

Gospel of Matthew



Nashville

The Common English Bible

a fresh translation to touch the heart and mind

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I’ve commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age” (Matt 28:19-20).

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ISBN 978-0-687-65727-8

09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18—10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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The Common English Bible (CEB), projected for completion in 2011, is a completely new translation of the Bible. This sample contains the forthcoming Gospel of Matthew.

The Common English Bible is translated by persons who are committed to the whole church of Jesus Christ. The diversity of experience among the translators presents the English translation of ancient words with an uncommon relevance that is freer from sectarian bias than most previous Bible translations. The translators, reviewers, and editors represent the women and men who worship in English speaking congregations, including churches of African, Asian, European, and Latino communities.

One hundred fifteen biblical scholars from twenty-two faith traditions participated in translating the CEB. The translators represent the English language as it is spoken in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, South Africa, and Australia. They worship God among the following communities of faith: African Methodist Episcopal Church, Anglican, Baptist, Baptist General Conference, Church of the Nazarene, Disciples of Christ, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Free Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, Free Methodist, Mennonite, National Baptist, Presbyterian Church (USA), Quaker, Reformed Church in America, Reformed Judaism, Roman Catholic Church, Seventh Day Adventist, United Churches of Christ, and United Methodist Church. The seventy-seven reading groups who reviewed and deeply influenced the natural language of the CEB translation are located in the following thirteen communities of faith: American Baptist, Apostolic Church of God, Church of the Nazarene, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Disciples of Christ, Episcopal Church, Moravian, National Baptist, Presbyterian Church (USA), Progressive National Baptist, Roman Catholic, United Churches of Christ, and United Methodist Church.

The Common English Bible is translated by persons who are committed to the role of the Bible in worship and in personal or group study. This fresh translation emerges in cultural and religious settings that have changed significantly in the past thirty years. The cultural change for English-speaking readers is so enormous that a modest revision of an older translation is not bold enough. The broader culture prefers the use of natural, straightforward language.

In addition, a “worship reformation” is taking place, exemplified by the use of projected images, texts, and music in contemporary services. With an emphasis on reading it aloud and having it heard well, this new translation is intended to function well in these contexts.

The reading grade level for revisions to the KJV remains as high as the KJV itself, at 11th grade or above. This reading difficulty is caused primarily by translating Hebrew or Greek word order, which produces sentences that sound wooden to the English speaker. Most college graduates read comfortably at a tenth grade reading level, but common speakers of English, more than 80 percent of the persons who speak the language, read comfortably at a 7th or 8th grade level. Each book of the CEB, and each paragraph within, was graded with software for predicting reading level. The CEB is presented at an average 7th grade reading level, with most books (e.g., Matthew) scoring in the 6th grade range. The CEB is presented in a common language that is accessible to persons of all ages and educational achievement. The CEB is for everyone, and it is easier to understand when read during worship or Bible study.

The Common English Bible is translated by many of the best biblical scholars in the world. The CEB is the result of collaboration among two hundred participants under the direction of the Common English Bible Editorial Board, which includes ten editors.

Each of the translators was selected on the basis of published scholarship for a particular book of the Bible. Each book of the CEB began with a lead translator whose work was revised by a consulting translator. A focus group in a congregation then read the book aloud and commented on difficult vocabulary or awkward expressions. A readability editor (with expertise in education and curriculum), proposed style improvements to the text, and a senior editor then made appropriate revisions to each book.

The CEB is sponsored and endorsed by the Common English Bible Committee, which is an alliance of mainstream Protestant denominational publishers, including Presbyterian (USA), Episcopalian, United Methodist, Disciples of Christ, and United Church of Christ representatives.

Visit www.commonenglish.com to learn more about this new translation. Compare the Common English Bible to the older English editions of the Bible, and check it out for yourself.

MATTHEW

Genealogy of Jesus

1 A record of the ancestors of Jesus Christ, Son of David, Son of Abraham:

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac.

Isaac was the father of Jacob.

Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.

3 Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar.

Perez was the father of Hezron.

Hezron was the father of Aram.

4 Aram was the father of Aminadab.

Aminadab was the father of Nahshon.

Nahshon was the father of Salmon.

5 Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab.

Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth.

Obed was the father of Jesse.

6 Jesse was the father of David the king.

David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.

7 Solomon was the father of Rehoboam.

Rehoboam was the father of Abijah.

Abijah was the father of Asaph.

8 Asaph was the father of Jehoshaphat.

Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram.

Joram was the father of Uzziah.

9 Uzziah was the father of Jotham.

Jotham was the father of Ahaz.

Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah.

10 Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh.

Manasseh was the father of Amos.

Amos was the father of Josiah.

11 Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

12 After the exile to Babylon, Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel.

Salathiel was the father of Zerubbabel.

13 Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud.

Abiud was the father of Eliakim.

Eliakim was the father of Azor.

14 Azor was the father of Zadok.

Zadok was the father of Achim.

Achim was the father of Eliud.

¹⁵ Eliud was the father of Eleazar.

Eleazar was the father of Matthan.

Matthan was the father of Jacob.

¹⁶ Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary—of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Christ.

¹⁷ So there were fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen generations from the exile to Babylon to the Christ.

Birth of Jesus

¹⁸ The birth of Jesus Christ happened this way. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off the engagement quietly. ²⁰ As he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child who has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ²² Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

²³ *Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,*

And they will call him, Emmanuel.^a

(*Emmanuel* means "God with us.")

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did just as the angel of God commanded and took Mary as his wife. ²⁵ But he didn't have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. Joseph called him Jesus.

Coming of the magi

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judah during the reign of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. ² They said, "Where is the one who is born king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him."

³ When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and the whole of Jerusalem was troubled with him. ⁴ He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They said, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

^aIsa 7:14

⁶ *You, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
you aren't at all least among the rulers of Judah;
because from you will come one who governs,
who will shepherd my people Israel.*^b

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you've found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him." ⁹ When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star that they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. ¹¹ They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

Escape to Egypt

¹³ When the magi had departed, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up. Take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod will soon search for the child in order to kill him." ¹⁴ Joseph got up and, during the night, took the child and his mother into Egypt. ¹⁵ He stayed there until Herod died. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: *I have called my son out of Egypt.*^c

Murder of the Bethlehem children

¹⁶ When Herod knew the magi had fooled him, he grew very angry. He sent soldiers to kill all the male children in Bethlehem and in all the surrounding territory who were two years old and younger, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. ¹⁷ This fulfilled the word spoken through Jeremiah the prophet:

¹⁸ *A voice was heard in Ramah;*

weeping and much grieving.

Rachel weeping for her children,

and she did not want to be comforted,

because they were no more.^d

^bMic 5:2; 2 Sam 5:2 ^cHos 11:1 ^dJer 31:15

Return from Egypt

¹⁹After King Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. ²⁰“Get up,” the angel said, “and take the child and his mother and go into the land of Israel. Those who were trying to kill the child are dead.” ²¹Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went into the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus ruled over Judea in place of his father Herod, Joseph was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he went into the area of Galilee. ²³He settled in a city called Nazareth so that what was spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled: He will be called a Nazorean.

Ministry of John the Baptist

3 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the desert of Judea announcing, ²“Change your hearts and lives, because the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³He was the one of whom Isaiah the prophet spoke when he said:

*The voice of one shouting in the desert,
“Prepare the way for the Lord;
straighten out the paths for him.”^e*

⁴John wore clothes made of camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey.

⁵People from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all around the Jordan River came to him. ⁶As they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River. ⁷Many Pharisees and Sadducees came to be baptized by John. He said to them, “You children of snakes! Who warned you to escape from the angry judgment that will happen soon? ⁸Produce fruit that shows you have changed your hearts and lives. ⁹And don’t even think about saying to yourselves, ‘Abraham is our father.’ I say to you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit will be chopped down and tossed into the fire. ¹¹I baptize with water those of you who have changed your hearts and lives. The one who is coming after me is stronger than I am. I’m not worthy to carry his sandals. He is the one who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹²The shovel he uses to sift between the wheat and the husks is in his hands. He’ll clean out his threshing area and bring the wheat into his barn. But he’ll burn the husks with a fire that can’t be put out.”

^e Isa 40:3

Baptism of Jesus

¹³At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan so that John would baptize him. ¹⁴John tried to stop him and said, “I need to be baptized by you, yet you come to me?”

¹⁵Jesus answered, “Allow it. This is necessary to fulfill all righteousness.”

So John agreed to baptize Jesus. ¹⁶When Jesus was baptized, he immediately came up out of the water. Heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God flying down like a dove and resting on him. ¹⁷A voice from heaven said, “This is my Son whom I love; I’m very pleased with him.”

Temptation of Jesus

4 Then the Spirit led Jesus up into the desert so that the devil might tempt him. ²Now after he had fasted for forty days and forty nights, he was starving. ³The tempter came to him and said, “Since you’re the Son of God, order these stones to become bread.”

⁴Jesus answered, “It’s written, *People won’t live only by bread, but by every word that comes out of God’s mouth.*”^f

⁵After that the devil brought him into the holy city, stood him at the highest point of the temple, and said to him, ⁶“Since you’re the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, *I will command my angels concerning you, and they will take you up in their hands so that you do not hit your foot on a stone.*”^g

⁷Jesus replied, “Again it is written, *You will not test the Lord your God.*”^h

⁸Then the devil brought him to a very high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹and said, “I’ll give you all these if you bow down and worship me.”

¹⁰Jesus responded, “Go away, Satan, because it’s written, *You will worship the Lord your God and serve only him.*”ⁱ ¹¹At that the devil left him, and angels came and took care of him.

Move to Galilee

¹²Now when Jesus heard that John was arrested, he went away into Galilee. ¹³He left Nazareth and settled in Capernaum, which lies alongside the sea in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴This fulfilled what Isaiah the prophet said:

^fDeut 8:3 ^gPs 91:11-12 ^hDeut 6:16 ⁱDeut 6:13

¹⁵ *Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
alongside the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,
¹⁶ the people who lived in the dark have seen a great light,
and a light has come upon those who lived in the region and in
shadow of death.¹*

¹⁷From that time Jesus began to announce, “Change your hearts and lives, because the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Calling of the first disciples

¹⁸As Jesus walked alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, because they were fishermen. ¹⁹He said to them, “Come, follow me, and I’ll show you how to fish for people.” ²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹Continuing on, he saw another set of brothers, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in the boat with Zebedee their father repairing their nets, and he called them. ²²Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Ministry to the crowds

²³Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues. He announced the good news of the kingdom and healed every disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴News about him spread into all Syria. People brought to him all those who had various kinds of diseases, those experiencing pain, those possessed by demons, those with epilepsy, and those who were paralyzed, and he healed them. ²⁵Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from the areas beyond the Jordan.

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain. He sat down and his disciples came to him. ²He taught them, saying:

Happy people

³“Happy are people who are poor in spirit, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

⁴“Happy are people who grieve, because they’ll be made glad.

⁵“Happy are people who are humble, because they’ll inherit the earth.

⁶“Happy are people who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, because they’ll be fed until they are full.

¹Isa 9:1-2

⁷“Happy are people who show mercy, because they’ll receive mercy.

⁸“Happy are people who have pure hearts, because they’ll see God.

⁹“Happy are people who make peace, because they’ll be called God’s children.

¹⁰“Happy are people whose lives are made miserable because they are righteous, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

¹¹“Happy are you when people insult you and make your life miserable and speak all kinds of bad and false things about you, all because of me. ¹²Be full of joy and be glad, because you have a great reward in heaven. For, in the same way, people made life miserable for the prophets who came before you.

Salt and light

¹³“You’re the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its saltiness, how will it become salty again? It’s good for nothing except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. ¹⁴You’re the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can’t be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead they put it on top of a stand, and it shines on all who are in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.

Jesus and the Law

¹⁷“Don’t even begin to think that I have come to do away with the Law and the Prophets. ¹⁸I haven’t come to do away with them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸I say to you very seriously that as long as heaven and earth exist, neither the smallest letter nor even the smallest stroke of a pen will be erased from the Law until everything there becomes a reality. ¹⁹Therefore whoever ignores one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called the lowest in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does these commands and teaches people to do them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰I say to you that unless your righteousness is greater than the righteousness of the legal experts and the Pharisees, you’ll never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Law of murder

²¹“You have heard that it was said to those who lived long ago, *You shouldn’t commit murder,*^k and all who commit murder will be in danger

^kExod 20:13

of judgment. ²²But I say to you that all who are angry with their brother or sister will be in danger of judgment. If they say to their brother or sister, ‘You idiot,’ they’ll be in danger of being condemned by the governing council. And if they say, ‘You fool,’ they’ll be in danger of fiery hell. ²³Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift at the altar and go. First make things right with your brother or sister and then come back and offer your gift. ²⁵Be sure to make friends quickly with your opponents while you are with them on the way to court. Otherwise they’ll haul you before the judge, the judge will turn you over to the officer of the court, and you’ll be thrown into prison. ²⁶I say to you in all seriousness that you won’t get out of there until you’ve paid the very last penny.

Law of adultery

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, *You shouldn’t commit adultery.*¹ ²⁸But I say to you that every man who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery in his heart. ²⁹And if your right eye causes you to fall into sin, tear it out and throw it away. It’s better that you lose a part of your body than that your whole body be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to fall into sin, chop it off and throw it away. It’s better that you lose a part of your body than that your whole body go into hell.

Law of divorce

³¹“It was said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife must *give her a divorce certificate.*’^m ³²But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife except for sexual unfaithfulness forces her to commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Law of oaths

³³“Again you have heard that it was said to those who lived long ago: *You shouldn’t swear a false oath, but you should follow through on what you have sworn to the Lord.*ⁿ ³⁴But I say to you that you must not swear at all. You must not swear by heaven, because it’s God’s throne. ³⁵You must not swear by the earth, because it’s God’s footstool. You must not swear by Jerusalem, because it’s the city of the great king. ³⁶And you must not swear by your head, because you can’t turn one hair white or black. ³⁷Let your *yes* mean yes, and your *no* mean no. Anything more than this comes from the evil one.

¹Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18 ^mDeut 24:1 ⁿLev 19:12; Num 30:2; Deut 23:21

Law of retaliation

³⁸“You have heard that it was said, *An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.*^o ³⁹But I say to you that you must not oppose those who want to hurt you. When people hit you on your right cheek, you must turn the left cheek to them as well. ⁴⁰When they wish to haul you to court and take your shirt, let them have your coat too. ⁴¹When they force you to go one mile, go with them two. ⁴²Give to those who ask, and don’t refuse those who wish to borrow from you.

Law of love

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, *You should love your neighbor*^p and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who make your life miserable because of your faith ⁴⁵so that you will be acting as children of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes the sun rise on both the evil and the good and sends rain on both the righteous and unrighteous. ⁴⁶If you love only those who love you, what reward do you have? Don’t even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing? Don’t even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸Therefore, just as your heavenly Father is complete in showing love to everyone, so also you must be complete.

Showy religion

6“Be careful that you don’t practice your religion in front of people to draw their attention. If you do, you’ll have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

²“Whenever you give to the poor, don’t blow your trumpet as the play-actors do in the synagogues and in the streets so that they may get praise from people. I assure you that they have their reward. ³But when you give to the poor, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing ⁴so that you may give to the poor in secret. Your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you.

Showy prayer

⁵“When you pray, don’t be like play-actors. They love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners so that people will see them. I assure you that they have their reward. ⁶But when you pray, go to your room, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is present in secret. Your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you.

^oExod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21 ^pLev 19:18

Proper prayer

⁷“When you pray, don’t pour out a flood of empty words, as the Gentiles do. They think that by saying many words they’ll be heard. ⁸You shouldn’t be like them, because your Father knows what you need before you ask. ⁹Pray like this:

Our Father who is in heaven;
let your name be holy.

¹⁰Let your kingdom come;
let what you will be done on earth as it’s done in heaven.

¹¹Give us the bread we need for today.

¹²And forgive us the things we should have done but didn’t,
just as we also forgive those who don’t treat us as they should.

¹³And don’t bring us to the place where we will be tempted,
but rescue us from the evil one.

¹⁴If you forgive people the sins they do to you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you don’t forgive people, neither will your Father forgive you for the sins you do.

Showy fasting

¹⁶“And when you fast, don’t put on a sad face like the play-actors. They distort their faces so people will know they’re fasting. I assure you that they have their reward. ¹⁷When you fast, brush your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸Then you won’t look like you’re fasting to people, but only to your Father who is present in secret. Your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Earthly and heavenly treasures

¹⁹“Stop collecting treasures for your own benefit on earth, where moth and rust eat away and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰Instead, collect treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moth and rust don’t eat away and where thieves don’t break in and steal. ²¹Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Seeing and serving

²²“The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how terrible that darkness will be! ²⁴Nobody can serve two masters. You’ll either hate the one and love the other, or be committed to the one and have contempt for the other.

Worry about necessities

²⁵“Therefore I say to you, don’t worry about your life, what you’ll eat or what you’ll drink, or about your body, what you’ll wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothes? ²⁶Look at the birds in the sky. They don’t sow seed or harvest grain or gather crops into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth much more than they are? ²⁷Who among you can add a single moment to their lives by worrying? ²⁸And why do you worry about clothes? Notice how the lilies in the field grow. They don’t wear themselves out with work, and they don’t spin cloth. ²⁹But I say to you that even Solomon in all of his splendor wasn’t dressed like one of these. ³⁰If God dresses grass in the field so beautifully, even though it’s alive today and tomorrow it’s thrown into the furnace, won’t God do much more for you, you people of weak faith? ³¹Therefore don’t worry and say, ‘What are we going to eat?’ or ‘What are we going to drink?’ or ‘What are we going to wear?’ ³²Gentiles long for all these things. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³Instead, desire first and foremost God’s kingdom and God’s righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴Therefore stop worrying about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Judging

7“Don’t judge, so that you won’t be judged. ²You’ll receive the same judgment you give. Whatever you deal out will be dealt out to you. ³Why do you see the splinter that’s in your brother’s or sister’s eye, but don’t notice the log in your eye? ⁴How can you say to your brother or sister, ‘Let me take the splinter out of your eye,’ when there’s a log in your eye? ⁵Impostor! First take the log out of your eye, and then you’ll see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother’s or sister’s eye. ⁶Don’t give holy things to dogs, and don’t throw your pearls in front of pigs. They’ll stomp on the pearls, then turn around and attack you.

Asking, seeking, knocking

⁷“Ask, and you’ll receive. Search, and you’ll find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives. And everyone who searches finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door is opened. ⁹Who among you will give your children a stone when they ask for bread? ¹⁰Or give them a snake when they ask for fish? ¹¹Even though you’re evil you know how to give good gifts to your children. All the more then will your heavenly Father give good things to those who

ask. ¹²Therefore, you should do the same to people as you want people to do to you; this is the Law and the Prophets.

Narrow gate

¹³“Go in through the narrow gate. The gate that leads to destruction is broad and the road wide, so many people enter through it. ¹⁴But the gate that leads to life is narrow and the road difficult, so few people find it.

Tree and fruit

¹⁵“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you dressed like sheep, but inside they’re vicious wolves. ¹⁶You’ll know them by their fruit. Do people get bunches of grapes from thorny weeds, or do they get figs from thistles? ¹⁷In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, and every rotten tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree can’t produce bad fruit. And a rotten tree can’t produce good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Therefore you’ll know them by their fruit.

Entrance requirements

²¹“Not everybody who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will get into the kingdom of heaven. Only those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven will enter. ²²On the day of judgment, many people will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in your name and expel demons in your name and do lots of miracles in your name?’ ²³Then I’ll tell them, ‘I’ve never known you. Get away from me, you people who do wrong.’

Two foundations

²⁴“Everybody who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise builder who built a house on bedrock. ²⁵The rain fell, the floods came, and the wind blew and beat against that house. It didn’t fall because it was firmly set on bedrock. ²⁶But everybody who hears these words of mine and doesn’t put them into practice will be like a fool who built a house on sand. ²⁷The rain fell, the floods came, and the wind blew and beat against that house. It fell and was completely destroyed.”

Crowd’s response

²⁸When Jesus finished these words, the crowds were amazed at this teaching ²⁹because he was teaching them like someone with authority and not like their legal experts.

Healing a man with leprosy

8 Now when Jesus had come down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. ²A man with leprosy came, bowed before him, and said, “Lord, if you want, you can make me clean.”

³Jesus reached out his hand and touched him, saying, “I want to; become clean.” Immediately he was made clean of his leprosy. ⁴Jesus said, “Make sure you don’t say anything to anybody. But go show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

Healing of the centurion’s servant

⁵When Jesus went into Capernaum, a centurion approached, ⁶pleading with him, “Lord, my servant is flat on his back at home, paralyzed, and his suffering is awful.”

⁷Jesus responded, “I’ll come and heal him.”

⁸But the centurion replied, “Lord, I’m not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word and my servant will be healed. ⁹I’m a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes. And I say to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

¹⁰When Jesus heard this he was amazed and said to the people following him, “I say to you with all seriousness that even in Israel I haven’t found anybody who has this kind of faith. ¹¹I say to you that there are many who’ll come from east and west and sit down to eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹²But the children of the kingdom will be thrown outside into the darkness. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth.” ¹³Jesus said to the centurion, “Go; it will be done for you just as you have believed.” And his servant was healed that very moment.

Healing of many people

¹⁴Jesus went into Peter’s house and saw Peter’s mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and served them. ¹⁶That evening they brought to him many who were demon-possessed. He threw the spirits out by just speaking a word. He healed everyone who was sick. ¹⁷This happened so that what Isaiah the prophet said would be fulfilled: *He is the one who took our illnesses and carried away our diseases.*⁹

⁹Isa 53:4

Discussions about following

¹⁸Now when Jesus saw the crowd, he ordered his disciples to go over to the other side of the lake. ¹⁹A legal expert came and said to him, “Teacher, I’ll follow you wherever you go.”

²⁰Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests. But the Human One^r has no place to lay his head.”

²¹Another man, one of his disciples, said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

²²But Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Calming a storm

²³When Jesus got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴A huge storm arose on the lake so that waves were sloshing over the boat. But Jesus was asleep. ²⁵They came and woke him, saying, “Lord, rescue us! We’re going to die!”

²⁶He said to them, “Why are you afraid, you people of weak faith?” Then he got up and gave orders to the winds and the lake, and there was a great calm.

²⁷The people were amazed and said, “What kind of person is this that he gives orders to the winds and the sea, and they obey him?”

Graveyard healing

²⁸When Jesus arrived on the other side in the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed came from among the tombs to meet him. They were so violent that nobody could travel on that road. ²⁹They cried out, “What have you to do with us, Son of God? Have you come to torture us before the time of judgment?”

³⁰Now far off in the distance there was a large herd of pigs feeding. ³¹The demons begged him, “If you throw us out, send us into the herd of pigs.”

³²Then he said to the demons, “Go away,” and they left and went into the pigs. The whole herd rushed down the cliff into the lake and drowned. ³³Those who tended the pigs ran into the city and told everything that had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴Then the whole city came out and met Jesus. When they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

^rOr Son of Man

Healing of a man who was paralyzed

⁹Boarding a boat, Jesus crossed to the other side of the lake and went into his own city. ²People brought to him a man who was paralyzed, lying on a cot. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man who was paralyzed, “Cheer up, my child, your sins are forgiven.”

³Some legal experts said among themselves, “This man is insulting God.”

⁴But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said, “Why do you think evil things in your hearts? ⁵Is it easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? ⁶But so you’ll know that the Human One^s has authority on the earth to forgive sins”—he said to the man who was paralyzed—“Get up, take your cot, and go home.” ⁷He got up and went home. ⁸When the crowds saw what had happened, they were afraid and praised God who had given such authority to human beings.

Calling of Matthew

⁹As Jesus was leaving there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax booth. He said to him, “Follow me,” and he stood up and followed him. ¹⁰As Jesus sat down to eat in Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners joined Jesus and his disciples at the table.

¹¹But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹²Jesus heard and said, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor, but sick people do. ¹³Go and learn what this means: *I want mercy and not sacrifice.* ¹⁴I didn’t come to call righteous people but sinners.”

Question about fasting

¹⁴At that time John’s disciples came and said, “Why do we and the Pharisees frequently fast, but your disciples never fast?”

¹⁵Jesus responded, “The wedding guests can’t mourn while the groom is still with them, can they? But the days will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and then they’ll fast. ¹⁶Nobody sews a piece of new, unshrunk cloth on old clothes because the patch tears away the cloth and makes a worse tear. ¹⁷Nobody pours new wine into old wineskins. If they did, the wineskins would burst, the wine would spill, and the skins would be ruined. In fact, people pour new wine into new wineskins, and thus keep both safe.”

^sOr Son of Man ¹⁴Hos 6:6

*A ruler's daughter,
and the woman who touched Jesus' clothes*

¹⁸While Jesus was speaking to them, a ruler came and knelt in front of him, saying, "My daughter has just died. But come and lay your hand on her, and she'll live." ¹⁹So Jesus and his disciples got up and went with him. ²⁰Then, look, a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years came up from behind Jesus and touched the edge of his robe. ²¹She thought, "If I only touch his robe I'll be healed."

²²When Jesus turned and saw her, he said, "Be encouraged, daughter. Your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed from that time on.

²³When Jesus went into the ruler's house, he saw the flute players and the distressed crowd. ²⁴He said, "Go away, because the little girl isn't dead but is asleep"; but they laughed at him. ²⁵After he had sent the crowd away, Jesus went in and touched her hand, and the little girl rose up. ²⁶News about this spread throughout that whole region.

Healing of two blind men

²⁷As Jesus departed, two blind men followed him, crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David."

²⁸When he came into the house, the blind men approached him. Jesus said to them, "Do you believe I can do this?"

"Yes, Lord," they replied.

²⁹Then Jesus touched their eyes and said, "It will happen for you just as you have believed." ³⁰Their eyes were opened. Then Jesus sternly warned them, "Make sure nobody knows about this." ³¹But they went out and spread the word about him throughout that whole region.

Healing of a man unable to speak

³²As they were leaving, people brought to him a man who was demon-possessed and unable to speak. ³³When Jesus had thrown out the demon, the mute man began speaking. The crowds were amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

³⁴But the Pharisees said, "He throws out demons with the help of the ruler of demons."

Compassion

³⁵Jesus traveled among all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, announcing the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were troubled and helpless,

like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The size of the harvest is bigger than you can imagine, but there are few workers. ³⁸Therefore plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers for the harvest."

Mission of the Twelve

10 He called his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits to throw them out and to heal every disease and every sickness. ²Here are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, who is called Peter; and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee; and John his brother; ³Philip; and Bartholomew; Thomas; and Matthew, the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus; and Thad- daeus; ⁴Simon the Zealot; and Judas, who betrayed him.

Commissioning of the Twelve

⁵Jesus sent these twelve out and commanded them, "Don't go among the Gentiles or into a Samaritan city. ⁶Go instead to the lost sheep, to the people of Israel. ⁷As you go, make this announcement: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' ⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with leprosy, and throw out demons. You received without having to pay. Therefore give without demanding payment. ⁹Don't get gold or silver or copper coins for your money belts to take on your trips, ¹⁰or a backpack for the road or two shirts or sandals or a walking stick. For workers deserve to be fed. ¹¹Whatever city or village you go into, find somebody in it who is worthy and stay there until you go on your way. ¹²When you go into a house, say, 'Peace!' ¹³If the house is worthy, let your peace come into it. But if the house isn't worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone refuses to receive you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet as you leave that house or city. ¹⁵I assure you that it'll be more bearable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on Judgment Day than it will be for that city.

Response of persecution

¹⁶"Look, I'm sending you as sheep among wolves. Therefore be wise as snakes and innocent as doves. ¹⁷Watch out for people—because they'll hand you over to councils and they'll beat you in their synagogues. ¹⁸They'll haul you in front of governors and even kings because of me so that you may give your testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹Whenever they hand you over, don't worry about how to speak or what you'll say, because what you can say will be given to you at that

moment. ²⁰You aren't doing the talking, but the Spirit of my Father is doing the talking through you. ²¹Brothers and sisters will hand each other over to death. A father will turn his child in. Children will rise up against their parents and have them executed. ²²All people will hate you on account of my name. But whoever stands firm until the end will be saved. ²³Whenever they persecute you in one city, escape to the next, because I assure that you'll not go through all the cities of Israel before the Human One^u comes.

²⁴"Disciples aren't greater than their teacher, and slaves aren't greater than their master. ²⁵It's enough for disciples to be like their teacher and slaves like their master. If they've called the head of the house Beelzebul, it's certain that they'll call the members of his household by even worse names.

Whom to fear

²⁶"Therefore don't be afraid of those people because there's nothing covered that won't be uncovered, and nothing secret that won't be brought out into the open. ²⁷What I say to you in the darkness tell in the light, and what you hear whispered announce from the rooftops. ²⁸Don't be afraid of those who kill the body but can't kill the soul. Instead be afraid of the one who can destroy both body and soul in hell. ²⁹Aren't two sparrows sold for a small coin? But not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father knowing about it already. ³⁰Even all the hairs of your head are counted. ³¹Don't be afraid. You're worth more than many sparrows.

Confessing Christ to people

³²"Therefore all who will acknowledge me before people, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven. ³³But all who deny me before people, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

Trouble in the family

³⁴"Don't think that I've come to bring peace to the earth. I haven't come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵For I've come to turn a man *against his father and a daughter against her mother and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law*. ³⁶*People's enemies are members of their own households.*^v

³⁷"Those who love father or mother more than me aren't worthy of me. Those who love son or daughter more than me aren't worthy of

^uOr *Son of Man* ^vMic 7:6

me. ³⁸Those who don't pick up their cross and follow me aren't worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their lives will lose them, and those who lose their lives because of me will find them.

Rewards

⁴⁰"Those who receive you are also receiving me, and those who receive me are receiving the one who sent me. ⁴¹Those who receive a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. Those who receive a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. ⁴²I assure you that everybody who gives even a cup of cold water to these little ones because they're my disciples won't lose their reward."

Ministry to the people

11 When Jesus finished teaching his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

Question from John the Baptist

²Now when John heard in prison about the things Jesus was doing, he sent word by his disciples to Jesus, asking, ³"Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"

⁴Jesus responded, "Go and report to John what you hear and see. ⁵*Those who were blind are able to see. Those who were crippled are walking. Those who had leprosy are clean. Those who were deaf now hear. Those who were dead are raised up. The poor have good news proclaimed to them.*^w ⁶Happy are those who don't stumble from the way because of me."

Appeal of John's ministry

⁷When they had gone, Jesus spoke to the crowds about John, "What did you go out to the desert to see? A stalk blowing in the wind? ⁸What did you go out to see? A man wearing refined clothes? Look, those who wear refined clothes are in royal palaces. ⁹What did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, actually more than a prophet. ¹⁰He is the one of whom it is written: *Look, I am sending my messenger before you, who will prepare his way before you.*^x

Significance of John's ministry

¹¹"I assure you that no greater human being has ever been born than John the Baptist. Yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is

^wIsa 35:5-6; 61:1 ^xMal 3:1

greater than he. ¹²And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven is violently attacked as violent people seize it. ¹³All the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴If you're willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵Let the person who has ears hear.

This generation

¹⁶"To what will I compare this generation? It is like a child sitting in the market calling out to others, ¹⁷"We played the flute and you didn't dance, we sang a funeral song and you didn't mourn.' ¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' ¹⁹Yet the Human One^y came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is proved to be right by her works."

Condemnation of Bethsaida and Capernaum

²⁰Then he began to scold the cities where he had done his greatest miracles because they didn't change their hearts and lives. ²¹"How terrible it will be for you, Chorazin! How terrible it will be for you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had happened in Tyre and Sidon, they would have changed their hearts and lives and put on sackcloth and ashes a long time ago. ²²But I say to you that it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on Judgment Day than it will be for you. ²³And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to heaven? No, you will be thrown down to hell. For if the miracles that were done in you had happened in Sodom, it would still be here today. ²⁴But I say to you that it will be more bearable for the land of Sodom on the Judgment Day than it will be for you."

The Father and the Son

²⁵At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you've hidden these things from those who are wise and intelligent and have shown them to babies. ²⁶Yes, Father, because that was exactly what you wanted to do.

²⁷"My Father has handed all things over to me. Nobody knows the Son except the Father. And nobody knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son decides to show the Father.

²⁸"Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Put on my yoke, and learn from me.

^yOr Son of Man

I'm gentle and humble in my heart. And you'll find rest for your selves. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Working on the Sabbath

12 At that time Jesus went through the wheat fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and picked heads of wheat and ate them. ²When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are breaking the Sabbath law."

³But he said to them, "Haven't you read what David did when he and those with him were hungry? ⁴He went into God's house and broke the law by eating the bread of the presence, which only the priests were allowed to eat. ⁵Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple treat the Sabbath as any other day and are still innocent? ⁶But I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. ⁷If you had known what this means, *I want mercy and not sacrifice,*² you wouldn't have condemned the innocent. ⁸For the Human One^a is Lord of the Sabbath."

Healing on the Sabbath

⁹Jesus left that place and went into their synagogue. ¹⁰A man with a withered hand was there. Wanting to bring charges against him, they asked, "Does the Law allow a person to heal on the Sabbath?"

¹¹Jesus replied, "Who among you has a sheep that falls into a pit on the Sabbath and will not take hold of it and pull it out? ¹²How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! So the Law allows a person to do what is good on the Sabbath." ¹³Then Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out and it was made healthy, just like the other one. ¹⁴But the Pharisees went out and met in order to find a way to destroy Jesus.

Healing the crowd

¹⁵Jesus knew what they intended to do, so he went away from there. Large crowds followed him, and he healed them all. ¹⁶But he ordered them not to spread the word about him ¹⁷so that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled:

¹⁸ *Look, my Servant whom I chose,
the one I love, in whom my soul finds great pleasure.
I'll put my Spirit upon him,
and he'll announce judgment to the Gentiles.*

²Hos 6:6 ^aOr Son of Man

¹⁹ *He won't argue or shout,
and nobody will hear his voice in the streets.*

²⁰ *He won't break a bent stalk,
and he won't snuff out a smoldering wick,
until he makes justice win.*

²¹ *And the Gentiles will put their hope in his name.^b*

²² They brought to him a demon-possessed man who was blind and unable to speak. Jesus healed him so that he could both speak and see.

²³ All the crowds were amazed and said, "This man couldn't be the Son of David, could he?"

²⁴ When the Pharisees heard, they said, "This man throws out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons."

²⁵ Because Jesus knew their thoughts, he replied, "Every kingdom involved in civil war becomes a wasteland. Every city or house that's torn apart by divisions will collapse. ²⁶ If Satan throws out Satan, he is at war with himself. How then can his kingdom continue to exist? ²⁷ And if I throw out demons by Beelzebul, then by whom do your people throw them out? Therefore they'll be your judges. ²⁸ But if I throw out demons by God's Spirit, then God's kingdom has come to you. ²⁹ Can people go into a house that belongs to a strong man and steal his possessions, unless they first tie up the strong man? Then they can rob his house. ³⁰ Those who aren't with me are against me. And those who don't work with me to gather are working to scatter.

Insulting the Holy Spirit

³¹ "Therefore I tell you that people will be forgiven for every sin and insult to God. But insulting the Holy Spirit won't be forgiven. ³² And whoever speaks a word against the Human One^c will be forgiven. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit won't be forgiven, not in this age or in the age that is coming.

Trees and fruits

³³ "Either consider the tree good and its fruit good, or consider the tree rotten and its fruit rotten. For a tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴ Children of snakes! How can you speak good things while you are evil? For what fills the heart comes out of the mouth. ³⁵ Good people bring out good things from their good treasure. But evil people bring out

^bIsa 42:1-4 ^cOr *Son of Man*

evil things from their evil treasure. ³⁶ I tell you that people will have to answer on Judgment Day for every useless word they speak. ³⁷ For by your words you'll be either judged innocent or condemned as guilty."

Request for a sign

³⁸ At that time some of the legal experts and the Pharisees requested of Jesus, "Teacher, we'd like to see a sign from you."

³⁹ But he replied, "An evil and unfaithful generation searches for a sign. But it won't receive any sign except Jonah's sign. ⁴⁰ Just as *Jonah was in the whale's belly for three days and three nights*,^d so will the Human One^e be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. ⁴¹ The citizens of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it as guilty, because they changed their hearts and lives in response to Jonah's preaching. And look, something greater than Jonah is here. ⁴² The queen of the south will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it as guilty because she came from a most distant land to hear Solomon's wisdom. And look, something greater than Solomon is here.

Unclean spirit seeking a home

⁴³ "When an unclean spirit leaves a person, it wanders through dry places looking for a place to rest. But it doesn't find any place. ⁴⁴ Then it says, 'I'll go back to the house I left.' When it comes, it finds the place vacant, cleaned up, and decorated. ⁴⁵ Then it comes and brings with it seven other spirits worse than itself. They go in and make their home there. That person is worse off at the end than at the beginning. This is the way it'll be also for this evil generation."

Jesus' family

⁴⁶ While Jesus was speaking to the crowds, his mother and brothers stood outside trying to speak with him. ⁴⁷ Someone said to him, "Look, your mother and brothers are outside wanting to speak with you."

⁴⁸ Jesus replied, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" ⁴⁹ He stretched out his hand toward his disciples and said, "Look, my mother and my brothers. ⁵⁰ For everyone who does the will of my Father who is in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

^dJonah 1:17 ^eOr *Son of Man*

Setting for the parables

13 On that day Jesus went out of the house and sat down beside the lake. ²Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat down. The whole crowd was standing on the shore.

Parable of the farmer

³He said many things to them in parables. “Look, a farmer went out to spread seed. ⁴As he was spreading seed, some fell on the path, and birds came and ate it. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground where the soil was shallow. They sprouted immediately because the soil wasn’t deep. ⁶But when the sun came up, it scorched the plants; and since they didn’t have roots, they dried up. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorny plants. The thorny plants grew and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and bore fruit, in one case a yield of a hundred to one, in another case a yield of sixty to one, and in another case a yield of thirty to one. ⁹Everyone who has ears should hear.”

Why Jesus speaks in parables

¹⁰Jesus’ disciples came and said to him, “Why do you use parables when you speak to the crowds?”

¹¹Jesus replied, “Because you’ve received the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but they haven’t. ¹²For those who have will receive more and they’ll have more than enough. But as for those who don’t have, even the little they have will be taken away from them. ¹³This is why I speak to them in parables: although they see, they don’t see; and although they hear, they don’t hear or understand. ¹⁴And what Isaiah prophesied has become completely true for them:

*You will hear, to be sure, but never understand;
and you will certainly see but never recognize what you are seeing.*

¹⁵*For this people’s heart has become so thick
that nobody can get through to it,
and they’ve become hard of hearing,
and they’ve shut their eyes,
so that they won’t see with their eyes
or hear with their ears
or understand with their hearts,*

and change their hearts and lives that I may heal them.^f

¹⁶“But your eyes are fortunate because they see. Your ears are fortunate because they hear. ¹⁷For I tell you the truth when I say that many

prophets and righteous people wanted very much to see what you see and hear what you hear, but didn’t.

Explanation of the parable of the farmer

¹⁸“Hear then the parable of the farmer. ¹⁹Whenever people hear the word about the kingdom and don’t understand it, the evil one comes and carries off what was planted in their hearts. This is the seed that was sown on the path. ²⁰As for the seed that was spread on rocky ground, this stands for people who hear the word and immediately receive it with joy. ²¹Because they have no roots, they last for only a little while. When they experience distress or abuse because of the word, they immediately fall away. ²²As for the seed that was spread among thorny plants, this stands for those who hear the word but the worries of this life and the false appeal of wealth choke the word, and it bears no fruit. ²³As for what was planted on good soil, this stands for those who hear and understand, and bear fruit and produce—in one case a yield of a hundred to one, in another case a yield of sixty to one, and in another case a yield of thirty to one.”

Parable of the weeds

²⁴Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like someone who planted good seed in his field. ²⁵While people were sleeping, an enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶When the stalks sprouted and bore grain, then the weeds also appeared.

²⁷“The servants of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Master, didn’t you plant good seed in your field? Then how is it that it has weeds?’

²⁸“‘An enemy has done this,’ he answered.

“The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us to go and gather them?’

²⁹“But the landowner said, ‘No, for fear that when you gather the weeds, you’ll pull up the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both grow side by side until the harvest. And at harvest time I’ll say to the harvesters, ‘Gather first the weeds and tie them together in bundles to be burned. But bring the wheat into my barn.’”

Parable of the mustard seed

³¹He presented another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that someone took and planted in his field. ³²It’s the smallest of all seeds. But when it’s grown, it’s the largest of all vegetable plants. It becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.”

^fIsa 6:9-10

Parable of the yeast

³³He spoke another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast, which a woman took and hid in a bushel of wheat flour until the yeast had worked its way through the whole.”

Purpose of parables to the crowds

³⁴Jesus said all these things to the crowds in parables, and he didn’t speak to the crowds except with a parable. ³⁵This was to fulfill what the prophet spoke:

I’ll open my mouth in parables

I’ll declare what has been hidden since the beginning of the world.^g

Explanation of the parable of the weeds

³⁶Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.”

³⁷Jesus replied, “The one who plants the good seed is the Human One.^h ³⁸The field is the world. And the good seeds are the children of the kingdom. But the weeds are the children of the evil one. ³⁹The enemy who planted them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the present age. The harvesters are the angels. ⁴⁰Just as people gather weeds and burn them in the fire, so it will be at the end of the present age. ⁴¹The Human Oneⁱ will send his angels, and they’ll gather out of his kingdom all things that cause people to fall away and all people who engage in sin. ⁴²He’ll throw them into a burning furnace. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father’s kingdom. Those who have ears should hear.”

Parable of the treasure

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure that somebody hid in the field, which someone else found and covered up. Full of joy, the finder sold everything and bought that field.

Parable of the merchant

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls. ⁴⁶When he found one very precious pearl, he went and sold all that he owned and bought it.

Parable of the net

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that people threw into the lake and gathered all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸When it was full, they pulled

^gPs 78:2 ^hOr *Son of Man* ⁱOr *Son of Man*

it to the shore where they sat down and put the good fish together into containers. But the bad fish they threw away. ⁴⁹That’s just the way it will be at the end of the present age. The angels will go out and separate the evil people from the righteous people, ⁵⁰and will throw the evil ones into a burning furnace. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth.

Treasures new and old

⁵¹“Have you understood all these things?”

They said to him, “Yes.”

⁵²Then Jesus said to them, “Therefore every legal expert who has been trained as a disciple for the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings old and new things out of his or her treasure.”

Jesus in his hometown

⁵³When Jesus finished these parables, he departed. ⁵⁴When he came to his hometown, he taught them in their synagogue. They were surprised and said, “Where did he get this wisdom? Where did he get the power to work miracles? ⁵⁵Isn’t he the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother named Mary? Aren’t James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas his brothers? ⁵⁶And his sisters, aren’t they here with us? Where did he get these things?” ⁵⁷They were repulsed by him and fell into sin.

But Jesus said to them, “Prophets are honored everywhere except in their own hometowns and in their own households.” ⁵⁸He was unable to do many miracles there because of their disbelief.

Death of John the Baptist

14 At that time Herod the ruler^j heard the news about Jesus. ²He said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist. He’s been raised from the dead. That’s why these miraculous powers are at work in him.” ³Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison because of Herodias, the wife of Herod’s brother Philip.

⁴That’s because John had told Herod, “It’s against the law for you to marry her.”

⁵Although he wanted to kill him, Herod feared the crowd because they thought John was a prophet. ⁶But at Herod’s birthday party Herodias’ daughter danced in front of the guests and thrilled Herod.

^jOr *tetrarch*, which refers to a prince over a small region

⁷Then he swore to give her anything she asked.

⁸At her mother's urging, the girl said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a plate." ⁹Although the king was upset, because of the oath and the guests he commanded that they give it to her. ¹⁰Then he had John beheaded in prison. ¹¹They brought his head and gave it to the girl and she brought it to her mother. ¹²But his disciples came and took the body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus what had happened.

Feeding the five thousand

¹³When Jesus heard about John, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. When the crowds learned this, they followed him on foot from the cities. ¹⁴When Jesus arrived and saw a large crowd, he had compassion for them and healed those who were sick. ¹⁵That evening his disciples came and said to him, "This is a deserted place and it's getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves."

¹⁶But Jesus said to them, "There's no need to send them away. You give them something to eat."

¹⁷They replied, "We don't have anything here except five loaves of bread and two fish."

¹⁸He said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹He ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves of bread and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them and broke the loaves apart, and gave them to his disciples. Then the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰Everyone ate until they were full, and they filled twelve baskets with the leftovers. ²¹About five thousand men plus women and children had eaten.

Walking on the water

²²Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead to the other side of the lake while he dismissed the crowds. ²³When he sent them away, he went up onto a mountain by himself to pray. Evening came and he was alone. ²⁴Meanwhile, the boat, fighting a strong headwind, was being battered by the waves and was already far away from land. ²⁵Very early in the morning Jesus came to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified and said, "It's a ghost!" They were so frightened they screamed.

²⁷Just then Jesus spoke to them, "Calm down. It's me. Don't be afraid."

²⁸Peter replied, "Lord, if it's you, order me to come to you on the water."

²⁹And Jesus said, "Come."

Then Peter got out of the boat and was walking on the water toward Jesus. ³⁰But when Peter saw the strong wind, he became frightened. As he began to sink, he shouted, "Lord, rescue me!"

³¹Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him, saying, "You man of weak faith! Why did you begin to have doubts?" ³²When they got into the boat the wind stopped blowing.

³³Then those in the boat worshipped him and said, "You must be the Son of God."

Healing the sick

³⁴Now when he had traveled to the other side, he landed at Genesaret. ³⁵When the people who lived in that place heard, they sent word throughout that whole region, and they brought to him all those who were sick. ³⁶Then they begged him that they might just touch the edge of his clothes. All who touched him were cured.

Rules from the elders

15 Then Pharisees and legal experts came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, ²"Why are your disciples breaking the elders' rules handed down to us? They don't wash their hands before they eat."

³Jesus replied, "Why do you break the command of God by the rules handed down to you? ⁴For God said, *Honor your father and your mother,*^k and *The person who speaks against father or mother will certainly be put to death.*¹ ⁵But you say, 'If you tell your father or mother, "Everything I'm expected to contribute to you I'm giving to God as a gift," then you don't have to honor your father.' ⁶So you do away with God's Law for the sake of the rules that have been handed down to you. ⁷Imposers! Isaiah really knew what he was talking about when he prophesied about you, ⁸*This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from me.* ⁹*Their worship of me is empty since they teach instructions that are human rules.*^m

¹⁰Jesus called the crowd near and said to them, "Listen and understand. ¹¹It's not what goes into the mouth that contaminates a person in God's sight. It's what comes out of the mouth that contaminates the person."

¹²Then the disciples came and said to him, "Do you know that the

^kExod 20:12; Deut 5:16 ^lExod 21:17; Lev 20:9 ^mIsa 29:13

Pharisees were offended by what you just said?”

¹³Jesus replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father didn’t plant will be pulled up. ¹⁴Leave them alone. They’re blind people who are guides to blind people. But if a blind person leads another blind person, they’ll both fall into the ditch.”

¹⁵Then Peter spoke up, “Explain this parable to us.”

¹⁶Jesus said, “Don’t you understand yet? ¹⁷Don’t you know that everything that goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸But what goes out of the mouth comes from the heart. And that’s what contaminates a person in God’s sight. ¹⁹Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adultery, sexual immorality, thefts, false testimonies, and insults. ²⁰These contaminate a person in God’s sight. But eating without washing hands doesn’t contaminate in God’s sight.”

Canaanite woman

²¹From there, Jesus went into the regions of Tyre and Sidon. ²²A Canaanite woman from those territories came out and shouted, “Have mercy upon me, Son of David. My daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession.” ²³But he didn’t respond to her at all.

His disciples came and urged him, “Send her away; she’s shouting after us.”

²⁴Jesus replied, “I’ve been sent only to the lost sheep, the people of Israel.”

²⁵But she knelt before him and said, “Lord, help me.”

²⁶He replied, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and toss it to dogs.”

²⁷She said, “Yes, Lord. But even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall off their masters’ table.”

²⁸Jesus answered, “Woman, you have great faith. It will be just as you wish.” And right then her daughter was healed.

Healing of many people

²⁹Jesus moved on from there along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. He went up the mountain and sat down. ³⁰Large crowds came to him, including those who were paralyzed, blind, injured, and unable to speak, and many others. They laid them at his feet, and he healed them. ³¹So the crowd was amazed when they saw those who had been unable to speak talking, and the paralyzed cured, and the injured walking, and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

Feeding the four thousand

³²Now Jesus called his disciples to himself and said, “I feel sorry for the crowd because they have been with me for three days and have nothing to eat. I don’t want to send them away hungry for fear they won’t have enough strength to travel.”

³³His disciples replied, “Where are we going to get enough food in this deserted place to fill the stomachs of such a big crowd?”

³⁴Jesus said, “How much bread do you have?”

They responded, “Seven loaves, and a few fish.”

³⁵He told the crowd to sit on the grass. ³⁶He took the seven loaves of bread and the fish. After he gave thanks, he broke them apart and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ³⁷They all ate until they were full. They collected seven baskets full of leftovers. ³⁸Four thousand men ate, plus women and children. ³⁹After dismissing the crowds, he went into the boat and came to the region of Magadan.

Demand for a sign

16 The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus. In order to tempt him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven.

²But he replied, “At evening you say, ‘It’ll be nice weather because the sky is bright red.’ ³And in the morning you say, ‘There’ll be bad weather today because the sky is cloudy.’ You know how to make sense of the sky’s appearance. But you’re unable to recognize the signs that point to what the time is. ⁴An evil and unfaithful generation searches for a sign. But it won’t receive any sign except Jonah’s sign.” Then he left them and went away.

Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

⁵When the disciples arrived on the other side of the lake, they had forgotten to bring bread. ⁶Jesus said to them, “Watch out and be on your guard for the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

⁷They discussed this among themselves and said, “We didn’t bring any bread.”

⁸Jesus knew what they were discussing and said, “You people of weak faith! Why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you don’t have bread? ⁹Don’t you understand yet? Don’t you remember the five loaves that filled the five thousand and how many baskets of leftovers you gathered? ¹⁰And the seven loaves that filled the four thousand and how many large baskets of leftovers you gathered? ¹¹Don’t you know that I wasn’t talking about bread? But be on your guard for the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” ¹²Then they understood that he wasn’t

telling them to be on their guard for yeast used in making bread. No, he was telling them to watch out for the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Peter's declaration about Jesus

¹³Now when Jesus came into the area of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Human Oneⁿ is?"

¹⁴They replied, "Some say John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. Others Jeremiah or one of the other prophets."

¹⁵He said, "And who do you say that I am?"

¹⁶Simon Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

¹⁷Then Jesus replied, "You are fortunate, Simon son of Jonah, because no human has shown this to you. Rather my Father who is in heaven has shown you. ¹⁸I tell you that you are Peter.^o And I'll build my church on this rock. The gates of the underworld won't be able to stand against it. ¹⁹I'll give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Anything you fasten on earth will be fastened in heaven. Anything you loosen on earth will be loosened in heaven." ²⁰Then he ordered the disciples not to tell anybody that he was the Christ.

First prediction of Jesus' death and resurrection

²¹From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he had to go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and legal experts, and that he had to be killed and raised on the third day. ²²Then Peter took him aside and scolded him, "God forbid, Lord! This won't happen to you." ²³But he turned to Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan. You're a stone that could make me stumble, for you're not thinking God's thought but human thoughts."

Saving and losing life

²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples, "All who want to come after me should say *no* to themselves, take up their cross, and follow me. ²⁵All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me will find them. ²⁶Why would people gain the whole world but lose their lives? Or what will people give in exchange for their lives? ²⁷For the Human One^p is about to come in the majesty of his Father with his angels. And then he'll repay each one for what that person has done. ²⁸I assure you that some standing here won't experience death before they see the Human One^q coming in his kingdom."

ⁿOr Son of Man ^oPeter means rock ^pOr Son of Man ^qOr Son of Man

Jesus' transformation

17 Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother and brought them to the top of a very high mountain. ²He was transformed in front of them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.

³Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Jesus. ⁴Peter reacted to all of this by saying to Jesus, "Lord, it's good that we're here. If you want, I'll put up three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

⁵While he was still speaking, look, a bright cloud stood above them. A voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son whom I love. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!" ⁶Hearing this, the disciples fell on their faces, terrified.

⁷But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." ⁸When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Don't tell anybody about the vision until the Human One^r is raised from the dead."

¹⁰The disciples asked, "Then why do the legal experts say that Elijah must first come?"

¹¹Jesus responded, "Elijah does come first and will restore all things. ¹²In fact, I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they didn't know him. But they did to him whatever they wanted. In the same way the Human One^s is also going to suffer at their hands." ¹³Then the disciples realized he was telling them about John the Baptist.

Healing of a boy who was demon-possessed

¹⁴When they came to the crowd, a man met Jesus. He knelt before him, ¹⁵saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son. He is epileptic and suffers terribly, for he often falls into the fire or the water. ¹⁶I brought him to your disciples, but they couldn't heal him."

¹⁷Jesus answered, "You faithless and crooked generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I put up with you? Bring him here to me." ¹⁸Then Jesus spoke harshly to the demon. And it came out of the child, who was healed from that time on.

¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and said, "Why weren't we able to throw the demon out?"

²⁰"Because you had little faith," he said. "I tell you truly, if you have faith like a mustard seed, you'll say to this mountain, 'Go

^rOr Son of Man ^sOr Son of Man

from here to there,' and it'll go. There'll be nothing that you can't do."^t

Second prediction of Jesus' death and resurrection

²²When the disciples joined each other in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Human One^u is about to be delivered over into the hands of humans. ²³They will kill him. But he'll be raised on the third day." And they were heartbroken.

Paying the temple tax

²⁴When they came to Capernaum, the people who collected the half-shekel temple tax came to Peter and said, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?"

²⁵"Yes," he said.

But when they came into the house, Jesus spoke to Peter first. "What do you think, Simon? From whom do earthly kings collect taxes, from their children or from strangers?"

²⁶"From strangers," he said.

Jesus said to him, "Then the children don't have to pay. ²⁷But just so we don't offend them, go to the lake, throw out a fishhook, and take the first fish you catch. When you open its mouth, you'll find a shekel coin. Take it and pay the tax for both of us."

Greatest in the kingdom

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

²Then he called a little child over, set him among the disciples, ³and said, "I tell you truly that if you don't turn your lives around and become like this child, you'll definitely not enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Those who humble themselves like this little child will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵Whoever receives a child like this in my name receives me.

Falling into sin

⁶"As for whoever causes these little ones who believe in me to trip and fall into sin, it would be better for them to have a huge stone hung around their neck and be drowned in the bottom of the lake. ⁷How terrible it is for the world because of the things that cause people to trip

^t17:21 is omitted in most critical editions of the Gk NT: *This kind doesn't come out except through prayer and fasting.* ^uOr Son of Man

and fall into sin! Such things have to happen, but how terrible it is for the person through whom those things happen! ⁸If your hand or your foot causes you to fall into sin, chop it off and throw it away. It's better to enter into life crippled or lame than to be thrown into the eternal fire with two hands or two feet. ⁹If your eye causes you to fall into sin, pluck it out and throw it away. It's better to enter into life with one eye than to be cast into a burning hell with two eyes.

Parable of the lost sheep

¹⁰"Be careful that you don't look down upon one of these little ones. For I say to you that their angels in heaven are always looking into the face of my Father who is in heaven.^v ¹²What do you think? If someone had a hundred sheep and one of them wandered off, wouldn't he leave the ninety-nine on the hillsides and go and search for the one that wandered off? ¹³If he finds it, I assure you that he is happier about having that one sheep than about the ninety-nine who didn't wander off. ¹⁴In the same way my Father who is in heaven doesn't want to lose one of these little ones.

Sinning brother or sister

¹⁵"If your brother or sister sins against you, go correct them when you are alone together. If they listen to you, then you've won over your brother or sister. ¹⁶But if they won't listen, take with you one or two others so that *every word may be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses.*^w ¹⁷But if they still won't pay attention, report it to the church. If they won't pay attention even to the church, let them be to you like a Gentile and tax collector. ¹⁸I assure you that whatever you fasten on earth will be fastened in heaven. And whatever you loosen on earth will be loosened in heaven. ¹⁹Again I assure you that if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, then my Father who is in heaven will do it for you. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, I'm there with them."

Parable of the unforgiving servant

²¹Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Should I forgive as many as seven times?"

²²Jesus said, "I don't tell you seven times, but rather as many as

^v18:11 is omitted in most critical editions of the Gk NT: *For the Human One has come to save the lost.* ^wDeut 19:15

seventy-seven times.^x ²³Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle accounts, they brought to him a servant who owed him ten thousand talents.^y ²⁵Because the servant didn't have enough to pay it back, the master ordered that he should be sold, along with his wife and children and everything he had, and that the sum should be used as payment. ²⁶But the servant fell down, kneeled before him, and said, 'Please, be patient with me, and I'll pay you back.'^z ²⁷The master had compassion on that servant and released him and forgave him the loan.

²⁸"When that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denaria.^z He grabbed him around the throat and said, 'Pay me back what you owe me.'

²⁹"Then his fellow servant fell down and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I'll pay you back.'³⁰ But he wouldn't. Instead, he threw him into prison until he paid back his debt.

³¹"When his fellow servants saw what happened, they were deeply offended. They came and told their master all that happened. ³²His master called the first servant and said, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you appealed to me. ³³Shouldn't you also have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴His master was furious and handed him over to the guard responsible for punishing prisoners, until he had paid the whole debt.

³⁵"My heavenly Father will also do the same to you if you don't forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Teaching about divorce

19 When Jesus finished saying these things, he left Galilee and came to the area of Judea on the east side of the Jordan. ²Large crowds followed him, and he healed them. ³Some Pharisees came to him. In order to tempt him, they said, "Does the Law allow a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"

⁴Jesus answered, "Haven't you read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female?^a ⁵And God said, 'Because of this a man should leave his father and mother and be joined together with his wife, and the two will be one flesh.'^b ⁶So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore humans shouldn't pull apart whatever God has put together."

⁷They said to him, "Then why did Moses command us to give a divorce certificate and divorce her?"^c

^xOr *seventy times seven*. ^yThis amount is equal to the wages for sixty million days. ^zThis amount is equal to the wages of a hundred days.

^aGen 1:27; 5:2 ^bGen 2:24 ^cDeut 24:1

⁸Jesus replied, "Moses allowed you to divorce your wives because your hearts are unyielding. But it wasn't that way from the beginning. ⁹I say to you that whoever divorces his wife except for sexual unfaithfulness and marries another woman commits adultery."

¹⁰His disciples said to him, "If that's the way things are between a man and his wife, then it's better not to marry."

¹¹He replied, "Not everybody can accept this teaching, but only those who have received the ability to accept it. ¹²For there are eunuchs who've been eunuchs from birth. And there are eunuchs who've been made eunuchs by other people. And there are eunuchs who've made themselves eunuchs on account of the kingdom of heaven. Those who can accept it should accept it."

Little children blessed

¹³Then they brought children to Jesus so that he would place his hands on them and pray. But the disciples scolded them. ¹⁴"Allow the children to come to me," Jesus said. "Don't forbid them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people like these." ¹⁵Then he blessed the children and went away from there.

Rich young man

¹⁶A man approached him and said, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to have eternal life?"

¹⁷Jesus said, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There's only one who is good. But if you want to enter eternal life, obey the commandments."

¹⁸The man said, "Which ones?"

Then Jesus said, "*You shouldn't commit murder. You shouldn't commit adultery. You shouldn't steal. You shouldn't give false testimony.* ¹⁹*Honor your father and mother,*^d and *love your neighbor as you love yourself.*"^e

²⁰The young man replied, "I've obeyed all these. What am I still missing?"

²¹Jesus said, "If you want to be complete, go sell what you own and give the money to the poor. Then you'll have treasure in heaven. And come follow me."

²²But when the young man heard this, he went away very sad, because he had many possessions.

^dExod 20:12-16; Deut 5:16-20 ^eLev 19:18

Teaching about giving up things

²³Then Jesus said to his disciples, “I assure you that it’ll be very hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴In fact, it’s easier for a camel to squeeze through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁵When his disciples heard this, they were very surprised. “Then who can be saved?” they asked.

²⁶Jesus looked at them and said, “It’s impossible with human beings. But all things are possible for God.”

²⁷Then Peter replied, “Look, we’ve left everything and followed you. What will we have?”

²⁸And Jesus said to them, “I assure you who’ve followed me that, when everything is made new, when the Human One^f sits on his magnificent throne, you also will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹And all who’ve left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for the sake of my name will receive one hundred times more and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰But many who are first will be last. And many who are last will be first.

Workers in the vineyard

20“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ²After he agreed with the workers to pay them a denarion,^g he sent them into his vineyard.

³“Then he went out around nine in the morning and saw others standing around the marketplace doing nothing. ⁴He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I’ll pay you whatever is right.’ ⁵And they went.

“Again around noon and then at three in the afternoon, he did the same thing. ⁶Around five in the afternoon he went and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you just standing around here doing nothing all day long?’

⁷“‘Because nobody has hired us,’ they replied.

He responded, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’

⁸“When evening came the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the workers and give them their wages, beginning with the last and moving on finally to the first.’ ⁹When those who were hired at five in the afternoon came, each one received a denarion. ¹⁰Now when those hired first came, they thought they’d receive more. But each of

^fOr Son of Man ^gA denarion was a typical day’s wage.

them also received a denarion. ¹¹When they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²‘These who were hired last worked one hour, and they received the same pay as we did even though we had to work the whole day and endure the heat.’

¹³“But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I did you no wrong. Didn’t I agree to pay you a denarion? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go. I want to give to this one who was hired last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Don’t I have the right to do what I want with what belongs to me? Or is your eye evil because I’m good?’ ¹⁶So those who are last will be first. And those who are first will be last.”

Third prediction of Jesus’ death and resurrection

¹⁷As they were going up to Jerusalem, Jesus took the Twelve aside by themselves on the road. He told them, ¹⁸“Look, we’re going up to Jerusalem. The Human One^h will be handed over to the chief priests and the legal experts. They’ll condemn him to death. ¹⁹They’ll hand him over to the Gentiles to be ridiculed, tortured, and crucified. But he’ll be raised on the third day.”

Request from James and John

²⁰Then the mother of Zebedee’s sons came to him along with her sons. Bowing before him, she asked a favor of him.

²¹“What do you want?” he said to her.

She responded, “Say that these two sons of mine will sit one on your right hand and one on your left in your kingdom.”

²²But Jesus replied to her, “You don’t know what you’re asking! Can you drink from the cup that I’m about to drink from?”

They said to him, “We can.”

²³He said to them, “You’ll drink from my cup. But to sit at my right or left hand isn’t mine to give. It belongs to those for whom my Father prepared it.”

²⁴Now when the ten other disciples heard about this, they became angry with the two brothers. ²⁵But Jesus called them over and said, “You know that those who rule the Gentiles show off their authority over them and their high-ranking officials order them around. ²⁶But that’s not the way it’ll be with you. Whoever wants to be great among you will be your servant. ²⁷Whoever wants to be first among you will be your slave—²⁸just as the Human Oneⁱ didn’t come to be served but rather to serve and to give his life to liberate many people.”

^hOr Son of Man ⁱOr Son of Man

Healing of two blind men

²⁹As they were going out of Jerusalem a large crowd followed him.

³⁰When two blind men sitting along the road heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, “Show us mercy, Lord, Son of David!”

³¹Now the crowd scolded them and told them to be quiet. But they shouted even louder, “Show us mercy, Lord, Son of David!”

³²Jesus stopped in his tracks and called to them. “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

³³“Lord, we want to see,” they replied.

³⁴Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they were able to see, and they followed him.

Entry into Jerusalem

21 Now when they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus gave two disciples a task. ²He said to them, “Go into the village over there. As soon as you enter, you’ll find a donkey tied up and a colt with it. Untie them and bring them to me. ³If anybody says anything to you, say that the Lord needs it.” He sent them off right away. ⁴Now this happened to fulfill what the prophet said, ⁵*Say to Daughter Zion, “Look, your king is coming to you, humble and riding on a donkey, and on a colt the donkey’s offspring.”*⁶ The disciples went and did just as Jesus had ordered them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt and laid their clothes on them. Then he sat on them.

⁸Now a large crowd spread their clothes on the road. Others cut palm branches off the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds in front of him and behind him shouted, “*Hosanna* to the Son of David! *Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*”^k *Hosanna* in the highest!” ¹⁰And when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up. “Who is this?” they asked. ¹¹The crowds answered, “It’s the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Cleansing the temple

¹²Then Jesus went into the temple and threw out all those who were selling and buying there. He pushed over the tables used by those who exchanged money and the chairs of those who sold doves. ¹³He said to them, “It’s written, *My house will be called a house of prayer.*¹ But you’ve made it a cave for robbers.”

¹⁴People who were blind and lame came to Jesus in the temple, and

¹Isa 62:11; Zech 9:9 ^kPs. 118:26 ^lIsa 56:7; Jer 7:11

he healed them. ¹⁵But when the chief priests and legal experts saw the amazing things he was doing and the children shouting in the temple, “*Hosanna* to the Son of David!” they were angry. ¹⁶They said to him, “Do you hear what these children are saying?”

“Yes,” he answered. “Haven’t you ever read that *I’ll bring out praise from the mouths of babies and infants?*”^m ¹⁷Then he left them and went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there.

Cursing the fig tree

¹⁸Early in the morning as he was returning to the city, he was hungry. ¹⁹He saw a fig tree along the road, but when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves. Then he said to it, “You’ll never again bear fruit!” And immediately the fig tree dried up.

²⁰When the disciples saw it, they were amazed. “How did the fig tree dry up so fast?” they asked.

²¹Jesus replied, “I assure you that if you have faith and don’t doubt, you’ll not only do what was done to the fig tree. You’ll even say to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the lake.’ And it will happen.

²²If you have faith, you’ll receive whatever you ask in prayer.”

Question of Jesus’ authority

²³When he came into the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came to him as he was teaching. They asked, “What kind of authority do you have for doing these things? And who gave you this authority?”

²⁴Jesus replied, “I have a question for you. If you tell me the answer, I’ll tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things. ²⁵Where did John get his authority to baptize? Did he get it from heaven or from humans?”

They argued among themselves, “If we say ‘from heaven,’ he’ll say to us, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ ²⁶But we can’t say ‘from humans’ because we’re afraid of the crowd, since everyone thinks that John’s a prophet.” ²⁷Then they replied, “We don’t know.”

Jesus also said to them, “Neither will I tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things.

Parable of two sons

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons. Now he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’

^mLXX Ps 8:3

²⁹“No, I don’t want to,” he replied. But later he changed his mind and went.

³⁰“The father said the same thing to the other son, who replied, ‘Yes, sir.’ But he didn’t go.

³¹“Which one of these two did his father’s will?”

They said, “The first.”

Jesus said to them, “I assure you that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you on the righteous road, and you didn’t believe him. But tax collectors and prostitutes believed him. Yet even after you saw this, you didn’t change your hearts and lives and you didn’t believe him.

Parable of the tenant farmers

³³“Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a tower. Then he rented it to tenant farmers and went away. ³⁴When it was almost time for harvest, he sent his servants to the tenant farmers to collect his fruit. ³⁵But the tenant farmers grabbed his servants. They beat some of them, and some of them they killed. Some of them they stoned to death.

³⁶“Again he sent other servants, a larger group than the first. They treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them. ‘They’ll respect my son,’ he said.

³⁸“But when the tenant farmers saw the son, they said to each other, ‘Here is the heir. Come on, let’s kill him and we’ll have his inheritance.’ ³⁹They grabbed him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

⁴⁰“Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenant farmers?”

⁴¹They said, “He’ll totally destroy those wicked farmers and rent the vineyard to other tenant farmers who’ll give him the fruit when it’s ready.”

⁴²Jesus said to them, “Haven’t you ever read in the scriptures, *The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The Lord has done this, and it’s amazing in our eyes?*” ⁴³Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a people who produce its fruit. ⁴⁴The one who falls on the stone will be crushed. And the stone will crush the person it falls on.”

⁴⁵Now when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard the parable,

ⁿPs 118:22-23

they knew Jesus was talking about them. ⁴⁶They were trying to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, who thought he was a prophet.

Parable of the wedding party

22 Jesus responded by speaking again in parables. ²“The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding party for his son. ³He sent his servants to call those invited to the wedding party. But they didn’t want to come. ⁴Again he sent other servants and said to them, ‘Say to those who have been invited, “Look, the meal is all prepared. I’ve butchered the oxen and the fattened cattle. Now everything’s ready. Come to the wedding party!”’ ⁵But they paid no attention and went away—some to their fields, others to their businesses. ⁶The rest of them grabbed his servants, abused them, and killed them.

⁷“The king was angry. He sent his soldiers and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire. ⁸Then he said to his servants, “The wedding party is prepared, but those who were invited weren’t worthy. ⁹Therefore go to the roads on the edge of town and invite everyone you find to the wedding party.’

¹⁰“Then those servants went to the roads and gathered everyone they found, both evil and good. The wedding party was full of guests. ¹¹Now when the king came in and saw the guests, he spotted a man who wasn’t wearing wedding clothes. ¹²He said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ But he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to his servants, “Tie his hands and feet and throw him out into the farthest darkness.’

¹⁴“People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth. For many people are invited, but few people are chosen.”

Question about taxes

¹⁵Then the Pharisees met together to find a way to trap him in his words. ¹⁶They sent their disciples, along with the Herodians, to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you’re genuine and that you teach God’s way as it really is. We know that you’re not swayed by people’s opinions, because you’re not looking for popularity. ¹⁷So tell us what you think: Does the Law allow people to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

¹⁸Knowing their evil motives, Jesus replied, “Why do you test me, you frauds? ¹⁹Show me a coin.” And they brought him a denarion.

²⁰“Whose image and inscription is this?” he asked.

²¹“Caesar’s,” they replied.

Then he said, “Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give to God

what belongs to God.”²² When they heard this they were amazed, and they departed.

Question about resurrection

²³ That same day Sadducees came to him. (Sadducees deny there’s a resurrection.)²⁴ They asked, “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man who doesn’t have children dies, his brother must marry his wife and produce children for his brother.’²⁵ Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married, then died. Because he had no children he left his widow to his brother.²⁶ The same thing happened with the second brother and the third, and in fact with all seven brothers.²⁷ Finally, the woman died.²⁸ So in the resurrection which of the seven brothers will be her husband?”

²⁹ Jesus responded, “You’re wrong because you don’t know either the scriptures or God’s power.³⁰ For in the resurrection people will not marry nor be given in marriage. Instead, they’ll be like God’s angels.³¹ But as far as the resurrection of the dead goes, haven’t you read what God told you, *‘I’m the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob?’*³² God isn’t the God of the dead but of the living.”³³ Now when the crowd heard this, they were amazed at his teaching.

Great commandment

³⁴ When the Pharisees heard that he had left the Sadducees speechless they met together.³⁵ One of them, a legal expert, tested him.³⁶ “Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

³⁷ He replied, “*You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul^a and with all your mind.*³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: *You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.*^r ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.”

Question about David’s son

⁴¹ Now as the Pharisees were gathering, Jesus asked them, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?”

⁴² “David’s son,” they replied.

⁴³ He said, “Then how is it that David, speaking by the Holy Spirit, calls him Lord when he said, *‘The Lord said to my lord, Sit at my right side until I turn your enemies into your footstool?’*^s ⁴⁵ If David calls him

Lord, how can he be David’s son?”⁴⁶ And nobody was able to answer him. And from that day forward nobody dared to ask him anything.

Ways of the legal experts and the Pharisees

23 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and his disciples,² “The legal experts and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat.³ Therefore you must take care to do everything they say. But don’t do what they do.⁴ For they tie together heavy packs that are impossible to carry. They put them on the shoulders of others, but are unwilling to lift a finger to move them.⁵ Everything they do, they do to be noticed by others. They make extra-wide prayer bands for their arms and long tassels for their clothes.⁶ They love to sit in places of honor at banquets.⁷ They love to be greeted with honor in the markets and to be addressed as ‘Rabbi.’

⁸ “But you shouldn’t be called *Rabbi*, because you have one teacher, and all of you are brothers and sisters.⁹ Don’t call anybody on earth your father, because you have one Father, who is heavenly.¹⁰ Don’t be called *teacher*, because Christ is your one teacher.¹¹ But the one who is greatest among you will be your servant.¹² All who lift themselves up will be brought low. But all who make themselves low will be lifted up.

Condemnation of the legal experts and the Pharisees

¹³ “How terrible it’ll be for you legal experts and you Pharisees! Impostors! You shut people out of the kingdom of heaven. You don’t go in yourselves, and you won’t allow those who want to go in to enter.^t

¹⁵ “How terrible it’ll be for you legal experts and Pharisees! Frauds! You travel over sea and land to make one convert. But when they’ve been converted, they become twice the child of hell you are.

¹⁶ “How terrible it’ll be for you blind guides who say, ‘If people swear by the temple, it’s nothing. But if people swear by the gold in the temple, they’re obligated to do what they swore.’¹⁷ You foolish and blind people! Which is greater, the gold or the temple that makes the gold holy?¹⁸ You say, ‘If people swear by the altar, it’s nothing. But if they swear by the gift on the altar, they’re obligated to do what they swore.’¹⁹ You blind people! Which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift holy?²⁰ Therefore those who swear by the altar swear by it and by everything that’s on it.²¹ Those who swear by the temple swear by it

^tMost critical editions of the Gk NT omit 23:14: *How terrible it’ll be for you, legal experts and Pharisees! Impostors! You eat up widows’ houses and make a show of praying long prayers. Therefore you’ll receive greater judgment.*

and by everything that's part of it. ²²Those who swear by heaven swear by God's throne and by the One who sits on it.

²³"How terrible it'll be for you, legal experts and Pharisees! Imposers! You give to God a tenth of mint, dill, and cumin, but you forget about the more important matters of the Law: justice, peace, and faith. You ought to tithe but without forgetting about those more important matters. ²⁴You blind guides! You filter out an ant but swallow a camel.

²⁵"How terrible it'll be for you, legal experts and Pharisees! Frauds! You clean the outside of the cup and plate, but inside they're full of violence and pleasure seeking. ²⁶Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup so that the outside of the cup will be clean too.

²⁷"How terrible it'll be for you, legal experts and Pharisees! Imposers! You're like whitewashed tombs. They look beautiful on the outside. But inside they're full of dead bones and all kinds of filth. ²⁸In the same way you look righteous to people. But inside you're full of pretense and rebellion.

²⁹"How terrible it'll be for you, legal experts and Pharisees! Frauds! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. ³⁰You say, 'If we'd lived in our ancestors' days, we wouldn't have joined them killing the prophets.' ³¹You testify against yourselves that you're children of those who murdered the prophets. ³²Go ahead, complete what your ancestors did. ³³You snakes! You children of snakes! How will you be able to escape judgment of hell? ³⁴Therefore, look, I'm sending you prophets, wise people, and legal experts. Some of them you'll kill and crucify. And some you'll beat in your synagogues and chase from city to city. ³⁵Therefore upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been poured out on the earth, from the blood of that righteous man Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you killed between the temple and the altar. ³⁶I assure you that all these things will come upon this generation.

Crying over Jerusalem

³⁷"Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You've killed the prophets and stoned those who were sent to you. How many times I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you didn't want that. ³⁸Look, your house is abandoned and deserted. ³⁹For I tell you that you won't see me until you say, *Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord.*"^u

^uPs 118:26

Prediction of the temple's destruction

24 Now Jesus left the temple and was going away. His disciples came to point out to him the temple buildings. ²He responded, "Do you see all these things? I assure that no stone will be left on another. All will be demolished."

Beginning of troubles

³Now while he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us when these things will happen. What will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?"

⁴Jesus replied, "Watch out that nobody deceives you. ⁵Many will come in my name saying, 'I'm the Christ.' They'll deceive many people. ⁶You'll hear about wars and reports of wars. Don't be alarmed. These things must happen, but the end won't come yet. ⁷Nations and kingdoms will fight each other, and there will be famines and earthquakes in all sorts of places. ⁸But all these things are just the beginning of the sufferings associated with the end. ⁹They'll arrest you, abuse you, and they'll kill you. All nations will hate you on account of my name. ¹⁰At that time many will fall away. They will betray each other and hate each other. ¹¹Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. ¹²Because disobedience will increase, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³But the one who endures to the end will be delivered. ¹⁴This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world as a testimony to all the nations. Then the end will come.

The great suffering

¹⁵"So when you see the disgusting and destructive thing that Daniel talked about standing in the holy place (the reader should understand this), ¹⁶then those in Judea should escape to the mountains. ¹⁷Those on the roof shouldn't come down to grab things from their houses. ¹⁸Those in the field shouldn't come back to grab their clothes. ¹⁹How terrible it'll be at that time for women who are pregnant and for women who are nursing their children. ²⁰Pray that you don't have to escape in winter or on the Sabbath day. ²¹There will be great suffering such as the world has never before seen and will never again see. ²²If that time weren't shortened, nobody would be delivered. But for the sake of the chosen ones that time was cut short.

²³"Then if somebody says to you, 'Look, here's the Christ,' or 'He's over here,' don't believe it. ²⁴False christs and false prophets will appear, and they'll show great signs and do amazing things so that they may deceive, if possible, even the chosen ones. ²⁵Look, I've told

you ahead of time. ²⁶So if they say to you, ‘Look, he’s in the desert,’ don’t go out. And if they say, ‘Look, he’s in the rooms deep inside the house,’ don’t believe it. ²⁷Just as the lightning flashes from the east to the west, so it’ll be with the coming of the Human One.^v ²⁸The vultures gather wherever there’s a dead body.

Coming of the Human One

²⁹“Now immediately after the suffering of that time the sun will become dark, and the moon won’t give its light. The stars will fall from the sky. The heavenly bodies will be shaken. ³⁰Then the sign of the Human One will appear in the sky. At that time all the tribes of the earth will be full of sadness and they’ll see *the Human One coming in the heavenly clouds*^w with power and much splendor. ³¹He’ll send his angels with the sound of a great trumpet, and they’ll gather his chosen ones from the four corners of the earth, from one end of the world to the other.

Lesson from the fig tree

³²“Learn this parable from the fig tree. After its branch becomes tender and it sprouts new leaves you know that summer is near. ³³In the same way, when you see all these things, you know that he’s near, at the door. ³⁴I assure you that this generation won’t pass away until all these things happen. ³⁵Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will certainly not pass away.

Day and hour

³⁶“But nobody knows when that day or hour will come, not the heavenly angels and not the Son. Only the Father knows. ³⁷For the coming of the Human One^x will be just like the time of Noah. ³⁸In those days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. ³⁹They didn’t know what was happening until the flood came and swept them all away. The coming of the Human One will be like that. ⁴⁰At that time there will be two men in the field. One will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding at the mill. One will be taken and the other left. ⁴²So keep alert, because you don’t know what day the Lord is coming. ⁴³But you understand that if the head of the house knew at what time the thief would come, he would keep alert and wouldn’t allow the

thief to break into his house. ⁴⁴Therefore you also should be prepared, because the Human One will come at a time you don’t know.

Faithful and unfaithful servants

⁴⁵“Who then are the faithful and wise servants whom their master puts in charge of giving food at the right time to those who live in his house? ⁴⁶Happy are those servants whose master comes and finds them doing just that. ⁴⁷I assure you that he’ll put them in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸But what about those bad servants who say to themselves, ‘My master won’t come until later,’ ⁴⁹and they begin to beat their fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunks? ⁵⁰The master of those servants will come on a day when they’re not expecting him and at a time they didn’t think he would come. ⁵¹He’ll cut them in pieces and put them in a place with the play-actors and frauds. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth.

Parable of the ten young bridesmaids

25 “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten young bridesmaids who took oil for their own lamps and went out to meet the groom. ²Now five of them were wise, and the other five were foolish. ³The foolish ones took their lamps but didn’t bring oil for them. ⁴But the wise ones took their lamps and also brought containers of oil.

⁵“When the groom was late in coming, they all became drowsy and went to sleep. ⁶But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Look, the groom! Come out to meet him.’

⁷“Then all those bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. ⁸But the foolish bridesmaids said to the wise ones, ‘Give us some of your oil, because our lamps have gone out.’

⁹“But the wise bridesmaids replied, ‘No, because if we share with you, there won’t be enough for both our lamps and yours. We have a better idea. You go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰But while they were gone to buy oil, the groom came. Those who were ready went with him into the wedding. Then the door was shut.

¹¹“Later the other bridesmaids came and said, ‘Lord, lord, open the door for us.’

¹²“But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I don’t know you.’

¹³“Therefore keep alert because you don’t know the day or the hour.

^vOr Son of Man ^wDan 7:13-14 ^xOr Son of Man

Parable of the valuable coins

¹⁴“It’s like a man who was leaving on a trip. He called his servants and handed his possessions over to them. ¹⁵To one he gave five valuable coins,^y and to another he gave two, and to another he gave one. He gave to each servant according to that servant’s ability. Then he left on his journey.

¹⁶“After the man left, the servant who had five valuable coins took them and went to work doing business with them. He gained five more. ¹⁷In the same way the one who had two valuable coins gained two more. ¹⁸But the servant who had received the one valuable coin dug a hole in the ground and buried his master’s money.

¹⁹“Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰The one who had received five valuable coins came forward and brought five more. He said, ‘Master, you gave me five valuable coins. Look, I’ve gained five more.’

²¹“His master replied, ‘Well done! You’re a good and faithful servant! You’ve been faithful over a little. I’ll put you in charge of much. Come, celebrate with me.’

²²“The second servant also came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two valuable coins. Look, I’ve gained two more.’

²³“His master replied, ‘Well done! You’re a good and faithful servant. You’ve been faithful over a little. I’ll put you in charge of much. Come, celebrate with me.’

²⁴“Now the one who had received one valuable coin came and said, ‘Master, I knew that you’re a hard man. You harvest grain where you haven’t sown. You gather crops where you haven’t spread seed. ²⁵So I was afraid. And I hid my valuable coin in the ground. Here, you have what’s yours.’

²⁶“His master replied, ‘You evil and lazy servant! You knew that I harvest grain where I haven’t sown and that I gather crops where I haven’t spread seed? ²⁷In that case, you should’ve turned my money over to the bankers so that when I came you could give me what belonged to me with interest. ²⁸Therefore take from him the valuable coin and give it to the one who has ten. ²⁹“For those who have much will receive more, and they’ll have more than they need. But as for those who don’t have much, even the little bit they have will be taken away from them. ³⁰Now take the worthless servant and throw him

^yOr talents

outside into the darkness.’

“People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth.

Judgment of the nations: the sheep

³¹“Now when the Human One^z comes in his majesty and all his angels are with him, he’ll sit on his majestic throne. ³²All the nations will be gathered in front of him. He’ll separate them from each other, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³He’ll put the sheep on his right side. But the goats he’ll put on his left.

³⁴“Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.’

³⁷“Then those who are righteous will reply to him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸When did we see you as a stranger and take you in, or naked and gave you clothes to wear? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

⁴⁰“Then the king will reply to them, ‘I assure you that when you’ve done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you’ve done it for me.’

Judgment of the nations: the goats

⁴¹“Then he’ll say to those on his left, ‘Get away from me, you who will receive terrible things. Go away into the unending fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you didn’t give me food to eat. I was thirsty and you didn’t give me anything to drink. ⁴³I was a stranger and you didn’t invite me in. I was naked and you didn’t give me clothes to wear. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t take care of me.’

⁴⁴“Then they’ll reply, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and didn’t do anything to help you?’ ⁴⁵Then he’ll answer, ‘I assure you that when you haven’t done it for one of the least of these, you haven’t done it for me.’ ⁴⁶And they’ll go away into eternal punishment. But the righteous ones will go into eternal life.”

^zOr Son of Man

Plot to kill Jesus

26 When Jesus finished speaking all these words, he said to his disciples, ²“You know that the Passover is two days from now. And the Human One^a will be handed over to be crucified.”

³Then the chief priests and elders of the people gathered in the courtyard of Caiaphas, the high priest. ⁴They were plotting to arrest Jesus by cunning tricks and to kill him. ⁵But they agreed that it shouldn't happen during the feast so there wouldn't be an uproar among the people.

A woman pouring perfume on Jesus

⁶When Jesus was at Bethany visiting the house of Simon, who had leprosy, ⁷a woman came to him with a vase made of alabaster containing very expensive perfume. She poured it on his head while he was sitting at dinner. ⁸Now when the disciples saw it they were angry and said, “Why this waste? ⁹For this could have been sold for a lot of money and given to the poor.”

¹⁰ But Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said, “Why do you make trouble for the woman? She's done a beautiful thing for me. ¹¹You always have the poor with you, but you won't always have me. ¹²By pouring this perfume over my body she's prepared me to be buried. ¹³I tell you the truth that wherever in the whole world this good news is announced, what she's done will also be mentioned in memory of her.”

Judas betrays Jesus

¹⁴Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ¹⁵“What will you give me if I turn him over to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶From that time on he was looking for an opportunity to turn him in.

Passover with the disciples

¹⁷On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and said, “Where would you like us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?”

¹⁸He replied, “Go into the city, to a certain man, and say, ‘The teacher says, ‘My time is near. I'm going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.’” ¹⁹The disciples did just as Jesus instructed them. They prepared the Passover.

²⁰At evening he was sitting at a table with the twelve disciples. ²¹As

^aOr Son of Man

they were eating he said, “I tell you the truth that one of you will betray me.”

²²They were very sad. Each one said to him, “I'm not the one, am I, Lord?”

²³He replied, “The one who will betray me is the one who dips his hand with me in the bowl. ²⁴The Human One^b goes to his death just as is written about him. But how terrible it is for that person who betrays the Human One!^c It would have been better for him if he'd never been born.”

²⁵Now Judas, who would betray him, replied, “It's not me, is it, Rabbi?”

Jesus answered, “You said it.”

Last supper

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took bread and, after saying a blessing over it, he gave it to his disciples and said, “Take and eat. This is my body.” ²⁷After he took a cup and gave thanks for it, he gave it to them and said, “Drink from this, all of you. ²⁸This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many people so that their sins may be forgiven. ²⁹I tell you, I won't drink any more wine until that day when I drink it in a new way with you in my Father's kingdom.” ³⁰Then after singing a song of praise they went to the Mount of Olives.

Predictions about disciples leaving Jesus

³¹Then Jesus said to them, “Tonight you'll all fall away because of me. For it's been written, *I'll hit the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will go off in all different directions.*^d ³²But after I'm raised up, I'll go before you to Galilee.”

³³Peter replied, “Even if all fall away because of you, I'll never fall away.”

³⁴Jesus said to him, “I tell you the truth that before the rooster crows tonight, you'll deny me three times.”

³⁵Peter said, “Even if I die with you, I'll not deny you.” All the disciples said the same thing.

Prayer at Gethsemane

³⁶Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane. He said to the disciples, “Stay here while I go and pray over there.” ³⁷When he took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, he began to feel sad and anxious.

^bOr Son of Man ^cOr Son of Man ^dZech 13:7

³⁸Then he said to them, “I’m very sad. It’s as if I’m dying. Stay here and keep alert with me.” ³⁹Then he went a short distance farther and fell on his face and prayed, “My Father, if it’s possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. But if it isn’t possible, then let it not be what I want but what you want.”

⁴⁰He came to the disciples and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Weren’t you able to keep alert one hour with me?” ⁴¹Keep alert and pray so that you won’t give in to temptation. For the spirit is eager, but the flesh is weak.” ⁴²Again a second time he went away and prayed, “My Father, if it’s not possible that this cup be taken away unless I drink it, then let it be what you want.”

⁴³Again he came and found them sleeping. For their eyes were heavy with sleep. ⁴⁴But he left them and again went and prayed the same words for the third time. ⁴⁵Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Will you sleep and rest all night? Look, the time has come for the Human One^e to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Get up. Let’s go. Look, my betrayer is here.”

Arrest

⁴⁷While he was still speaking, look, Judas, one of the Twelve, came. With him was a large crowd from the chief priests and elders of the people, carrying swords and clubs. ⁴⁸His betrayer had given them a sign: “Arrest the man I kiss.” ⁴⁹Just then he came to Jesus and said, “Hello, Rabbi.” Then he kissed him.

⁵⁰But Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you came to do.” ⁵¹Then they came and grabbed Jesus and arrested him.

⁵¹One of those with Jesus reached for his sword. Hitting the high priest’s slave, he cut off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, “Put the sword back into its place. For all those who use the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³Or do you think that I’m not able to ask my Father and he’ll send to me more than twelve battle groups^f of angels right away? ⁵⁴But if I did that how would the scriptures be fulfilled that say this must happen?” ⁵⁵Then Jesus said to the crowds, “Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me, like a thief? ⁵⁶But all this has happened so that what the prophets said in the scriptures might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples left him and ran away.

^eOr *Son of Man* ^fOr *legions* (of the Roman army, about five thousand soldiers each)

Jesus before the Council

⁵⁷Those who arrested Jesus brought him to Caiaphas the high priest. The legal experts and the elders had gathered there. ⁵⁸Peter followed him from a distance until he came to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered that area and sat outside with the officers to see how it would turn out.

⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole council were trying to get false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰They didn’t find anything they could use from the many false witnesses who were willing to come forward. But finally they found two ⁶¹who said, “This man said, ‘I can tear down God’s temple and rebuild it in three days.’”

⁶²Then the high priest stood and said to Jesus, “Have you no answer to what these men have testified against you?”

⁶³But Jesus was silent.

The high priest said, “By the living God, I demand that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God.”

⁶⁴“You said it,” Jesus replied. “But I say to you that from now on you’ll see *the Human One*^g *sitting on the right side of God and coming on the heavenly clouds.*”^h

⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He’s insulting God! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you’ve heard his insult to God. ⁶⁶What do you think?”

And they answered, “He deserves to die!” ⁶⁷Then they spat in his face and beat him. They hit him ⁶⁸and said, “Prophecy for us, Christ! Who hit you?”

Peter’s denial

⁶⁹Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A slave girl came and said, “You were also with Jesus the Galilean.”

⁷⁰But he denied it in front of all of them, saying, “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

⁷¹When he went over to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, “This man was with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.”

⁷²With an oath, he denied it again, saying, “I don’t know the man.”

⁷³A short time later those standing there came and said to Peter, “You must be one of them. The way you talk gives you away.”

^gOr *Son of Man* ^hPs 110:1; Dan 7:13

⁷⁴Then he cursed and swore, “I don’t know the man!” At that moment the rooster crowed. ⁷⁵Peter remembered Jesus’ words, “Before the rooster crows you’ll deny me three times.”

Jesus before Pilate

27 Early in the morning all the chief priests and the elders of the people reached the decision against Jesus to have him put to death. ²They bound him, led him away, and brought him to Pilate the governor.

Judas’ death

³When Judas, who betrayed Jesus, saw that he was condemned to die, he felt deep regret. He brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, and ⁴said, “I did wrong because I betrayed an innocent man.”

But they said, “What is that to us? That’s your problem.” ⁵He threw the silver pieces into the temple and left. Then he went and hanged himself.

⁶The chief priests picked up the silver pieces and said, “According to the Law it’s not right to put this money in the treasury. Since it was used to pay for someone’s life, it’s unclean.” ⁷So they decided to use it to buy the potter’s field where strangers could be buried. ⁸That’s why that field is called “Field of Blood” to this very day. ⁹This fulfilled the words of Jeremiah the prophet: *And I took the thirty pieces of silver, the price for the one whose price had been set by some of the Israelites, ¹⁰and I gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.*¹

Questioned by Pilate

¹¹Jesus was brought before the governor. The governor said, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

Jesus replied, “That’s what you say.” ¹²But he didn’t answer when the chief priests and elders accused him.

¹³Then Pilate said, “Don’t you hear the testimony they bring against you?” ¹⁴But he didn’t answer, not with even a single word. So the governor was greatly amazed.

Death sentence

¹⁵It was customary at the feast for the governor to release to the crowd one prisoner, whomever they might choose. ¹⁶At that time there was a well-known prisoner named Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷When the crowd

¹Zech 11:12-13; Jer 32:6-9

had come together, Pilate asked them, “Whom would you like me to release to you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?” ¹⁸For he knew that the leaders of the people had handed him over because of jealousy.

¹⁹While he was serving as judge, his wife sent this message to him, “Leave that righteous man alone. I’ve suffered much today in a dream on account of him.”

²⁰But the chief priests and the elders stirred up the crowds so that they would ask for Barabbas and kill Jesus. ²¹The governor said, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”

“Barabbas,” they replied.

²²Pilate said, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Crucify him!”

²³But he said, “Why? What wrong has he done?”

But their shouts grew even louder. “Crucify him!”

²⁴ Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere and that a riot was starting. So he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. “I’m innocent of this man’s blood,” he said. “It’s your problem.”

²⁵All the people replied, “Let his blood be on us and on our children.”

²⁶Then he released Barabbas to them. When he had whipped Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Soldiers mocking Jesus

²⁷The governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the governor’s house, and they gathered the whole company¹ of soldiers around him. ²⁸They stripped him and put a red military coat on him. ²⁹They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a stick in his right hand. Then they bowed down in front of him and mocked him, saying, “Greetings, king of the Jews.” ³⁰After they spat on him, they took the stick and struck his head again and again. ³¹When they finished mocking him, they stripped him of the military coat and put his own clothes back on him. They led him away to crucify him.

Crucifixion

³²Now as they were going out, they found Simon, a man from Cyrene. They made him carry Jesus’ cross. ³³When they came to a place called Golgotha, which means *Skull Place*, ³⁴they gave Jesus wine mixed with vinegar to drink. But after tasting it, he didn’t want to drink it. ³⁵After they crucified him, they divided up his clothes among them by drawing

¹Or *cohort* (approximately six hundred soldiers)

lots. ³⁶They sat there, guarding him. ³⁷They placed above his head the charge against him. It read, “This is Jesus, the king of the Jews.” ³⁸They crucified with him two thieves, one on his right side and one on his left.

³⁹Those who were walking by insulted him, shaking their heads. ⁴⁰They said, “You who were going to tear down the temple and build it again in three days, save yourself! If you’re the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

⁴¹In the same way, the chief priests, along with the legal experts and the elders, were making fun of him, saying, ⁴²“He saved others, but he can’t save himself. He’s the king of Israel, so let him come down from the cross now. Then we’ll believe in him. ⁴³He trusts in God, so let God deliver him now if he wants to. For he said, ‘I’m the Son of God.’” ⁴⁴The thieves who were crucified with him insulted him in the same way.

Death

⁴⁵From noon until three in the afternoon the whole earth was dark.

⁴⁶At about three Jesus cried out with a loud shout, “*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,*” which means, “My God, my God, why have you left me?”^k

⁴⁷But some of those standing there said, “He’s calling Elijah.” ⁴⁸Just then one of them ran over, took a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a pole. He tried to give it to Jesus to drink.

⁴⁹But the rest of them said, “Let’s see if Elijah will come and save him.”

⁵⁰Again Jesus cried out with a loud shout. Then he died.

⁵¹Look, the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split, ⁵²and all the bodies of the holy people who had died were raised. ⁵³After Jesus’ resurrection they came out of their graves and went into the holy city where they appeared to many people. ⁵⁴When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what had just happened, they were terrified and said, “This was certainly the Son of God.”

⁵⁵Many women were watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to serve him. ⁵⁶Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

Burial

⁵⁷That evening a man named Joseph came. He was a rich man from Arimathea who had become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He came to Pilate and

asked for Jesus’ body. Pilate gave him permission to take it. ⁵⁹Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had carved out of the rock. After he rolled a large stone at the door of the tomb, he went away. ⁶¹Now Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting in front of the tomb.

Guard at the tomb

⁶²The next day, which was the day after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate. ⁶³They said, “Sir, we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I’ll arise.’ ⁶⁴Therefore order the grave to be sealed until the third day. Otherwise his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people, ‘He’s been raised from the dead.’ This last deception will be worse than the first.”

⁶⁵Pilate replied, “You have soldiers for guard duty. Go and make it as secure as you know how.” ⁶⁶Then they went and secured the tomb by sealing the stone and posting the guard.

Resurrection

28 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the tomb. ²Look, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord came down from heaven. Coming to the stone, he rolled it away and sat on it. ³Now his face was like lightning and his clothes as white as snow. ⁴The guards were so terrified of him that they shook with fear and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, “Don’t be afraid. I know that you’re looking for Jesus who has been crucified. ⁶He isn’t here, because he’s been raised from the dead, just as he said. Come, see the place where they laid him. ⁷Now hurry, go and tell his disciples, ‘He’s been raised from the dead. He’s going on ahead of you into Galilee. You’ll see him there.’ I’ve given the message to you.”

⁸With great fear and excitement, they hurried away from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹But Jesus met them and greeted them. They came and grabbed his feet and worshipped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Go and tell my brothers that I am going into Galilee. They’ll see me there.”

Guards’ report

¹¹Now as the women were on their way, some of the guards came into the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened.

¹²They met with the elders and decided to give a large sum of money

^kPs 22:1

to the soldiers. ¹³They told them, “Say that his disciples came at night and stole his body while you were sleeping. ¹⁴And if the governor hears about this, we’ll square it with him so you’ll have nothing to worry about.” ¹⁵So the soldiers took the money and did as they were told. And this report has spread throughout all Judea to this very day.

Commissioning of the disciples

¹⁶Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus told them to go. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸Jesus came near and spoke to them, “I’ve received all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to obey everything that I’ve commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age.”