expect him. Then his master will punish him severely and assign him a place with those who do not serve him faithfully. 47 The servant who knew what his master wanted but did not get ready and do it will be severely punished. 48 But every servant who did not know what his master wanted him to do, and then did something wrong, will only get a mild punishment. The master will expect much from all servants to whom he has given much. And the master will expect even more from servants whom he has entrusted with many responsibilities.

49 I came to stir up spiritual passions in people. I wish that they were already acting on them! 50 Soon I must go through terrible suffering. I will continue to be distressed until I finish my suffering. 51 You should know that I did not come so that people would live together peacefully. No, you must understand that instead, people will take sides for and against me. 52 Be prepared, because this is what is going to happen. In a family of five people, some will believe in me and some will not. Three family members will join together against the other two. 53 Family members will conflict. A father will oppose his son, or a son will oppose his father. A mother will oppose her daughter, or a daughter will oppose her mother. A mother-in-law will oppose her daughter-in-law, or a daughter-in-law will oppose her mother-in-law."

54 He also said to the crowds, "When you see a dark cloud forming in the west, you immediately say 'It is going to rain!' and that is what happens. 55 When the wind blows from the south, you say, 'It is going to be a very hot day!' and you are right. 56 You hypocrites! By observing the clouds and the wind, you are able to discern what is happening regarding the weather. You should be able to discern what God is doing at this present time!

57 Each of you ought to decide for yourselves what is right! 58 Here is one thing you should do. You should try to settle things with someone who has accused you while you are still on the way to the court. If he forces you to go to the judge, the judge could decide that you are guilty and turn you over to the court officer. Then that officer will put you in prison. 59 I tell you that if you go to prison, you will never get out of there until you are able to pay every bit of what the judge says you owe."

13 At that time, some people who were there in the crowd told Jesus about what had recently happened to some Galileans. Pilate, the Roman governor, had ordered soldiers to kill the Galileans while they were offering sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem. 2 Jesus replied to them, "Do you think that this happened to those people from Galilee because they were more sinful than all the other Galileans? 3 I assure

you, that was not the reason! Instead, God will similarly punish all of you if you do not turn from your sinful behavior. 4 Or what about those 18 people who died when the tower in *the neighborhood of* Siloam fell on them? Do you think that this happened to them because they were worse sinners than everyone else in Jerusalem? 5 I assure you, that was not the reason! But instead, you need to realize that God will similarly punish all of you if you do not turn from your sinful behavior!"

6 Then Jesus told them this story: "A man planted a fig tree in his garden. *Each year* he came to pick the figs, but there were *always* none on it. 7 Then he said to the gardener, 'Look at this tree! I have been looking for fruit on it every year for the past three years, but there have been no figs. Cut it down! It is just using up the nutrients in the soil for nothing!' 8 But the gardener replied, 'Sir, leave it here for another year. I will dig around it and fertilize it. 9 If it has figs on it next year, we can allow it to keep growing! But if it does not bear any fruit by then, you can cut it down.'"

10 On one Jewish day of rest, Jesus was teaching people in one of the synagogues. 11 There was a woman there whom an evil spirit had crippled for 18 years. She was always bent over. She could not stand up straight. 12 When Jesus saw her, he called her over to him. He said to her, "Woman, I have healed you of this illness!" 13 He put his hands on her. Immediately she stood up straight and began praising God! 14 But the leader of the synagogue was angry because Jesus had healed her on the Jewish rest day. So he said to the people, "There are six days each week on which our laws permit people to work. If you need healing, those are the days to come to the synagogue for someone to heal you. Do not come on our day of rest!" 15 Then Jesus replied to him, "You and your fellow religious leaders are hypocrites! Each of you *also works on the day of rest sometimes! For example, you* untie your ox or donkey to lead it from the stall to a place where it can drink water. 16 This woman is a Jew, descended from Abraham! But Satan has kept her crippled for 18 years, as though he had tied her up! Certainly you would agree that it is right that I free her from this disabling disease, even if I do it on a day of rest!" 17 After he said that, his enemies were ashamed of themselves. But all the other people were happy about all the wonderful things he was doing.

18 Then he said, "I want to explain what it is like when God rules as king. I will give you a picture to help you understand. 19 It is like a tiny mustard seed that a man planted in his field. It grew until it became big, like a tree. It was so big that birds built nests in its branches."

20 Then again he said, "I will tell you in another (way what) it is like when God rules. 21 It is like a little bit of yeast that a woman mixed with about 25 kilograms of flour. That small amount of yeast made the whole batch of dough swell up."

22 Jesus continued traveling toward Jerusalem. He stopped in all the towns and villages along the way and taught the people. 23 Someone asked him, "Lord, will God only save a few people?" Jesus replied so that everyone there could hear, 24 "You need to try hard to enter, because it is very difficult. I tell you that many people will try to get in, but they will not be able to. 25 After the owner of the house gets up and locks the door, you will stand outside and you will knock on the door. And you will beg the owner and say to him, 'Lord, open the door for us!' But he will reply, 'No, I will not open it, because I do not know you, and I do not know where you are from!' 26 Then you will say, '*You must have forgotten that* we ate meals with you, and you taught us in the streets of our towns!' 27 But he will say, 'I tell you again, I do not know where you are from. You are all wicked people! Get away from here!'" 28 *Then Jesus continued by saying,* "You will see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob *in the distance*. All the prophets who lived long ago will also be there where God rules everything as king. But you will be outside, crying and grinding your teeth in sorrow! 29 But inside there will be people from every part of the world*, including many non-Jewish people*. They will all celebrate together where God rules everything as king. 30 Think about this: Some people who seem the least important now will be the most important then, and others who seem important now will be the least important then."

31 That same day, some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, "Leave this area, because the ruler Herod Antipas wants to kill you!" 32 He replied to them, "Go and tell that cunning man*, who thinks he can hurt me but who really cannot,* this message from me: 'Listen! I am expelling demons and performing miracles now, and I will continue doing so for a short time. After that, I will finish my work.' 33 But I must also continue my trip to Jerusalem during the coming days, since *the Jewish leaders have always acted as if* it is not appropriate to kill a prophet in a place other than Jerusalem.

34 Oh, people of Jerusalem! You killed the prophets who lived 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 gather you together to protect you, as a hen gathers her young chicks under her wings. But you did not want me to do that. 35 Now look! God will no longer protect you, people of Jerusalem. I will also tell you this: I will enter your city only once more. After that, you will not see me until the time when I return, and then you will say about me, 'May God bless this man who comes with God's authority!'"

14 One day, which was a day of rest, Jesus went to eat at the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees. *This leader had invited other Pharisees to the same meal.* They were all watching Jesus carefully *to try to find grounds to accuse him*. 2 Right there in front of Jesus was a man who had a disease that caused his arms and legs to be very swollen. 3 Jesus asked the experts in Jewish law and the Pharisees who were present, "Is it permitted in the law to heal people on the day of rest, or not?" 4 They did not reply. So Jesus put his hands on the man and healed him. Then he told him he could go. 5 And he said to the others there, "If one of you had a son or an ox that fell into a well on the day of rest, you would pull him out immediately." 6 Again, they were not able to answer him.

7 Jesus noticed that the people who had been invited to the meal were choosing to sit in the places where important people usually sit. So he gave this advice to them. 8 "When someone invites one of you to a wedding feast, do not sit in a place where important people sit. It may be that he has invited a person who is more important than you to the feast. 9 When the host who invited both of you sees where you are each sitting, he will say to you, 'Let this person have your seat!' Then you will have to take the least important seat, and you will be ashamed. 10 Instead, when someone invites you to a feast, go and sit in the least important seat. Then when the host who invited everyone comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, come sit in a better seat!' Then all the people

who are eating with you will see that he is honoring you.
11 For God will humble those who exalt themselves, and he
will exalt those who humble themselves."
12 Jesus also said to the Pharisee who had invited him to
the meal, "When you invite people to a midday or evening
meal, do not only invite your friends, relatives, or rich
neighbors, since they will later repay you by inviting you for
a meal. 13 Instead, when you give a feast, invite poor people,
crippled people, lame people or blind people. 14 If you do
that, God will reward you, because they will not be able to
repay you. You can be sure that God will pay you back at
the time when he causes righteous people to become alive
again."
15 One of those who were eating with him heard him say
that. He said to Jesus, "God has truly blessed everyone who
will get to celebrate where God rules everything as king!"
16 Jesus replied to him, "One time a man decided to prepare
a large feast. He invited many people to come. 17 When it
was time for the feast, he sent his servant to tell those whom
he had invited, 'Come now, because everything is ready!'
18 But when the servant did that, all of the people whom he
had invited began to say why they could not come. The first
man to whom the servant went said, 'I have just bought a
field, and I must go there and see it. Please ask your master
to forgive me for not coming!' 19 Another person said, 'I have
just bought five pairs of oxen, and I must go to examine
them. Please ask your master to forgive me for not coming!'
20 Another person said, 'I have just gotten married, so I cannot
come.' 21 So the servant returned to his master and reported
what everyone had said. The owner of the house was angry
and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and
alleys of the city and find poor and crippled and blind and
lame people, and bring them here into my house!' 22 *After*
the servant *went out and did that, he came back and* said,
'Sir, I have done what you told me to do, but there is still
room for more people.' 23 So his master said to him, 'Then
go outside the city. Search for people along the highways.
Search also along the narrow roads with hedges. Strongly
urge the people in those places to come to my house. I want
it to be full of people! 24 Moreover I tell you this, those men
whom I invited first will not get to enjoy my feast*, because
they refused to come*.'"
25 A large crowd of people was traveling with Jesus. He
turned toward the people and said to them, 26 "If anyone
comes to me who loves his father and mother and wife and
children and brothers and sisters more than he loves me, he
can not be my disciple. He must even love me more than
he loves his own life! 27 Whoever does not carry his own
cross and does not obey me cannot be my disciple. 28 After
all, if one of you wanted to build a tower, you would first
sit down and determine how much it would cost. That way
you would know whether you had enough money to finish
it. 29 Otherwise, if you laid the foundation and were not able
to finish the rest of the tower, everyone who saw it would
make fun of you. 30 They would say, 'This man started to
build a tower, but he was not able to finish it!' 31 Or suppose
a king had 10,000 soldiers in his army. And suppose another
king who had 20,000 soldiers was coming to attack him.
Before sending his army out to battle, that first king would
certainly sit down with his advisors to determine whether
he could defeat the other king's army. 32 Suppose he decided
his army could not defeat the other army. Then he would
send messengers to the other king while his army was still
far away. He would tell the messengers to ask, 'What must
I do to have peace with you?' 33 So, similarly, if any one of
you does not first decide that you are willing to give up all
that you have, you cannot be my disciple."
34 *Jesus also said,* "*You are like* salt*, which* is very useful.
But if salt were to lose its saltiness, no one could ever make
it taste salty again. 35 *If salt does not taste salty anymore,* it
is no longer any good even for the soil or the manure heap.
People just throw it away. You should think carefully about
what you just heard me say!"

15 Now, many tax collectors and other people whom
the religious leaders considered to be sinners kept
coming to Jesus to listen to him teach. 2 *When* the Pharisees
and teachers of the Jewish laws *saw this, they* began to
grumble. They said, "This man welcomes sinners and even
eats with them." *They thought Jesus was defiling himself by
doing that.* 3 So Jesus told them this parable: 4 "Suppose that
one of you had 100 sheep and you lost one of them. Certainly
you would leave the 99 other sheep in the wilderness and
go search for the lost sheep until you had found it. 5 When
you found it, you would joyfully put it on your shoulders to
carry it home. 6 Then when you arrived home, you would
call together your friends and neighbors and say to them:
'Be joyful with me, because I have found my sheep that was
lost!' 7 You should know that, in a similar way, there is great
joy among those in heaven when one sinner repents from
his sins. That joy is greater than their joy over many people
who are already right with God and do not need to repent.
8 Or suppose that a woman had ten valuable silver coins
but lost one of them. Certainly she would light a lamp
and sweep the floor and search carefully until she found
it. 9 When she found it, she would call together her friends
and neighbors and say to them, 'Be very happy with me,
because I have found the coin that I lost!' 10 I tell you that,
in a similar way, there is much joy among the angels of God
when one sinner repents from his sins."
11 Then Jesus continued and said, "There once was a man
who had two sons. 12 One day the younger son said to his
father, 'Father, give me now the share of your property that
I would otherwise have received when you died.' So the
father divided his property between his two sons. 13 Only a
few days later, the younger son gathered together all that
he owned and traveled to a country far away. There in
that country he spent all his money foolishly in wasteful,
immoral living. 14 After he had spent all his money, there
was a severe famine throughout that country. Soon he did
not have anything left to live on. 15 So he went to a man
who lived in that country and asked him to hire him. So the
man sent him out to his fields to feed his pigs. 16 *He became
so hungry that* he wished he could eat the bean pods that
the pigs ate, yet no one gave him anything. 17 Finally he
began to think clearly about how foolish he had been, and
he said to himself: 'All of my father's hired servants have
more than enough food to eat, but here I am dying because
I do not have anything to eat! 18 So I will leave here and go
back to my father. I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned
against God and against you. 19 I do not deserve to have you
consider me your son any more. Please let me work for you
as one of your hired servants."' 20 So he left there and started
traveling back to his father's house. But while he was still a
great distance from the house, his father saw him and felt
deep compassion for him. He ran to his son and embraced
him and kissed him on the cheek. 21 His son said to him,
'Father, I have sinned against God and against you. So I do

not deserve to have you consider me your son any more.'
22 But his father said to his servants; 'Go quickly and bring
my best robe and put it on my son. Also put a ring on his
finger and shoes on his feet! 23 And bring the calf that we
have fattened for a special occasion and kill it, so that we
can eat it and celebrate! 24 We need to celebrate because this
son of mine was like a dead man, but he is now alive again!
He was like a lost person, but we have found him again!' So
they all began to celebrate.
25 *While all that was happening,* the father's older son
was out working in the fields. *After he finished working,* he
headed home. As he was getting close to the house, he heard
people playing music and dancing. 26 He called for one of
the servants and asked what was happening. 27 The servant
said to him, 'Your brother has come home. Your father told
us to kill the fattened calf to celebrate because your brother
returned safe and healthy.' 28 But the older brother was angry
and did not want to join the celebration. So his father came
out and pleaded with him to come in. 29 But he replied to
his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have worked as hard
as a slave for you. I have always obeyed everything you
told me to do. But you have never given me so much as a
young goat that I could use to host a feast for my friends.
30 But now that this son of yours has come back home, after
wasting all your money on prostitutes, you have told your
servants to kill the fattened calf for a celebration!' 31 But his
father said to him, 'My son, you are always with me, and all
that I own is yours. 32 But it is right for us to celebrate and
rejoice, because it is as though your brother was dead and
is alive again! It is as though he was lost and we have him
found again!'"

16 Jesus also said to his disciples, "Once there was a
rich man who had a household manager. One day
someone informed the rich man that the manager was doing
such a bad job that the rich man was losing lots of money.
2 So he called the manager to come to him and said to him,
'What I hear you have been doing is terrible! Give me a final
written report of the things you have been managing, because
you will no longer be my household manager!' 3 Then the
manager said to himself, 'My master is going to dismiss me
from being his manager, so I have to think of what to do.
I am not strong enough to work by digging ditches, and I
am ashamed to beg for money. 4 I know what I will do so
that people will take me into their houses *and provide for
me* after he dismisses me from my management work!' 5 So
he asked everyone who owed his master money to come to
him one by one. He asked the first one, 'How much do you
owe my master?' 6 The man replied, '3,000 liters of olive
oil.' The manager said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down, and
quickly change it to 1, 500 liters!' 7 He said to another man,
'How much do you owe?' The man replied, '1,000 baskets of
wheat.' The manager said to him, 'Take your bill and change
it to 800 baskets!' 8 *When* the master *heard what his manager
had done, he* praised the dishonest manager for being so
clever. The truth is, the people who belong to this world are
more clever than the people who belong to God in how they
relate to those around them. 9 I tell you, use the money you
have in this world to make friends for yourselves. Then when
that money is gone, those friends will welcome you into
their homes, which will last forever. 10 People who faithfully
manage small amounts of money will also be honest with
much greater amounts. People who are dishonest in the way
they manage small amounts of money will also be dishonest
with much greater amounts. 11 So if you have not faithfully
handled the money *God has given you* in this world, he will
certainly not trust you with the true riches *of heaven*. 12 If you
have not faithfully managed property that belongs to other
people, you should not expect anyone to give you property
of your own. 13 No servant is able to serve two different
masters at the same time. If he tried to do that, he would
hate one of them and love the other one, or he would be
loyal to one of them and despise the other one. You cannot
devote your life to serving God if you are also devoting your
life to acquiring money and other material possessions."
14 When the Pharisees *who were there* heard what Jesus
was teaching, they made fun of him because they loved to
acquire money. 15 But Jesus said to them, "You try to make
other people think that you are righteous, but God knows
what you are really like. Keep in mind that God considers
to be detestable many things that people praise as very
important.
16 The laws that God gave Moses and the things that the
prophets wrote were in effect until John the Baptizer came.
Since then, I have been preaching the good news about how
God will rule as king. Many people *are accepting my message
and* are very eagerly trying to become part of the kingdom of
God. 17 All of God's laws, even those that seem insignificant,
are more permanent than heaven and earth.
18 Any man who divorces his wife and marries another
woman is committing adultery, and any man who marries a
woman whose husband has divorced her is also committing
adultery."
19 *Jesus also said,* "Once there was a rich man who wore
expensive purple and linen clothes. Every day he gave lavish
feasts. 20 And *every day* people laid a poor man whose name
was Lazarus at the gate of the rich man's house. Lazarus'
body was covered with sores. 21 *He was so hungry that* he
wanted to eat the scraps of food that fell from the table
where the rich man ate. *While he was lying there,* dogs came
and licked his sores. 22 Eventually the poor man died. Then
the angels took him to be with *his ancestor* Abraham. The
rich man also died, and people buried his body. 23 In the
place of the dead, the rich man was suffering great pain. He
looked up and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus sitting
very close to Abraham. 24 So the rich man shouted, 'Father
Abraham, I am suffering very much in this fire! So please
pity me and send Lazarus here so that he can dip his finger
in water and touch my tongue to cool it!' 25 But Abraham
replied, 'Child, remember that while you were alive on earth
you enjoyed many good things. But Lazarus was miserable.
Now he is happy here, and you are suffering. 26 Besides
that, God has placed a huge ravine between you and us. So
those who want to go from here to you there are not able
to. Furthermore, no one can cross from there to where we
are, either.' 27 Then the rich man said, 'If that is so, Father
Abraham, I ask you to send Lazarus to my family home. 28 I
have five brothers *who live there*. Tell him to warn them so
that they do not also come to this place where we suffer
great pain!' 29 But Abraham replied, '*No, I will not do that
because* your brothers have what Moses and the prophets
wrote long ago. They should obey what they wrote!' 30 But
the rich man replied, 'No, Father Abraham*, that will not be
enough*! But if someone from those who have died goes back
to them and warns them, they will turn from their sinful
behavior.' 31 Abraham said to him, 'So they would not obey
what Moses and the prophets wrote. Then it would not help
even if someone from among the people who have died went

and warned them. They would still not believe that they should turn from their sinful behavior.'"

17 Jesus said to his disciples, "Things that tempt people to sin will certainly happen. But how terrible it will be for anyone who causes those things to happen! 2 It would be better for that person if someone fastened a huge stone around his neck and threw him into the sea than if he were to cause someone to sin whose faith was weak. 3 Be careful how you act. If another believer sins, you should rebuke him. If he says that he is sorry for having sinned and asks you to forgive him, then you should forgive him. 4 Even if he sins against you seven times in one day, if he comes to you each time and says, 'I am sorry for what I did,' you must continue forgiving him."

5 Then the representatives said to Jesus, "Give us more faith!" 6 Jesus replied, "Even if you had faith that was no bigger than this tiny mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Pull yourself out of the ground, roots and all, and plant yourself in the sea,' and it would obey you!"

7 *Jesus also said,* "Suppose that one of you had a servant who was plowing your fields or taking care of your sheep. After he came into the house from the field, you would not say, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat!' 8 Instead, you would say to him, 'Prepare a meal for me! Then put on your serving clothes and serve it to me so that I can eat and drink! Afterwards you can eat and drink.' 9 You would not thank your servant just for doing the work that he had been told to do! 10 Similarly, when you have done everything that God has told you to do, you should say, 'We are only God's servants. We do not deserve to have you thank us. We have only done the things that he told us to do.'"

11 As Jesus and his disciples were walking along the road to Jerusalem, they were going through the area between the regions of Samaria and Galilee. 12 As Jesus entered a village, ten lepers came toward him, but they stood at some distance away. 13 They called out, "Jesus, Master, please have pity on us!" 14 When Jesus saw them, he said to them, "Go and have the priests examine you." So they went, and on the way, their leprosy disappeared. 15 Then one of them, when he saw that he no longer had leprosy, went back, praising God loudly. 16 *He came to Jesus and* he lay down on the ground with his face at Jesus' feet, and he thanked him. This man was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus said, "I healed ten lepers! I would have expected the other nine to come back as well! 18 This foreign man was the only one who returned to thank God. None of the others came back!" 19 Then he said to the man, "Get up and go on your way. God has healed you because you trusted in me."

20 One day some Pharisees asked Jesus, "When will God begin to rule everyone?" He replied, "That will not happen with signs that people can recognize if they watch for them. 21 People will not be able to say, 'Look! God is ruling here!' or 'God is ruling there!' *Contrary to what you think,* God has already begun to rule within you."

22 Jesus said to his disciples, "There will be a time when you will want to see me, the Son of Man, ruling powerfully. But you will not see that. 23 People will say to you, 'Look, the Messiah is over there!' or they will say, 'Look, he is here!' *When they say that,* do not follow them. 24 For when the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other*, everyone can see it*. Similarly, when I, the Son of Man, come back again, everyone will see me. 25 But before that happens, I must suffer in many ways, and people will reject me. 26 But when I, the Son of Man, come again, people will be doing things just like people were doing at the time when Noah lived. 27 At that time people ate and drank *as usual*, and they got married *as usual*, up until the day when Noah and his family entered the big boat. But then the flood came and destroyed all those who were not in the boat. 28 Similarly, when Lot lived *in the city of Sodom*, people *there* ate and drank *as usual*. They bought things and they sold things. They planted crops and they built houses *as usual*. 29 But on the day that Lot left Sodom, fire and burning sulfur came down from the sky and destroyed all those who had stayed in the city. 30 Similarly, when I, the Son of Man, return to earth, people will be unprepared. 31 On that day, those who are outside their houses, with all the things that they own inside the houses, must not take the time to go inside and get them. Similarly, those who are out working in a field must not come back home to get anything. *They must flee quickly.* 32 Remember what happened to Lot's wife! 33 Anyone who continues in his own way of living will die. But anyone who leaves his old way of living *for my sake* will live forever. 34 I tell you this: On the night when I return, there will be two people sleeping in one bed. God will take the one who believes in me and leave the other one behind. 35 Two women will be grinding grain together. God will take one of them and leave the other one behind." 36 [a] ["There will be two in the field; one will be taken and the other left."] 37 His disciples said to him, "Lord, where will this happen?" He replied to them, "Wherever there is a dead body, the vultures will gather to eat it."

18 Jesus told his disciples another story to teach them that they should pray continually and not become discouraged *if God did not immediately answer their prayers*. 2 He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not revere God and did not care about people. 3 There was a widow in that city who kept coming to that judge, saying, 'Please get justice for me against the man who is opposing me in court.' 4 For a long time the judge refused to help her. But later, he said to himself, 'I do not revere God and I do not care about people. 5 But this widow keeps bothering me! So I will judge her case and make sure she is treated fairly. I am concerned that if I do not do that, she will exhaust me by continually coming to me!'" 6 Then Jesus said, "Think carefully about what the unjust judge said. 7 *Even more* certainly will God*, who is just,* bring about justice for his chosen people, who pray earnestly to him all day long! And he is always patient with them. 8 I tell you, God will quickly bring about justice for his chosen ones! Nevertheless when I, the Son of Man, come back to earth, there will still be many people who do not believe in me."

9 Then Jesus also told the following story to some people who thought they were righteous and who looked down on other people. 10 *He said,* "Two men went up to the temple in Jerusalem to pray. One of the men was a Pharisee. The other man was someone who collected taxes from the people for the Roman government. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself in this way, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like other people. Some steal money from others. Some treat others unjustly. Some commit adultery. I do not do any of those things. And I am certainly not like this sinful

[a] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 36.

tax collector who cheats people! 12 I fast on two days during
every week, and I give ten percent of all that I earn to the
temple!' 13 But the tax collector stood far away from the
other people in the temple courtyard. He would not even
look up toward heaven. Instead, he beat on his chest and
said, 'O God, please forgive me, because I am a terrible
sinner!'" 14 Then Jesus said, "I tell you that as they left to
go home, God had forgiven the tax collector, but God had
not forgiven the Pharisee. This is because God will humble
everyone who exalts himself, and God will exalt everyone
who humbles himself."

15 One day people were bringing even their babies to
Jesus so that he would put his hands on them and bless
them. When the disciples saw this, they told them not to
do that. 16 But Jesus called for the children to be brought
to him. He said, "Let the little children come to me! Do not
stop them, because it is *humble and trusting* people like these
children who let God rule their lives. 17 Indeed, I say to you
that whoever will not humbly and trustingly let God rule
over his life will not accept God's rule at all."

18 Once a Jewish leader asked Jesus, "Good teacher, what
must I do in order to have everlasting life?" 19 Jesus said to
him, "Why do you call me good? God is the only one who
is truly good!

20 *In answer to your question, certainly* you know the
commandments *that God gave to Moses for us to obey*: 'Do
not commit adultery. Do not murder anyone. Do not steal.
Do not give a false report. Honor your father and mother.'"
21 The man said, "I have obeyed all those commandments
ever since I was young." 22 When Jesus heard him say that,
he replied to him, "You still need to do one more thing. Sell
all that you own. Then give the money to people who have
very little to live on. The result will be that you will have
spiritual riches in heaven. Then come and be my disciple!"
23 The man became very sad when he heard that, because
he was extremely rich. 24 When Jesus looked at the man and
said, "It is very difficult for those who are wealthy to let
God rule over them. 25 In fact, it is easier for a camel to go
through the eye of a needle than for rich people to let God
rule their lives." 26 Those who heard Jesus say that replied,
"Then it seems that God will not consider that anyone should
have eternal life!" 27 But Jesus said, "What is impossible for
people is possible for God." 28 Then Peter said, "What about
us? We have left everything we had in order to become your
disciples." 29 Jesus said to them, "I can assure you that those
who have left their homes, their wives, their brothers, their
parents, or their children in order to let God rule over them
30 will receive in this life many times as much as they left
behind and, in the coming age, they will receive everlasting
life."

31 Jesus took his 12 representatives to a place by
themselves. He said to them, "Listen carefully! We are
on our way to Jerusalem. While we are there, everything
that the prophets wrote long ago about me, the Son of Man,
will happen. 32 This will happen when my enemies turn me
over to the authorities who are not Jews. They will mock
me, treat me with disdain, and spit on me. 33 They will whip
me and then they will kill me. But two days later I will
become alive again." 34 But the disciples did not understand
any of those things that he said. God prevented them from
recognizing their significance, so they did not know what
Jesus meant by what he was telling them.

35 As Jesus and his disciples came near to the city of Jericho,
a blind man was sitting beside the road. He was begging for
money. 36 When he heard a crowd of people passing by, he
kept asking *those around him*, "What is happening?" 37 They
told him, "*There is a crowd because* Jesus, the man from the
town of Nazareth, is coming down the street." 38 He shouted,
"Jesus, you who are descended from King David, have pity
on me!" 39 Those who were walking at the front of the crowd
scolded him and told him to be quiet. But he shouted even
more loudly, "You who are descended from King David, have
pity on me!" 40 Jesus stopped walking and commanded the
people to bring the man to him. When the blind man came
near, Jesus asked him, 41 "What do you want me to do for
you?" He replied, "Lord, I want you to enable me to see!"
42 Jesus said to him, "Then I now restore your sight! Because
you have trusted in me, I have healed you!" 43 Immediately
he was able to see. And he went with Jesus, praising God.
And when all the people there saw this, they also praised
God.

19 Jesus entered Jericho and was going through the
city. 2 There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He
was in charge of collecting taxes, and he was very rich.
3 He wanted to see Jesus, but he could not see him over
the crowd. He was a very short man *and there were many
people around Jesus*. 4 So he ran farther down the road. He
climbed a sycamore fig tree so he could see Jesus when he
came by. 5 When Jesus got there, he looked up and said to
him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, I have to stay at your
house tonight!" 6 So he came down quickly. He was glad
to welcome Jesus into his home. 7 But the people who saw
Jesus go there grumbled, saying, "He has gone to be the
guest of a real sinner!" 8 Then Zacchaeus stood up while they
were eating and said to Jesus, "Lord, I want you to know
that I am going to give half of what I own to poor people.
And as for the people whom I have cheated, I will pay them
back four times the amount I took from them." 9 Jesus said
to him, "Today God has saved this household, because this
man has shown that he is a true descendant of Abraham.
10 Remember this: I, the Son of Man, came to find and save
people *like you* who have been disobeying God."

11 The people were listening to everything Jesus said. He
was getting close to Jerusalem*, and he knew that the people
had a wrong idea*. They thought he would begin to rule as
king over God's people as soon as he got to Jerusalem. So
Jesus decided to tell them another story *to correct that idea*.
12 He said, "A prince was preparing to go to a distant country
so that a higher king could give him the right to rule over
the country where he lived. After he received it, he would
come back to rule his people. 13 *Before he left,* he summoned
ten of his servants. He gave each of them an equal amount of
money. He said to them, 'Do business with this money until I
return!' *Then he left.* 14 But many people of his country hated
him. So they sent some messengers to follow him and say
to the higher king, 'We do not want this man to be our king!'
15 *But he was made king anyway. Later* he returned as the new
king. Then he called in the servants to whom he had given
the money. He wanted to know how much they had gained
by doing business with the money he had given them. 16 The
first servant came to him and said, 'Sir, with your money I
have earned ten times as much!' 17 He said to this man, 'You
are a good servant! You have done very well! Because you
have faithfully taken care of a small amount of money, I will
give you ten cities to rule over.' 18 Then the second servant
came and said, 'Sir, the money you gave me is now worth
five times as much!' 19 He also said to that servant, '*Well*

done! I will put you over five cities.' 20 Then another servant
came. He said, 'Sir, here is your money. I wrapped it up in
a cloth and hid it to keep it safe. 21 I was afraid that you
would take everything I earned. I know you are a hard man
who takes things from others that do not really belong to
you. You are like a farmer who harvests grain that another
farmer has planted.' 22 He said to that servant, 'You wicked
servant! I will condemn you by the words you just said. You
said I am a hard man. You said I take what does not belong to
me. You said I am like a farmer who harvests what another
farmer has planted. 23 So you should at least have given
my money to money lenders! Then when I returned I could
have collected that amount plus the interest it would have
earned!' 24 Then the king said to those who were standing
near, 'Take the money from him and give it to the servant
who made ten times as much!' 25 They protested, 'But sir, he
already has a lot of money!' 26 But the king said, 'I tell you
this: To the people who use well what they have received,
I will give even more. But from the people who do not use
well what they have received, I will take away even what
they already have. 27 Now, as for those enemies of mine who
did not want me to rule over them, bring them here and
execute them while I am watching!'"

28 After Jesus said those things, he traveled farther along
on the road up to Jerusalem. 29 When they got close to the
villages of Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives,
he sent two of his disciples on ahead. 30 He told them, "Go
to the village just ahead of you. As you enter it, there you
will see a young donkey tied up that no one has ever ridden.
Untie it and bring it to me. 31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are
you untying the donkey?' say to him, 'Jesus needs it.'" 32 So
the two disciples went to the village and found the donkey,
just as Jesus had told them. 33 As they were untying it, its
owners said to them, "Why are you untying our donkey?"
34 They replied, "Jesus needs it." And the owners gave them
permission to use it. 35 Then the disciples brought the donkey
to Jesus. They threw their robes on the donkey's back and
helped Jesus get on it. 36 Then, as he rode along, others
spread their robes on the road in front of him to honor him.
37 As Jesus approached the road that goes down from the
Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of his disciples began to
praise God with loud, joyful shouts for all the great miracles
that they had seen him do. 38 They were saying things like,
"May God bless our king who comes with God's authority!
May there be peace between God in heaven and us his people,
and may everyone praise God!" 39 Some of the Pharisees who
were in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell your disciples
to stop saying those things!" 40 He replied, "I tell you this: If
these people were silent, the stones themselves would shout
to praise me!"

41 When Jesus came near to Jerusalem and saw the city,
he cried about its people. 42 He said, "I wish that today you
people knew how to have God's peace. But now you are
unable to know this. 43 I want you to know this: You are
going to experience difficult times. Your enemies will come
and set up a barricade around your city. They will surround
the city and attack it on all sides. 44 They will *break through
the walls and* destroy them and the rest of the city. They will
kill all of you. They will completely demolish everything.
All this will happen because you did not recognize the time
when God came to save you!"

45 Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple
courtyard. He began to force the people who were selling
things there to leave. 46 He told them, "The Scriptures say,
'God's temple should be a place where people pray.' But you
have made it 'a hideout for thieves'!"

47 Each day during that week, Jesus was teaching people
at the temple. The chief priests, the teachers of religious
laws, and other Jewish leaders were trying to find a way to
kill him. 48 But they did not find any way to do it, because
very many people were eager to hear him.

20 One day during that week, Jesus was teaching the
people at the temple and telling them God's good
message. As he was doing that, the chief priests, the teachers
of the Jewish laws, and some other elders came to him.
2 They said to him, "Tell us, what right do you have to do
these things? And who gave you this right?" 3 He replied, "I
will also ask you a question. Tell me 4 about John baptizing
people: Did God command him to baptize or did humans
command him?" 5 They discussed this among themselves.
They said, "If we answer, 'God commanded him,' then he
will say, 'So why did you not believe him?' 6 But if we say,
'It was only humans who told him to baptize,' the people
will stone us to death, because most of them believe that
John was a prophet *whom God sent*." 7 So they replied that
they did not know who told John to baptize. 8 Then Jesus
said to them, "Just as you will not tell me, I will not tell you
who sent me to do those things."

9 Then Jesus told the people this parable: "A man planted
a vineyard. He rented the vineyard to some people who
would take care of it. Then he went to another country and
stayed there for a long time. 10 When it was time to harvest
the grapes, this owner sent a servant 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. But
after the servant arrived, they beat that servant and sent him
away without giving him any grapes. 11 Later, the owner sent
another servant, but they also beat and shamed that servant.
They sent him away without any grapes. 12 Still later, the
owner sent yet another servant. The farmers wounded this
servant too and forced him to leave the vineyard. 13 So the
owner of the vineyard said to himself, 'What should I do
now? I will send my son, whom I love very much. They will
probably respect him.' 14 *So he sent his son,* but when the
people who were caring for the vineyard saw him coming,
they said to each other, 'Here comes the man who will some
day inherit this vineyard! Let us kill him! Then the vineyard
will be ours!' 15 So they dragged him outside the vineyard,
and they killed him. I will tell you what the owner of the
vineyard will do to them! 16 He will come and kill those
people who were taking care of the vineyard. Then he will
arrange for other people to take care of it." When the people
listening to Jesus heard this, they said, "May a situation like
this never happen!" 17 But Jesus looked directly at them and
said, "You can say that, but think about the meaning of these
words that are written in the Scriptures.

'The stone that the builders rejected has become the
most important stone in the building.

18 This stone will break to pieces everyone who falls on
it, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.'"

19 The chief priests and the teachers of the Jewish laws
realized that he was accusing them when he told the story
about those wicked people. So they immediately tried to
find a way to arrest him. *But they did not arrest him,* because
they were afraid of what the people would do if they did

so. 20 So they watched him carefully. They also sent spies *to talk to Jesus* who pretended to be sincere, but who really wanted to get Jesus to say something wrong. They wanted to *be able to accuse him of encouraging resistance to the Roman government so that they could* turn him over to the governor *of the province*. 21 One of them said to him, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right. You do that even if important people do not like it. You teach truthfully what God wants us to do. 22 *So tell us what you think about this matter.* Is it right for us to pay taxes to the Roman government, or not?" 23 But he knew that they were trying to trick him to get him into trouble either with the Jews, who hated to pay those taxes, or with the Roman government. So he said to them, 24 "Show me a Roman coin. Then tell me whose picture and name are on it." So they *showed him a coin and* said, "It has the picture and name of Caesar." 25 He said to them, "In that case, give to the government what belongs to it, and give to God what belongs to him." 26 The spies could find nothing wrong with anything that Jesus said while the people were standing around him. The spies were so amazed at his answer that they did not say anything more.

27 After that, some Sadducees came to Jesus. Their group of Jews taught that no one would rise from the dead. They also intended to ask Jesus a challenging question. 28 One of them said to him, "Teacher, Moses taught us Jews what to do if a man dies who has a wife but no children. His brother should marry the widow so that she can have a child by him. People will then consider that child a descendant of the man who died. 29 Well, there were seven brothers in one family. The oldest one married a woman, but before she had any children, he died, leaving her as a widow. 30 The second brother followed this law and married the widow, but the same thing happened to him. 31 Then the third brother married her, but the same thing happened again. In the end, all seven brothers, one by one, married that woman but died without having any children. 32 Afterwards, the woman died, too. 33 Therefore, if it is true that there will be a time when people who have died will become alive again, whose wife do you think that woman will be then? Keep in mind that she was married to all seven brothers!" 34 Jesus replied to them, "In this world, men marry women, and parents give daughters in marriage to men. 35 But the people whom God will consider worthy of being in heaven when he brings them back to life after they have died will not marry. 36 *They do not marry* because they cannot die anymore. Rather, they are like the angels *who live forever*. They are God's children, since God has made them alive again after they have died. 37 *Now that I have answered your question about marriage, I will show from Scripture* that God does make people alive again after they have died. Even Moses wrote about this. In the place where he describes meeting God at the burning bush, he records how the Lord called himself 'the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' *God would not have said that if he had not made those men alive again and he were not still their God.* 38 After all, he is not the God of people who are dead. He is the God of people who are alive, because to God, everyone remains alive *even after they die*."

39 Some of the teachers of the Jewish law *who were there* replied, "Teacher, you have answered very well!" 40 *The scribes said this* because the people who had been trying to trap Jesus *had stopped asking him difficult questions. He had answered so well that they* were afraid to ask him anything else.

41 So in return, *Jesus asked them a difficult question of his own.* He said, "Why do people say that the Messiah is *only* a descendant of King David? 42 Consider that David himself wrote in the Book of Psalms *about the Messiah*,

'God said to my Lord,
"Sit here next to me on my right side*, in that position of great honor*.
43 *Sit here* while I completely defeat your enemies.'"

44 In this psalm, King David calls the Messiah 'my Lord.' *That is a title of great respect.* So how could the Messiah be David's descendant? *It is the descendant who should show great respect to the ancestor.*"

45 Then, while all the other people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, 46 "Make sure that you do not act like the men who teach our Jewish laws. They like to put on long robes and walk around to make people think that they are very important. They also like people to greet them respectfully in the marketplaces. They like to sit in the most important seats in the synagogues. At dinner parties they like to sit in the places for the most honored people. 47 They *also* steal all the property of widows. But to make other people think that they are righteous, they pray for a long time *in public*. God will condemn them strictly for what they have done."

21 Then Jesus looked up *from where he was sitting* and saw rich people putting their gifts *of money* into the offering boxes *in the temple courtyard*. 2 He also saw a poor widow put two small copper coins into one of the boxes. 3 And he said *to his disciples*, "The truth is that this poor widow has put more *into the offering box* than all *of these rich people*. 4 Let me tell you why that is true. All those *rich people* gave a lot of money, but it was extra money that they did not really need. But this widow, who is very poor, gave all the money that she had, even though she really did need it to live on."

5 Some *of Jesus' disciples* were talking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and decorations that people had given. But Jesus said, 6 "*Let me tell you what is going to happen to* these things that you are admiring. Someday your enemies will demolish them entirely."

7 Then they asked him, "Teacher, when will these things happen? And what will show that these things are about to take place?" 8 Jesus replied, "Do not let anyone mislead you. For many people will come and each will claim to be me. Each will say about himself, 'I am the Messiah!' They will also say, 'The time is almost here when God will rule as king!' Do not believe what they are saying! 9 Also, you will hear about wars and people fighting each other. Things like that must happen before the end *of the world* comes. So *when you hear about those things,* do not be afraid.

10 Various people groups will attack each other, and the people of different kingdoms will fight each other. 11 And in various places there will be great earthquakes. There will also be famines and terrible diseases. Many things will happen that will cause people to be very afraid. People will see strange things in the sky *that will show that something very important is going to happen*. 12 But before all these things *happen*, your enemies will seize you and treat you badly. They will bring you to the synagogues*, whose judges will put you on trial* and *put you in the* prisons. Your enemies will also have kings and high government authorities put you on

trial because you believe in me. 13 That will be a time for
you to tell them the truth about me. 14 So resolve firmly not
to worry ahead of time about what you will say to defend
yourselves, 15 because I will give you the right words so that
you will know what to say. As a result, none of the people
accusing you will be able to say that you are wrong. 16 And
even your parents and brothers and sisters and *other* relatives
and friends will betray you, and they will kill some of you.
17 Most people will hate you because you believe in me.
18 But your entire being will be safe *spiritually*. 19 If you go
through difficult times and prove that you trust God, after
you die your souls will live on in God's presence.

20 When you see armies surround *the city of* Jerusalem,
then you will know that they will soon destroy that city.
21 At that time those of you who are in *other places in the
province of* Judea must escape to the mountains. And those
of you who are in this city must leave. Those of you who are
in the nearby countryside must not come into the city. 22 *You
should run away* because God will punish *the city of Jerusalem*
at this time. *When he does that,* what God has said in the
Scriptures about this will come true. 23 When this happens,
how terrible it will be for pregnant women and for those who
are nursing their babies. There will be great suffering in the
land. God will be angry with these people and punish them
severely. 24 Many of them will die because soldiers will kill
them with their weapons. Their enemies will take others as
prisoners and send them to many places around the world.
The Gentiles will control *the city of* Jerusalem for as long as
God allows."

25 "At this time, strange things will happen to the sun,
the moon, and the stars. And on earth, people groups will
become very frightened. They will be as afraid as they would
be in a roaring ocean with huge waves. 26 People will be
so afraid that they will faint because they are waiting for
what will happen next in the world. The stars in the sky will
move out of their usual places. 27 Then all people will see
me, the Son of Man, coming in the clouds powerfully and
with brilliant light. 28 So when those terrible things begin to
happen, assume a posture of confidence, because God will
soon rescue you."

29 Then Jesus gave them an example. He said, "Think
about the fig trees, and even all the trees. 30 When you
see that their leaves are sprouting, you know that it is the
beginning of summer. 31 In the same way, when you see
these things that I have just described happening, you will
know then that God will soon show himself as king. 32 I am
telling you the truth. The people who see the first of the
signs I have described will definitely live to see all these
things happen. 33 You may think of the sky and the land as
permanent. They are not, but my words are permanent.

34 Be very careful to control yourselves. If you get drunk,
your minds will not be alert afterwards. And if you worry
about day-to-day matters, you will become distracted. *Then
you will not be paying attention to the signs I have told you
about, and* I will surprise you when I return. 35 *I will come so
suddenly that* it will be like when a trap springs closed on
an animal. *So you need to be watching for my return,* because
it will affect every person in the world. 36 So you must be
always ready for my coming. Pray that you will be able to
stay faithful to me as you experience these difficult things
that I have been talking about. That way I, the Messiah, will
declare you innocent *when I come to judge the world*."

37 Each day Jesus was teaching people at the temple. But
every evening he went *out of the city* and stayed all night
on the Mount of Olives. 38 And early every morning, great
crowds of people came to the temple to listen to him *as he
taught*.

22 It was now almost time for the Celebration of
Unleavened Bread, which people also called the
Passover. 2 The chief priests and the teachers of the Jewish
laws were looking for a way to have Jesus killed without
starting a riot among the *many* people *who thought he was a
great man*.

3 Then Satan entered into Judas, whose other name was
Iscariot. He was one of 12 men whom Jesus had chosen to
represent him. 4 He went and talked with the chief priests
and the officers of the temple guard about how he might
help them capture Jesus. 5 They were very pleased *when he
offered to do that*. They said they would pay him money *if
he did it*. 6 So Judas agreed, and then he started looking for
a way to help them capture Jesus where the crowd would
not see it.

7 Then the Day of Unleavened Bread came. This was the
day when Jewish people had to kill the lambs that they
would eat for the Passover celebration. 8 So Jesus sent Peter
and John out with these instructions: "Go and prepare the
meal for the Passover celebration so that we can all eat it
together." 9 They replied to him, "Where do you want us to
prepare the meal?" 10 He answered, "Listen carefully. When
you go into the city, a man carrying a large jar of water will
meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters. 11 Say
to the owner of the house, 'Our teacher says to show us the
room where he can eat the Passover meal together with us,
his disciples.' 12 He will show you a large room that is on the
upper floor of the house. It will be all ready for entertaining
guests. Prepare the meal for us there." 13 So the two disciples
went *into the city*. They found everything to be just as Jesus
had told them. So they prepared *the meal for* the Passover
celebration there.

14 When it was time to eat the meal, Jesus came and sat
down with his representatives. 15 He said to them, "I have
wanted very much to eat this special Passover supper with
you before I die. 16 I tell you, the next time I eat it will
be when God gives it its deepest meaning when he rules
everywhere as king." 17 Then he took a cup of wine and
thanked God for it. He told them, "Take this wine and share
it among yourselves. 18 *I want you to do this* because, I tell
you, I will not drink wine again until God rules everywhere
as king." 19 Then he took some bread and thanked God for
it. He broke it into pieces and gave it to them to eat. As he
did so, he said, "This bread is my body, which I am about to
sacrifice for you. Do this again later to honor me." 20 In the
same way, after they had eaten the meal, he took the cup of
wine and said, "This is the new covenant that I will make
using my own blood, which will flow out of my wounds for
you when I die. 21 But I want you all to know that the person
who will hand me over to my enemies is here eating with
me. 22 *I say this* because I, the Son of Man, will indeed die
in the way that God has planned. But how terrible it will be
for the man who hands me over *to my enemies*!" 23 Then they
all began to ask each other which of them would actually
be prepared to betray Jesus.

24 After that, they began to argue among themselves about
which one of them they should think was the most important
person. 25 Jesus responded to them, "The kings of the Gentile
nations like to show people that they are powerful. Yet
they give themselves the name 'Ones Who Help the People.'

26 But you should not be like those rulers! Instead, the most
honored people among you should act as if they were the
least honored ones. Anyone who leads must act like a servant.
27 For you know that the important person is the one who
eats at the table, not the servant who brings the food. But I,
your leader, have been setting an example for you by serving
you while I have been among you
28 You are the people who have stayed with me during all
the hard things I have suffered. 29 So now I am appointing
you to important positions in which you will rule, just as
my Father has appointed me to rule as a king. 30 You will sit
and eat and drink with me when I become king. In fact, you
will sit on thrones and judge the people of the 12 tribes of
Israel."
31 "Simon, Simon, pay attention! Satan has asked *God* to
let him test all of you, the way someone shakes grain in a
sieve*, and God has permitted him to do that*. 32 But I have
prayed for you, Simon. *I have asked God* that you will not
completely stop believing in me. So when you decide that
you truly do believe in me, encourage the others *to believe
in me as well*." 33 Peter replied to him, "Lord, I am ready to
go with you to prison. I am even willing to die with you!"
34 Jesus replied, "Peter, I want you to know that this night,
before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you
do not know me!"
35 Then Jesus asked the disciples, "When I sent you out
to the villages, and you went without any money, food, or
sandals, was there anything you needed but could not get?"
They replied, "No, there was nothing!" 36 Then Jesus said,
"But, now, if anyone *among you* has some money, he should
take it with him. Also, whoever has food should take it with
him. And whoever does not have a sword should sell his coat
and buy one! 37 I tell you this because what a prophet wrote
about me in the Scriptures must take place: 'People treated
him like a criminal.' Everything the Scriptures say about me
is going to happen." 38 The disciples replied, "Lord, look! We
have two swords!" He answered, "We will not need more
than two."
39 Jesus left the city and went to the Mount of Olives, as
he usually did. His disciples went with him. 40 When Jesus
came *with his disciples* to the place where he often spent the
night, he said to them, "Pray that God will help you not to
sin when you are tempted." 41 Then he went about 30 meters
from them, knelt down, and prayed. 42 He said, "Father,
if you are willing, please allow me not to experience the
terrible things that are about to happen. But do not do what
I want. Do what you want." 43 [a] [Then an angel from heaven
came to him and gave him courage. 44 [b] He was suffering
greatly. So he prayed very intensely. His sweat was falling
to the ground like large drops of blood.] 45 When Jesus got
up from praying, he returned to his disciples. He discovered
that they were sleeping. They were very sad and this had
made them tired. 46 He *woke them up and* said to them, "This
is no time for you to be sleeping! Get up! Pray that *God will
help you so that* nothing tempts you to sin."
47 While Jesus was still speaking, a crowd of people came
to him. Judas, one of Jesus' 12 representatives, was guiding
them. He came up to Jesus to greet him with a kiss on the
cheek. 48 But Jesus said to him, "Judas, how dare you use
a kiss to hand me, the Son of Man, over to my enemies!"
49 When the disciples realized what was happening, they
said, "Lord, should we use our weapons *to keep them from
arresting you*?" 50 One of them *drew his sword and* struck the
servant of the high priest, but *only* cut off his right ear. 51 But
Jesus said, "Do not do any more of that!" Then he touched
the servant where he had been wounded and healed him.
52–53 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the
temple guards, and the Jewish elders who had come to arrest
him, "It is surprising that you have come here with swords
and clubs to arrest me, as if I were a robber. For many days
I was with you in the temple, but you did not try to arrest
me at all! But this is the time you are doing what you want.
It is also the time when Satan is doing the evil things as he
wants to do."
54 The Jewish leaders and soldiers seized Jesus and led
him away. They brought him to the high priest's house.
Peter followed them *from a safe distance* far behind. 55 Some
people lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat
down together. Peter came and sat among them. 56 A female
servant saw Peter sitting there as the fire shone upon him.
She looked at him carefully and said, "This man was also
with the one they have arrested!" 57 But he denied it, saying,
"Young lady, I do not know him!" 58 A little later someone
else saw Peter and said, "You also are one of those who were
with the man they arrested!" But Peter said, "No, mister, I
am not one of them!" 59 About an hour later someone else
said loudly, "*The way that* this man *speaks shows that he* is
from *the region of* Galilee. So he must certainly have come
here with the man they arrested!" 60 But Peter said, "Mister,
that is not true!" Immediately a rooster crowed, while Peter
was still speaking. 61 Jesus turned around and looked right
at Peter. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said to
him: "This night, before the rooster crows, you will deny
three times that you know me." 62 And he went out of the
courtyard and cried with great sorrow.
63 The men who were guarding Jesus made fun of him
and beat him. 64 They put a blindfold on him *so he could not
see and then took turns hitting him*. They said to him, "Show
us that you are a prophet! Tell us who just hit you!" 65 They
said many other *cruel* things about him, mocking him.
66 At dawn the next morning, many of the Jewish leaders
gathered together. In this group were the chief priests and
the men who taught the Jewish laws. They had the soldiers
bring Jesus into the Jewish council chamber. 67 There they
said to him, "If you are the Messiah, tell us!" But he replied,
"If I say that I am the Messiah, you will not believe me.
68 But if I ask you whether you think I am the Messiah, you
will not answer me. 69 But from now on, I, the Messiah, will
be sitting next to almighty God *and ruling*!" 70 Then they
all asked, "If that is so, are you *saying that you are* the Son
of God?" He answered, "Yes, what you are saying is true."
71 Then they said to each other, "We ourselves have heard
him say *that he is equal to God*! And so we certainly do not
need any more people to testify against him *on a charge of
blasphemy*!"

23 Then the whole group got up and took Jesus to
Pilate*, the Roman governor*. 2 They accused him *in
front of Pilate*. They said, "We have seen this man *causing
trouble by* misleading our people. He has been telling them
to not pay the taxes that Caesar, the Roman emperor, has
imposed. Also, he has been saying that he is the Messiah,
a king!" 3 Pilate then asked him, "Are you the King of the
Jews?" Jesus replied, "Yes, it is just as you have asked me."

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[a] Some ancient manuscripts include verses 43 and 44.

[b] See the note on the previous verse.

4 Then Pilate said to the chief priests and to the crowd, “This
man is not guilty of any crime.” 5 But the group from the
Jewish ruling council kept accusing Jesus. They said, “He
is trying to get the people to riot! He has been teaching his
ideas throughout all of *the region of* Judea. He started doing
that in *the region of* Galilee, and now he is doing it here as
well!”
6 When Pilate heard what they said, he asked, “Does this
man come from *the region of* Galilee?” 7 When Pilate found
out that Jesus was from Galilee, where Herod Antipas ruled,
he sent Jesus to him. Herod was also in Jerusalem at that
time. 8 When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, because he
had wanted to see Jesus for a long time. This was because
Herod had heard many things about Jesus, and he wanted
to see him perform a miracle. 9 So he asked Jesus many
questions, but Jesus did not reply to any of them. 10 And the
chief priests and some experts in the Jewish laws stood near
Jesus, accusing him very strongly *of committing many crimes*.
11 Then Herod and his soldiers insulted Jesus and made fun
of him. They put expensive clothes on him *to pretend that he
was a king*. Then Herod sent him back to Pilate. 12 Until that
time the two men had been very hostile to each other, but
on that day Herod and Pilate became friends.
13 Pilate then gathered together the chief priests and other
Jewish leaders and the crowd that was still there. 14 He said
to them, “You brought this man to me, saying that he has
been leading the people to revolt. But I want you to know
that after examining him while you were listening, I conclude
that he is not guilty of doing any of the things you said he
did. 15 Also, Herod sent him back to us *without punishing him*.
That means that he too *concluded that he was not guilty*. So
it is clear that this man has not done anything for which he
deserves to die. 16 So I will *tell my soldiers to* whip him and
then set him free.” 17 [a] [*Pilate said this because* he had to set
one prisoner free at every Passover celebration.] 18 But the
whole crowd shouted together, “Put this man to death! Set
Barabbas free for us instead!” 19 Now Barabbas was a man
who had led some people in the city *of Jerusalem* to rebel
against the Roman government. He was also a murderer. He
was in prison because of these crimes. 20 But Pilate wanted
very much to set Jesus free, so he tried to speak to the crowd
again. 21 But they kept on shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify
him!” 22 Pilate then spoke to the crowd a third time. “No!
He has not committed any crime! He has not done anything
for which he deserves to die. So I will have my soldiers whip
him, and then I will set him free.” 23 But the people in the
crowd kept shouting to insist that Pilate execute Jesus on
a cross. Finally, because they continued to shout so loudly,
they persuaded Pilate. 24 So Pilate declared that he would do
what they wanted. 25 Then Pilate set free the man whom the
crowd was asking him to release. That man was in prison
because he had fought against the government and murdered
people! Pilate then commanded the soldiers to take Jesus
and do what the crowd wanted.
26 Now there was a man named Simon, who was from
the city of Cyrene *in Africa*. He was coming into Jerusalem
from the countryside. As the soldiers were leading Jesus
away, they grabbed hold of Simon. They *took from Jesus the
cross that they had made him carry, and they* put it on Simon’s
shoulders. They told him to carry it and follow behind Jesus.
27 Now a large crowd was walking behind Jesus. In the crowd
were many women who were beating on their chests *to show
their grief* and wailing *sorrowfully* for him. 28 But *instead of
accepting their sympathy,* Jesus turned to these women and
said, “You women of Jerusalem, do not weep for me! Instead,
weep over *the terrible things that are going to happen to* you
and your children! 29 For I want you to know that there will
soon be a time when people will say, ‘How fortunate are the
women who have never given birth to children or nursed
babies!’ 30 Then the people in this city will say, ‘We wish
that the mountains would fall on top of us and that the hills
would cover us up!’ 31 Right now it is difficult for people to
do bad things to others, just as it is difficult to set fire to
fresh wood. But later, people will easily be able to do terrible
things to others, just as it is easy to set fire to dry wood.”
32 Two other men, who were criminals, were also walking
with Jesus to the place where the Romans would execute
them. 33 When they got to the place whose name was The
Skull, there the soldiers crucified Jesus, nailing him to a
cross. They did the same thing to the two criminals. They put
one of them at the right side of Jesus and the other at his left
side. 34 [b] [But Jesus said, “Father, please forgive these people.
They do not realize what they are doing.”] Then the soldiers
divided his clothes and gambled with something like dice
to determine which piece of clothing each one would get.
35 Many people stood nearby, watching. They were making
fun of Jesus. The Jewish leaders did the same thing. They
said, “He saved other people! If God has really chosen him
to be the Messiah, he should save himself!” 36 The soldiers
also mocked him. They came up to him and offered him
some sour wine. 37 They said to him, “If you are the King of
the Jews, save yourself!” 38 On the cross above his head, the
soldiers also fastened a sign that stated, “This is the King of
the Jews.”
39 One of the criminals who was hanging *on a cross next
to Jesus also* insulted him. He said, “If you really were the
Messiah, you would save yourself, and you would save us
too!” 40 But the other criminal scolded him *for saying that*.
He told him, “You should be afraid of God *punishing you*!
You are also dying on a cross*, and soon God will judge you*.
41 The two of us deserve *to die*. They are punishing us as
we deserve for the evil things that we did. But the man you
are insulting did nothing wrong!” 42 Then he said to Jesus,
“Jesus, please think about me and treat me well when you
begin to rule as king!” 43 Jesus replied, “I want you to know
that today you will be with me in paradise!”
44 By then it was about noontime. But it became dark
throughout that whole area until three o’clock in the
afternoon. 45 There was no light from the sun. And the
thick curtain *that closed off the Most Holy Place* in the temple
split into two pieces. 46 When that happened, Jesus shouted
loudly, “Father, I put my spirit into your care!” After he said
that, he stopped breathing and died.
47 When the centurion *who was commanding the soldiers*
saw what happened, he said, “Indeed, this man did nothing
wrong!” What he said honored God. 48 When the crowd of
people who had gathered to see these men die saw what
had actually happened, they went back to their homes,
hitting their chests to show that they were sorrowful. 49 *But
when the rest of the crowd left,* all of Jesus’ acquaintances,
including the women who had come with him from *the region
of* Galilee, kept watching what happened from where they
were standing, some distance away.

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[a] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 17.
[b] Some ancient manuscripts include the first part of verse 34.

50 There was a man named Joseph *who lived in Jerusalem*.
He was a good and righteous man who was a member
of the Jewish Council. 51 But he had not agreed with the
other Council members when they decided to kill Jesus and
when they planned how to do it. He was from the town of
Arimathea in Judea. He was waiting expectantly for the time
when God would send his king to begin to rule. 52 Joseph
went to Pilate and asked Pilate to permit him to take Jesus'
body and bury it. *Pilate gave him permission,* 53 So Joseph
took Jesus' body down *from the cross*. He wrapped it in a
linen cloth. Then he put Jesus' body in a burial chamber
that someone had cut into a rock cliff. No one had ever put
a body in that chamber before. 54 This happened on the day
when the Jewish people got ready for their day of rest. It
was soon going to be sunset, the start of the Sabbath. 55 The
women who had come with Jesus from *the district of* Galilee
followed *Joseph and the men who were with him*. They saw
the burial chamber, and they saw how the men laid Jesus'
body inside it. 56 Then the women went back to where they
were staying in order to prepare spices and ointments *to put
on Jesus' body*. However, they stopped working when the
Sabbath began, just as the Jewish law required.

24 Very early in the morning on Sunday, those women
went to the burial chamber. They brought with them
the spices that they had prepared *to put on the body of Jesus*.
2 *When they arrived,* they discovered that somebody had rolled
away the stone *that had been closing off the entrance* to the
burial chamber. 3 They went into *the burial chamber*, but the
body of Jesus was not there! 4 They did not know what to
think about that. Then suddenly two men stood by them
wearing bright, shining clothes! 5 This made the women very
frightened. They bowed down low to the ground. The two
men said to them, "You should not be looking for someone
who is alive in a place where they bury the bodies of dead
people! 6 He is not here. No, he has come back to life! Recall
that while he was still with you in Galilee, he said to you,
7 'They will have to hand me, the Son of Man, over to sinful
men. Those men will kill me by nailing me to a cross. But two
days later, I will become alive again.'" 8 The women recalled
what Jesus had told them. 9 So they left the burial chamber
and went to Jesus' 11 representatives and the other disciples
of Jesus and told them what happened. 10 The women who
told these things to them were Mary from Magdala village,
Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women
who were with them. 11 But they thought this report was
foolishness, so they did not believe the women. 12 However,
Peter decided *to see whether the story was true*. He ran to the
burial chamber. He stooped down *and looked inside*. He saw
the linen cloths *in which Jesus' body had been wrapped, but
Jesus was not there*. So he left the tomb, puzzling over what
had happened.

13 That same day two of Jesus' disciples were walking
to an outlying village named Emmaus. It was about ten
kilometers from Jerusalem. 14 They were talking with each
other about all the things that had happened *to Jesus*. 15 While
they were talking and discussing *those things*, Jesus himself
approached them and started walking with them. 16 But God
prevented them from realizing that it was Jesus. 17 Jesus
said to them, "What have you two been talking about while
you were walking?" They stopped, and they had very sad
expressions on their faces. 18 But then one of them, whose
name was Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only person
who is visiting Jerusalem who does not know about the
events that have happened there in recent days!" 19 He said
to them, "What events?" They replied, "The things that
happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth, who was a
prophet. God enabled him to perform great miracles and
to teach wonderful messages. Most people thought he was
wonderful. 20 But our chief priests and leaders handed him
over *to the Roman authorities*. They sentenced him to die, and
they killed him by nailing him to a cross. 21 We were hoping
that he was the one who would free us Israelites from our
enemies! But this does not seem possible now, since three
days have passed since the Romans executed him. 22 In spite
of this, some women from our group amazed us. Early this
morning they went to the chamber *where Jesus was buried*,
23 but the body of Jesus was not there! They came back and
told us they had seen some angels in a vision. The angels
said that Jesus was alive! 24 Then some of those who were
with us *when the women came and said this* went to the burial
chamber. They saw that things were exactly as the women
had reported. But they did not see Jesus." 25 Then Jesus said
to them, "You two foolish men! You are so slow to believe
all that the prophets have written about the Messiah! 26 You
should certainly have known that it was necessary for the
Messiah to suffer all those things *and die*, and then receive
great honor from God!" 27 Then Jesus explained to them all
the things that the Scriptures said about himself. He started
with what Moses wrote, and then he explained what all the
prophets had written.

28 When they had nearly reached the village where the
two men were going, it appeared that Jesus was going to
keep walking down the road. 29 But they pleaded with him
not to do that. They said, "Stay with us tonight, because it
is late in the afternoon and it will soon be dark." So he
went in *to the house* to stay with them. 30 When they all sat
down to eat, Jesus took some bread and thanked God for
it. Then he broke it in pieces and began to give some to
the two men. 31 And then God enabled them to recognize
him. But immediately he disappeared! 32 They said to each
other, "While we were walking along the road and he was
talking with us and enabling us to understand the Scriptures,
we got so excited inside! *It all made sense that the Messiah
would have to suffer but then receive great honor.*" 33 So they
left immediately and returned to Jerusalem. There they
found Jesus' 11 representatives and some others who had
gathered together with them. 34 They told those two men, "It
is true that Jesus has become alive again. He has appeared
to Simon!" 35 Then those two men told the others what had
happened as they were walking along the road. They also
told them how they both recognized Jesus as he broke some
bread for them.

36 As they were saying that, Jesus himself suddenly
appeared among them. He said to them, "May God give
you peace!" 37 But *they were not peaceful.* They were startled
and afraid because they thought that they were seeing a
ghost! 38 He said to them, "You should not be alarmed! And
you should not doubt *that I am alive*. 39 Look at *the wounds
in my hands* and my feet! That way you can be sure that it is
really I myself. Ghosts do not have bodies, as you see that I
have, and you can touch me to prove that my body is real."
40 After he said that, he showed them *the wounds in* his hands
and his feet. 41 They were so glad that they could still hardly
believe *that he was really alive*. So he said to them, "Do you
have something here that I could eat?" 42 So they gave him
a piece of roasted fish. 43 While they were watching, he took
it and ate it.

44 Then he said to them, “I will repeat what I told you
while I was with you before. God was going to make happen
everything that he said about me*, the Messiah,* throughout all
of the Scriptures.” 45 Then he enabled them to understand
the *things that* the Scriptures *said about him*. He said to them,
46 “This is what you can read in the Scriptures: that the
Messiah would suffer *and die*, but on the third day after that,
he would become alive again. 47 *The Scriptures also say that*
those who believe in the Messiah would go and announce
on his behalf that God will forgive people who stop sinning.
I want you to do this, starting here in Jerusalem and going
to every people group in the world. 48 You *must tell people*
that you saw everything happen to me that the Scriptures
said would happen to the Messiah. 49 And I am going to send
the Holy Spirit to you, as my Father promised. But you must
stay in this city until God gives you the power *of the Holy*
Spirit.”

50 Then Jesus led them outside *the city* until they came
near *the village of* Bethany. There he lifted up his hands and
blessed them. 51 As he was doing that, he left them and went
up to heaven. 52 After they worshiped him, they returned to
Jerusalem very joyfully. 53 Each day they went to the temple
and spent time worshiping God there.