

THE GREAT NEWS

as reported by

Luke

Luke's Reason for Writing This Report

Most Honorable Theophilus:

You know that many have undertaken the task of writing a report about the astounding events that have taken place here.

²Those who wrote these reports for us had been eyewitnesses of these events from the very beginning, and were responsible guardians of the message.

³However, it occurred to me that because I also have been accurately acquainted with the details of the facts from the very beginning, it would be good for me to send an orderly report to you,

⁴so that you might know with certainty that the events you were told about did indeed take place.

John the Baptizer Is Born

⁵During the time that Herod was king of Judea, there was a certain priest by the name of Zachariah, who belonged to the Abijah division of priests. His wife, also a descendant of Aaron,^a was named Elizabeth.

⁶God was pleased with both of them, because they fully obeyed all that He had commanded them, and most carefully obeyed His instructions about religious rites and duties.

⁷But they had no children, because Elizabeth hadn't been able to give birth to any, and now they were both quite old.

⁸But it so happened that while Zachariah was serving as priest before God, when it was his group's turn to serve,

⁹he drew the assignment by lot^a (which was the way the priests decided what work each of them would do) to burn incense on the altar inside the Temple of the Lord.

¹⁰When the time came for him to burn the incense, there was a large crowd of people outside praying.

¹¹But as Zachariah went inside and approached the altar of incense, he was suddenly aware that an angel of the Lord was standing at the right side of

the altar.

¹²When Zachariah saw him, he was startled, then terrified.

¹³But then the angel spoke to him and said, "Don't be afraid, Zachariah, because God has heard your earnest pleading in prayer. Your wife Elizabeth will give birth to a son for you, and you are to name him John.

¹⁴"He will be a source of extreme joy and happiness to you, and many others will rejoice with you when he is born.

¹⁵"God will regard him as a very special person. And since he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from the time he is in his mother's womb, he must never drink wine or strong drink.

¹⁶"He will convince many of the people of Israel to turn from living to please themselves to living to please the Lord their God.

¹⁷"Just before the Messiah begins His ministry, John will preach in the same spirit and with the same power that Elijah did. He will soften the hearts of fathers toward their children, and will cause those who are disobedient to turn back and live in wisdom by doing what's right. In other words, he will get the people prepared and ready to welcome their Lord."

¹⁸"But how can I be sure that this will really happen?" Zachariah asked the angel. "Because both my wife and I are much too old now to have children."

¹⁹"I am Gabriel," the angel replied. "I stand in the presence of God, and it was God who sent me to tell you this great news.

²⁰"But because you have not believed the message I brought you, which will happen at the proper time, your mouth will be silenced and you will not be able to speak until what I told you about has taken place."

²¹Meanwhile, the people waiting outside for Zachariah began to wonder why he was in the Temple so long.

²²But when he finally came out, he couldn't speak to them. Then they realized he must have seen a vision in the Temple, because he kept mak-

1:5a . . . from whom all the priests of Israel are descendants.

1:9a By throwing dice or drawing straws, or some

such means, after prayer had been made, asking God to decide the outcome.

ing signs to them, but he couldn't say a word.

²³When his time of service was completed, he returned home.

²⁴Soon after that his wife Elizabeth was expecting a baby, and for five months she didn't leave the house.

²⁵"Just think of what the Lord has done for me!" she exclaimed. "He has taken pity on me, and now people won't be looking down on me."^a

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

²⁶In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to a virgin named Mary, who lived in Nazareth, a town in Galilee.

²⁷She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David.

²⁸"Greetings, highly favored one!" the angel addressed her. "The Lord is with you! You have reason to be the happiest woman on earth."

²⁹But when Mary saw him and then heard what he said, she was confused and perplexed, wondering what he could ever mean by such a greeting.

³⁰"Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel continued, "because God is greatly pleased with you.

³¹"Listen carefully! You will very soon conceive a child in your womb and give birth to a Son. You are to name Him Jesus."^a

³²"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make Him King of Israel, the same as His ancestor King David was.

³³"And He will reign over the people of Israel forever. There will never be an end to His Kingdom."^a

³⁴"How can that happen," Mary asked the angel, "since I'm a virgin?"

³⁵"The Holy Spirit will come upon you," the angel replied, "and the power of the Most High God will hover over you. For that reason, the Holy One who will be born to you will be called the Son of God.

³⁶"Even your relative Elizabeth will have a son. She is now an old woman, and everyone knows that now, because of her age, she will never have

any children. But she is now in the sixth month of her pregnancy,

³⁷because nothing is impossible for God."

³⁸"Sir," Mary replied, "I am a willing servant of the Lord. So may it all happen as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

³⁹Very soon after that Mary hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea.

⁴⁰There she entered the home of Zachariah and greeted Elizabeth.

⁴¹The moment Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the babe in her womb made a leap, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

⁴²Then with a loud voice she exclaimed, "Of all women you are the one most favored by God! What a blessing to the world that Child will be to whom you will give birth.

⁴³"But why am I so privileged that the mother of my Lord should visit me?

⁴⁴"I tell you the truth, the moment I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

⁴⁵"You are blessed by God because you believed He would do what He said He would. And God will indeed keep the promise He made to you."

Mary's Song of Praise

⁴⁶Then Mary said,

"My whole being overflows with praise to the Lord!

⁴⁷And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!^a

⁴⁸Because in spite of the low and humble position of this servant^a of the Lord, He didn't ignore me. Just think of it—from this time onward people in all generations will speak of me as the one who was so blessed and made so happy by God.

⁴⁹Because He who is the Mighty One has done such great things for me! Truly, His name is to be most highly revered!

⁵⁰From one generation to the next, He continues to be big-hearted toward those who continue to

1:25a ... *for not being able to have children.*

1:31a The name *Jesus* means *Savior*.

1:30-33a A good portion of this prophecy has already been fulfilled. The Messiah has been born of Mary. He has already been declared *great*. But not until His second coming, following the Battle of Armageddon and the judgment of fire, earthquake, and darkness upon the earth, will He assume *the throne of David* as King of the Jews. Isaiah 16:5.

Other Scripture indicates, however, that David himself will be restored as king of the Jews. Jeremi-

ah 30:9. Nevertheless, it is Christ who will reign over even David and over all nations of the earth as King of kings and Lord of lords. Isaiah 2:1-5.

His reign over the earth will last forever. Isaiah 9:6-7. The first 1,000 years, called the Millennium, will be the period during which Christ will subdue the earth. 1 Corinthians 15:22-28. His Kingdom on earth will continue beyond that, however, thruout endless eternity.

1:47a Mary was a wonderful woman, but not perfect. Even she needed a Savior.

have fear of dishonoring or displeasing Him.

⁵¹ He has done such great things by His powerful might. He has scattered those who are proud, who had such lofty ideas about what they by themselves would do.

⁵² He has pulled down the mighty from their thrones and elevated and promoted those who are humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things, but those who considered themselves to be rich,^a He sent away with empty hearts.

⁵⁴ He has helped His servant Israel. He has faithfully honored His promise

⁵⁵ to Abraham and our other forefathers, when He told them He would be merciful to their descendants forever.”

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months, and then returned home.^a

The Birth of John the Baptizer

⁵⁷ When the time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a boy.

⁵⁸ And when her neighbors and relatives heard how good the Lord had been to her, they rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹ Eight days after the baby was born, they came to be present when the child was circumcised, and they wanted to name him Zachariah, after his father.

⁶⁰ But his mother spoke up and said, “No, his name is to be John.”

⁶¹ “But why?” they asked her. “None of your relatives have that name.”

⁶² So they made signs to the child’s father, asking him what he wanted the boy to be named.

⁶³ And he made signs asking for a writing tablet, and to everyone’s amazement he wrote, “His name is John.”

⁶⁴ As soon as he wrote that, he could speak again, and he began praising God.

⁶⁵ All the people in that area were deeply shaken by the circumstances of John’s birth. People throughout all the hill country of Judea were talking about it.

⁶⁶ Everyone who heard about it made a mental note of it, saying, “What kind of person will this child grow up to be?” because it was very evident that the hand of the Lord was upon him in a very special way.

Zachariah’s Prophecy

⁶⁷ Another happening was that John’s father, Zachariah, was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying:

⁶⁸ “May the Lord God of Israel be praised! He saw our great need, and has provided a ransom for His people.

⁶⁹ Thru a descendant of His servant David, He has raised up One with great power to save us.

⁷⁰ From the time God created man He prophesied thru His holy prophets that He would do this.^a

⁷¹ Those prophets told how we would be saved from our enemies and from the power of all who hate us.^a

⁷² God promised our forefathers that He would remember His unbreakable promise and be merciful and kind to us.

⁷³ With a solemn oath He promised our father Abraham

⁷⁴ that He would free us from the power of our enemies, so that we could serve Him without fear.

⁷⁵ He promised He would help us to do what is completely right and pleasing in His sight all the days of our lives.^a

⁷⁶ And you, my child, will be called the prophet of the Most High God. You will go on the scene ahead of the Lord to prepare the people to receive Him.

⁷⁷ You will tell His people how they can receive forgiveness for their sins and be saved.

⁷⁸ Because of His tender mercy, God has visited us from Heaven with the dawning of a New Day, for the purpose of giving us light and understanding.

⁷⁹ We have been living in darkness and in fear of death, but now God will guide us into a life of peace and assurance!”^a

1:48a Literally *bond maid*, one in bondage to another. But a true follower of the Lord is not forced into bondage to Him. We gladly serve such a wonderful and loving Lord. It is an honor to live for Him and serve Him.

1:53a ... *believing themselves to have everything, and sensing no need* ...

1:56a It would seem likely that she stayed until Elizabeth’s baby was born.

1:70a Genesis 3:15.

1:71a Isaiah 14:1; 44:24-26; 54:7-17; Jeremiah 30:9-11; 33:14-16; Zechariah 9:9-10, etc.

1:75a Philippians 2:12-13.

1:79a God sent His Son to earth in human form in the person of Jesus Christ, that we might learn what life is all about. When we are converted from our determination to do what we want, and instead truly desire to do what God wants, He forgives our sins and gives us peace and joy and everlasting life—all because of the sacrifice Christ made in suf-

⁸⁰The child grew and became strong in his courage and determination to do only what was right and pleasing to God.^a When he grew up, he lived in the wilderness until he entered his public ministry to Israel.

The Birth of Jesus

2 It was during that time that an order went out from Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, that a census was to be taken thruout all the inhabited world.

²This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

³So everyone went to register for the census, each going to the city where his family register was kept.

⁴And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem, the city of David, in Judea.

⁵Both he and Mary went there to register. Mary was engaged to him, and was expecting a baby.^a

⁶It so happened that while they were there, the time came for the baby to be born.

⁷But since there was no room for them in the inn, they went into a cattle shed. And there she gave birth to her first child, a Son. She wrapped Him in wide strips of cloth^a and laid Him in a manger.^b

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸Out in the fields nearby were some shepherds staying with their sheep, watching over their flock thru the night.

⁹Suddenly, without warning, an angel of the Lord stood in front of them, and the whole area became most brilliantly illuminated by the Lord's glory. The shepherds were terrified.

¹⁰"Don't be afraid," the angel said. "Listen, I am bringing you Great News—news that will bring great joy! It is Great News for everyone everywhere!

¹¹"Because today in the city of David, a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah,^a the Lord!

¹²"And this is the sign by which you can know that I am telling you the truth: You will find a baby

wrapped in wide strips of cloth, lying in a manger."^a

¹³Then suddenly a massive throng of the millions of angels in Heaven joined the angel who had just spoken, all praising God and loudly proclaiming:

¹⁴"Give glory to God in the highest heavens! And may there be peace in the hearts of all people on earth who live to please God."

¹⁵When that great throng of angels had left and had gone back to Heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem, right now, and see for ourselves this great happening that the Lord has just told us about!"

¹⁶So off they went, and they did indeed find Mary and Joseph. And there was the Baby, lying in a manger.

¹⁷After they had seen Him, they went out and told people everywhere what they had been told about this Child.

¹⁸And all who heard what the shepherds reported were amazed and wondered what this could mean.

¹⁹But Mary treasured all their words, and thought about them often.

²⁰When the shepherds went back to their sheep they kept talking to each other about how great God is, and continued praising Him for everything they had just seen and heard. They had found everything just as the angel had said they would.^a

²¹When the time came to circumcise the Child, which was eight days after His birth, He was named Jesus, the name given Him by the angel even before He was conceived.

Jesus is Presented in the Temple

²²And when the days for Mary's purification had been completed, in obedience to the Law of Moses,^a Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord.

²³The Law of the Lord commands:

Every firstborn baby that's a boy is to be dedicated to the Lord for His service.^a

²⁴They also went to offer the sacrifice they were instructed to make in obedience to the Law of the Lord. They were to offer at least

a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.^a

fering and dying on the cross for us.

1:80a Literally *strong in spirit*.

2:5a See Matthew 1:18-25.

2:7a This was how young babies were dressed. They were called *swaddling cloths* (to swathe, to wrap around like a bandage).

2:7b A feeding trough for animals.

2:11a The Greek word is *Christ*, but the Hebrew translation is *Messiah*, meaning *the anointed One* whom God anointed with great power and authority before the universe was created. John 17:24.

2:12a See v 20, and the note.

2:20a Every baby in Israel was wrapped in wide strips of cloth, but not even the poorest was placed

²⁵ Now at that time there was a devout, truly good man living in Jerusalem named Simeon,^a who was faithfully waiting for God to send the Messiah to save and restore Israel. And the Holy Spirit was upon him.

²⁶ The Holy Spirit had actually told him he would not die before he had seen the Messiah, whom God had promised.

²⁷ And at the same time that the parents of the Child Jesus brought Him into the Temple courts to do for Him what the Law required, the Holy Spirit led Simeon to go there too.

²⁸ When he saw the Child he took Him in his arms and thanked God, saying:

²⁹ "Lord, You have kept Your promise! Now I can leave this life in peace.

³⁰ Because with my own eyes, I have seen the One thru whom You will bring salvation,

³¹ which You have provided for all people.

³² He will be a Light to reveal Your truth to people in all nations, and He will be the glory of Your people Israel!"

³³ Joseph and Jesus' mother continued to be amazed at the things that were said about Him.

³⁴ Then Simeon pronounced God's blessing on all three of them. Then he said to Mary, Jesus' mother, "Listen, Mary, this Child is destined to bring about the fall of many in Israel. He will also cause many in Israel to rise.

³⁵ "He will be a wonder that will be spoken against, so that the deepest thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And a sword will also pierce thru your own soul."

³⁶ There was also a prophetess in Jerusalem at that time named Anna, a daughter of Phanuel, a member of the tribe of Asher. She was now 84 years old.

³⁷ She had been married for seven years, but had now been a widow ever since her husband's death. She never left the Temple, but continued to worship the Lord day and night by praying and often fasting.

³⁸ When she came to where Mary and Joseph and the Baby were, just as Simeon was talking to them, she also began praising God for sending Jesus. And she spoke about Him to everyone in Jerusalem who

was waiting to be set free.

³⁹ When they had performed all that the Law of the Lord required, they returned home to their own city of Nazareth in Galilee.^a

⁴⁰ And the Child grew and became strong in His desire and determination to live only to please God.^a He was continually being filled with wisdom, and God's blessing was upon Him.

The Boy Jesus at the Temple

⁴¹ His parents went to Jerusalem every year for the Passover Feast.

⁴² And when Jesus was 12 years old, they went up for the Feast, as usual.

⁴³ When the days of the Feast ended, they started for home. But without Joseph or His mother knowing it, Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem.

⁴⁴ They thought He was somewhere in the crowd they were traveling with, so they traveled a whole day before they finally missed Him when they looked for Him among their friends and relatives.

⁴⁵ When they couldn't find Him they traveled all the way back to Jerusalem to look for Him.

⁴⁶ Not until three days later did they find Him. There He was, sitting in the Temple in the middle of a group of teachers, both listening to them and asking questions.

⁴⁷ All who heard Him were amazed at how much He knew, and His wise answers.

⁴⁸ When His parents finally found Him, they, too, were amazed. "Son, why did You do this to us?" His mother heartrendingly implored. "Your father and I have been frantically looking everywhere for You!"

⁴⁹ "Why did you need to look for Me?" He replied. "Didn't you know it would only be right that I would be here, busy in the affairs of My Father?"

⁵⁰ But they didn't understand what He was talking about.

⁵¹ Then He went with them, back home to Nazareth, and He was always obedient to them. But what He had done and said were just more things that Mary continued to treasure and wonder about.

⁵² Loved by both God and man, Jesus continued to grow in wisdom and in physical stature.

in a manger. Also, they had been told by the prophets of old and by their present religious leaders that the Christ (the Messiah) would someday come. All they had been told was now coming to pass, so they had good reason to praise God.

2:22a Forty days for a son. Leviticus 12:1-4.

2:23a Exodus 13:2,12.

2:24a Leviticus 12:8.

2:25a Note that Simeon was a common man, not a priest.

2:39a Matthew 2:1-23 reveals that before returning to Nazareth they returned to Bethlehem, then escaped to Egypt, then home to Nazareth.

2:40a Literally *strong in spirit*.

The Preaching of John the Baptizer

3 It was during the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar that John, the son of Zachariah, received a message from God while he was out in the wilderness.

²At the time, Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea; Herod was ruler of Galilee; his brother Philip, ruler of Iturea and Trachonitis; and Lysanias, ruler of Abilene. Annas and Caiaphas were the High Priests.

³After hearing from God, John went thruout the whole region of the Jordan River, proclaiming to everyone, “Turn away from your sins and be baptized, and God will forgive your sins.”

⁴He was fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah the prophet, who had declared:

Listen to the one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare for the coming of the Lord! Straighten out your ways for Him!

⁵Every valley will be filled, every mountain and hill will be leveled, the crooked places will be straightened, and the rough places will be smoothed out.

⁶Then people everywhere on the earth will see the salvation that God has made available for all mankind.^a

⁷Great crowds of people were continually coming out to be baptized^a by John. “You children of snakes!” he challenged some of them.^b “Who told you that you could escape the coming judgment of God’s fierce anger?”

⁸“If you expect God to forgive you, you must now live lives that will prove that you have indeed turned from your sinning! And don’t think you are safe just because you can say, ‘Godly Abraham is our forefather.’ Because God is able to take even these stones and raise up descendants for Abraham.^a

⁹“Indeed, I warn you, the axe of God’s judgment is already being employed in cutting the very roots of the trees, and every tree that is not producing good fruit is being cut down and thrown into the fire!”^a

¹⁰“Then what should we do?” the crowds imploringly asked him.

¹¹“If you have two coats,” he replied, “give one to

the person who doesn’t have any. If you have food, share it with others.”

¹²Some tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?”

¹³“Don’t charge anyone more tax than the government has told you to charge,”^a he told them.

¹⁴Then some soldiers asked him, “What should we do?”

“Don’t take property or money from anyone by unlawful force,” he replied. “Also, don’t accuse anyone with wrong that you know he didn’t do. And be content with your pay.”

¹⁵The people were expecting the Messiah to appear any time now, and they were all seriously wondering whether or not John might be the Messiah.

¹⁶But John told all of them plainly, “I baptize you in water, but Someone far more powerful than I am is coming. I’m not even worthy to unloose the straps in His sandals. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire.

¹⁷“His winning fork is already in His hand, and He will separate the chaff from the grain and clear His threshing floor of everything. He will bring His wheat into His barn, but He will burn the chaff with fire that can never be put out.”^a

¹⁸He also taught them many other things as he continued to preach the Great News to them.

¹⁹Now John had repeatedly scolded Herod, the ruler of Galilee, for marrying Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, and for many other evils Herod had done.

²⁰Herod then added this crime to all his former crimes; he locked John up in jail.

²¹In the course of John’s ministry of baptizing all the people who came to him, Jesus was also baptized. As He was praying,^a Heaven opened up!

²²And the Holy Spirit came down upon Him in the form of a dove. Then a voice came from Heaven, saying, “You are My Son whom I love so dearly. I have found such great delight in You.”

The Family History of Jesus

²³Jesus was about 30 years of age when He began His public ministry. He was considered to be the

3:6a Isaiah 40:3-5.

3:7a Literally *immersed*. See Matthew 3:11 note.

3:7b Matthew 3:7 records that he said this to the Pharisees and Sadducees. They merely came to look and criticize. They didn’t come with open hearts, willing to be converted and baptized. Luke 7:30.

3:8a God doesn’t have any grandchildren. Depending upon the holiness of your mother or father to gain Heaven will do you no good! You must personally become a child of God by repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and be born again by surrendering to Jesus as your Lord (Acts 20:21), if you are to escape the

son of Joseph.

Joseph was the son of Heli;

- ²⁴ Heli, the son of Matthat;
 Matthat, the son of Levi;
 Levi, the son of Melchi;
 Melchi, the son of Janna;
 Janna, the son of Joseph;
²⁵ Joseph, the son of Mattathiah;
 Mattathiah, the son of Amos;
 Amos, the son of Nahum;
 Nahum, the son of Esli;
 Esli, the son of Naggai;
²⁶ Naggai, the son of Maath;
 Maath, the son of Mattathiah;
 Mattathiah, the son of Semei;
 Semei, the son of Joseph;
 Joseph, the son of Judah;
²⁷ Judah, the son of Joannas;
 Joannas, the son of Rhesa;
 Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel;
 Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel;
 Shealtiel, the son of Neri;
²⁸ Neri, the son of Melchi;
 Melchi, the son of Addi;
 Addi, the son of Cosam;
 Cosam, the son of Elmodam;
 Elmodam, the son of Er;
²⁹ Er, the son of Jose;
 Jose, the son of Eliezer;
 Eliezer, the son of Jorim;
 Jorim, the son of Matthat;
 Matthat, the son of Levi;
³⁰ Levi, the son of Simeon;
 Simeon, the son of Judah;
 Judah, the son of Joseph;
 Joseph, the son of Jonan;
 Jonan, the son of Eliakim;
³¹ Eliakim, the son of Melea;
 Melea, the son of Menan;
 Menan, the son of Mattathah;
 Mattathah, the son of Nathan;
 Nathan, the son of David;
³² David, the son of Jesse;
 Jesse, the son of Obed;
 Obed, the son of Boaz;
 Boaz, the son of Salmon;
 Salmon, the son of Nahshon;

- ³³ Nahshon, the son of Amminadab;
 Amminadab, the son of Aram;
 Aram, the son of Hezron;
 Hezron, the son of Perez;
 Perez, the son of Judah;
³⁴ Judah, the son of Jacob;
 Jacob, the son of Isaac;
 Isaac, the son of Abraham;
 Abraham, the son of Terah;
 Terah, the son of Nahor;
³⁵ Nahor, the son of Serug;
 Serug, the son of Reu;
 Reu, the son of Peleg;
 Peleg, the son of Eber;
 Eber, the son of Shelah;
³⁶ Shelah, the son of Cainan;
 Cainan, the son of Arphaxad;
 Arphaxad, the son of Shem;
 Shem, the son of Noah;
 Noah, the son of Lamech;
³⁷ Lamech, the son of Methuselah;
 Methuselah, the son of Enoch;
 Enoch, the son of Jared;
 Jared, the son of Mahalalel;
 Mahalalel, the son of Cainan;
³⁸ Cainan, the son of Enos;
 Enos, the son of Seth;
 Seth, the son of Adam; and
 Adam, the son of God.

The Temptation of Jesus

4 When Jesus left the Jordan River He was full of the Holy Spirit,^a and the Spirit led Him into the wilderness, where He was tempted by the devil for 40 days.

² He ate nothing during that time, but when the 40 days came to an end, He was hungry.

³ So the devil said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread."

⁴ But Jesus replied, "The Scriptures declare, **Man will not survive on bread alone. He must also feast upon every word of God.^a**"

⁵ Then the devil took Him up on a high mountain, and in a fraction of a second showed Him all the kingdoms of the world.

⁶ "I will give you all the glory and wealth of all

coming fierce anger of God. See also Matthew 3:9; Acts 20:20-21; Galatians 6:8, and the notes there.

3:9a See John 15:1-16.

3:13a Many of these tax collectors would charge more than they were instructed to charge, and keep the extra for themselves.

3:17a See Mark 9:44 note.

3:21a ... *after coming out of the water* ...

4:1a ... *after the Holy Spirit had come upon Him at His baptism* ... See John 3:34.

4:4a Deuteronomy 8:3.

these kingdoms, and make you Ruler over them,” the devil told Him, “because they have all been put under my authority, and I can give them to anyone I wish.

⁷“So if you will just kneel down and worship me, it will all be yours.”

⁸But Jesus thundered, “Get behind Me, Satan! Because the Scriptures declare,

You shall worship the Lord, your God, and He is the only One you shall serve!^a”

⁹Then the devil brought Him to Jerusalem, and had Him stand on the highest part of the Temple, and said to Him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here.

¹⁰“Because the Scriptures declare:

God will put His angels in charge of You, and order them to protect You.

¹¹**They will catch You in their hands, so that not even Your feet will be injured on the stones below.^a”**

¹²But Jesus replied, “It also says,

You shall not try to force the Lord your God into a situation where He must prove Himself.^a”

¹³When the devil had finished all of these temptations, he left Him for a while.^a

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

¹⁴Then Jesus, full of the Spirit’s power, returned to Galilee. And the news of how the Holy Spirit was working in a powerful way thru Him was the big news thruout the whole region.

¹⁵He went from synagogue to synagogue, teaching; and everyone who heard His teaching praised Him.

¹⁶When He came to Nazareth, His hometown, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath,^a as He always did, and stood up to read the Scriptures.^b

¹⁷He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and read from the place where it is written:

¹⁸**The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me. He has given Me this special anointing for the purpose of announcing the Great News to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to those who are enslaved in any way, to give sight to the blind, and to restore liberty to those who are crushed down.**

¹⁹**He has sent Me to proclaim that the time to preach and to accept this Great News is NOW.^a**

²⁰Then He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. Everyone in the synagogue was now looking at Him most intently.

²¹Then He began to speak to them, saying, “This Scripture has come true today, even while you were listening.”

²²Everyone continued listening carefully. They were amazed at all He said and how eloquently He said it. “But, isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they then said.

²³Then Jesus said to them, “You will most certainly quote to Me the proverb, ‘Doctor, heal yourself,’ by which you will mean, ‘We heard about the miraculous things you did in Capernaum. Let’s see now what you can do here in your hometown.’

²⁴“But I must remind you,” He added, “that no prophet is welcomed in his hometown.

²⁵“During the time of Elijah, when the heavens were closed up tight and it didn’t rain for three-and-a-half years, there was famine everywhere.

²⁶“There were many widows in Israel at that time, but God didn’t send Elijah to help any of them. Instead, he was sent to a widow in the small town of Zarephath, near the city of Sidon.

²⁷“Also, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet, but he didn’t heal any of them. He healed only Naaman, the Syrian.”

²⁸When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were furious.

²⁹They leaped up and drove Him out of town and led Him to the top of the hill on which their town was built. Their plan was to throw Him off the cliff.

³⁰But when they got there, He just walked thru the middle of the crowd, and went on His way.

Jesus Drives out an Evil Spirit

³¹He went back to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and continued to teach the people there on the Sabbath days.

³²They were continually amazed at the way He taught, because He spoke with such confident authority.

³³One time as He was teaching in the synagogue, a man possessed by a demon screamed out as loud as he could,

³⁴“Leave us alone! What business do You have being here with us, You Jesus of Nazareth? Have

4:8a Deuteronomy 6:13.

4:11a Psalm 91:11,12.

4:12a Deuteronomy 6:16.

4:13a 1 Corinthians 10:13.

4:16a Saturday, the Jewish day of rest.

4:16b See Matthew 13:54-58; Mark 6:1-6.

4:19a Isaiah 61:1,2.

You come to destroy us? I know who You are! You're the Holy One from God!"

³⁵ "Be quiet, and come out of him!" Jesus sharply commanded the demon. And after it had thrown the man down in front of everyone, it came out without doing him any harm.

³⁶ The people were all amazed, and said among themselves, "What kind of teaching is this? Why, with real authority and power He commands the demons to come out! And they always obey Him!"

³⁷ So the news about what He was doing continued to spread throughout the whole region.

Jesus Heals Many People

³⁸ When He left the synagogue He went to Simon's house. On arriving there, they found that Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a high fever, so they asked Jesus to help her.

³⁹ He went in and stood by her bed and commanded the fever to leave her, and it left! So she got right up and began to prepare a meal for them.

⁴⁰ As soon as the sun had set, everyone who had family members or friends who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him. He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

⁴¹ One after another, demons came out of many of them, crying out and saying, "You are the Messiah, the Son of God!" because they knew from past experience^a that He was the Messiah. But He rebuked them, and wouldn't allow them to continue speaking.^b

⁴² At daybreak Jesus left Capernaum and went to a deserted area. But the people came looking for Him, and when they found Him, they tried to keep Him from leaving them.

⁴³ But He said, "I must preach the Great News about the Kingdom of God to people in other cities, too, because that's the reason God sent Me here."

⁴⁴ So He continued to preach in synagogues all over Galilee.

Jesus Calls His First Followers

5 One day as Jesus was teaching the crowds that had gathered around Him on the shore of Lake Galilee, they pressed hard against Him to hear God's message.

² Then He saw two empty boats at the water's edge that the fishermen had left while they washed their nets.

³ He got into one of the boats, owned by Simon, and asked him to push out a little way from shore. Then He sat down and taught that great crowd from the boat.

⁴ When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Now head out for deep water and lower your nets for some fish."

⁵ "But Master," Simon objected, "we worked hard all night and didn't catch a thing. But if You say so, I will let the nets down again."

⁶ And when they did, they caught such an enormous number of fish that their nets began to break!

⁷ So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. When they got there they filled both boats so full that they were on the verge of sinking.

⁸ When Simon looked at all those fish, he fell to his knees in front of Jesus, and said, "O Sir, You must leave me, because I am a sinful man."

⁹ Simon said this because both he and all who were with him were totally overwhelmed at the great number of fish they had caught.

¹⁰ The same was true of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

"Don't be afraid," Jesus replied to Simon. "From now on you will be catching people instead of fish."

¹¹ So as soon as they got their boats to shore, they left everything and followed Him.

A Man with Leprosy Healed

¹² When Jesus came to one town, a man covered with leprosy saw Him. He came to Jesus and fell to his knees in front of Him and pleaded, "O Sir, if You want to, I know You can make me well."

¹³ Jesus reached out His hand and touched him, and said, "I do want to. Be healed!" Instantly the leprosy was gone!

¹⁴ "Don't talk to anyone about this,"^a Jesus ordered the man. "But go immediately and show the priest what's happened to you. Then as a testimony to everyone that you are healed, offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded."^b

¹⁵ But following this, the news about Him continued to spread farther and faster than ever, and huge crowds gathered to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses.

¹⁶ But instead of always staying with the crowds,

4:41a Pluperfect tense—positive, completed action in past time. They had seen Him in His Divine glory in eternity past. He is well known to all the spirit world.

4:41b Christ doesn't desire nor does He need Satan's testimony.

5:14a For the reason see Matthew 12:16 note.

5:14b Leviticus 13:1-46 and 14:1-32.

He would often slip away into wilderness areas to pray.

Jesus Heals A Paralyzed Man

¹⁷One day as He was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the Law sitting in His audience. They had come from every town in Galilee and Judea, and also from Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was there, enabling Jesus to heal the sick.

¹⁸Then an amazing thing happened. Several men brought a paralyzed man to Him on a stretcher. They tried to carry him inside the house and place him in front of Jesus.

¹⁹But when they couldn't find any way to get him in, because of the crowd, they carried him up on the roof. After removing some tile they lowered the man and the stretcher down into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

²⁰When Jesus saw the determined faith these men had, He said to the man, "My friend, your sins are forgiven you."

²¹On hearing this, the teachers of the Law of Moses^a and the Pharisees began thinking to themselves, "Just who does this fellow think he is, blaspheming like that! Who can forgive sins, except God alone?"

²²But Jesus knew what they were thinking, so He asked, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts?^a

²³"Which is easier to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or, 'Get up and walk?'"

²⁴"But, so you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins ..." He then said to the paralytic, "I say to you, 'Stand up, and pick up your stretcher and be on your way home!'"

²⁵Instantly, as everyone was watching, the man got up, took up his stretcher, and started for home praising God!

²⁶The people were all amazed, and they, too, praised God, and kept on praising Him. They were totally overwhelmed with awe, and kept saying to one another, "We have seen some astounding things today! Wasn't that something!"

The Calling of Levi

²⁷After that Jesus went out, and as He was walking along He noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tollbooth. "Come along and follow Me," Jesus invited him.

²⁸And he got right up and left everything, and went with Him.

²⁹Then Levi put on a lavish dinner for Jesus in his home. A large number of tax collectors and other guests were also invited to eat with them.

³⁰But the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees of that area began to complain bitterly to Jesus' followers, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with these crooked tax collectors^a and other sinners?"

³¹"Those who are well don't need a doctor," Jesus responded. "But the sick do.

³²"I haven't come to call those who consider themselves so godly that they have no need of further help. I'm here to call sinners to turn from their sinning, and to now live in obedience to God."

A Question About Fasting

³³Then they asked Him, "Why is it that John's followers and the followers of the Pharisees often fast^a and pray, but yours are always eating and drinking?"

³⁴"Would you expect the happy friends of the bridegroom to stop eating while the bridegroom is still with them?" He replied.

³⁵"But the time will come when the Bridegroom will be taken from them. They will indeed fast when that time comes."

³⁶Then He told them a parable: "No one cuts a piece of cloth from a new garment to repair an old one. If you did, you would ruin the new garment by taking the piece from it, and the new piece wouldn't match the old garment anyway.

³⁷"In the same way, no one puts new wine into old wineskins. The new wine would burst the old skins and the wine would run out, and the used skins would also be ruined.

³⁸"New wine must be put into new wineskins.

5:21a Exodus 19:1-31:18.

5:22a Their hearts (the emotional centers of their beings) were the cause of their conclusions, not merely their minds. They were jealous, and were looking for ways to discredit Him.

5:30a Tax collectors were despised in Israel, because they were Jews who collected taxes for the hated Roman government. And they were often dishonest in the amounts they collected.

5:33a To go without eating.

6:1a There were two special Sabbaths (which were extra Sabbaths) during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Leviticus 23:4-8. Read all of Leviticus 23 regarding extra Sabbaths. See also Matthew 28:1 note.

6:8a ... where everyone can see you.

6:9a ... by refusing to do the good we are capable of doing?

Then both are preserved.

³⁹“And no one who drinks old wine will immediately develop a taste for new wine. Because he keeps insisting, ‘The old is better.’”

A Question About the Sabbath

6 On the second Sabbath after the first special Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread,^a Jesus and His followers were walking by some wheat fields. His followers broke off some heads of wheat, then rubbed the husks off between their hands and ate the kernels.

²“Why are you harvesting grain?” some Pharisees challenged them. “That’s unlawful on the Sabbath!”

³“Haven’t you read what David did when he and his men were hungry?” Jesus responded.

⁴“He went right into the house of God and ate the sacred bread, which wasn’t lawful for him to eat. Only the priests were allowed to eat it, but he also gave some to his men.

⁵“Also, I, the Son of Man, am the Lord who decides what can and what cannot be done even on the Sabbath,” He concluded.

⁶On another Sabbath when Jesus went into the synagogue and was teaching, a man with a withered right hand was there.

⁷The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law kept watching Him closely, to see if He would heal this man on the Sabbath. They were so anxious to accuse Him of doing something wrong.

⁸Jesus knew what they were thinking, but in spite of that He said to the crippled man, “Stand up, and come and stand over here.”^a So he got to his feet and stood where Jesus told him.

⁹“Let Me ask you a question,” Jesus then said to these religious critics. “Is it lawful to do good deeds on the Sabbath, or are we to do evil^a? Can we take action to save life, or are we to destroy life^b?”

¹⁰After looking around at each one of them, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And when he did so, it was restored, just as full of life and strength as the other!

¹¹But the teachers and the Pharisees were furious, and began to discuss among themselves what

they should do to Jesus.

Jesus Chooses the Twelve Apostles

¹²One day during that time, He went off into the hills to pray, and He continued in prayer to God all night.

¹³When morning came, He called His followers to Him. And from among them He chose twelve, whom He called apostles.^a

¹⁴First there was Simon (whom He named Peter), and his brother Andrew; then James, John, Philip, Bartholomew,

¹⁵Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon (who was called the Zealot),

¹⁶Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who later became the traitor.

Blessings and Woes

¹⁷Then He came down from the hills with them and stood in a level area where He met with a crowd of His other followers. There was also a very large crowd of people there from Jerusalem and all over Judea, and from the seacoast area of Tyre and Sidon—all of whom had come to hear Him speak and to be healed of their diseases.

¹⁸There were also many there who were tormented by evil spirits, and they were healed.

¹⁹Everyone in that great crowd was trying to touch Him, because out from Him was coming power that was healing everyone.

²⁰Then He looked at all these people who were following Him and said:

“There is extreme happiness, both now and forever, for those of you who are poor,^a because the Kingdom of God belongs to you.^b

²¹“There is extreme happiness, both now and forever, for those of you who hunger now *with desire to please God*, because you will be completely fulfilled. There is also extreme happiness both now and forever, for those of you who weep now, because the time is coming when you will rejoice.

²²“There is also extreme happiness both now and forever for you, even when people hate you, when they exclude you from their company and speak angrily against you and curse your name, all because of the firm stand you take and the faithful

6:9b ... *by refusing to save the life we are capable of saving?*

6:13a The word *apostle* means *one who is sent*. An apostle could be called an envoy, one who is sent to accomplish a certain mission or work—an officially authorized messenger or representative.

6:20a Matthew 5:3 records that Jesus said, “... for

those who are poor in spirit ...” *realizing that their only hope is in Jesus Christ, and in living to please God thru His help*. No one inherits the Kingdom of God simply because he or she is poor.

6:20b What greater happiness can there be than knowing for sure that our future is incredibly brilliant and sure in God’s Kingdom, forever!

life you live for the Son of Man.

²³“Always rejoice when this happens, and even leap for joy, because your reward in Heaven for being faithful will indeed be extremely great! Remember, this was also the way the prophets who lived and witnessed faithfully and boldly for God before your time were treated by the fathers of those who now mistreat you.^a

²⁴“But woe to you who are rich now, because you are already receiving what you are living for.^a

²⁵“Woe to you who are full now, because a day and time definitely is coming when you will experience awful hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, because the time is coming when you will hysterically weep and mourn.^a

²⁶“Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,^a because that’s how the fathers of those who speak well of you now treated the false prophets who gave false hope to the people of their time.

Love Your Enemies

²⁷“But to those of you whose hearts and ears are open to what I’m saying, I have this to say: Always make a practice of being kind and considerate even toward your enemies.^a Always do good to those who hate you.

²⁸“Continue to speak kindly to those who curse you, and even help them. And continue to pray for the ultimate happiness of those who treat you with

contempt, or threaten and mistreat you.

²⁹“If someone hits you on the cheek, offer the other cheek to him too. If he takes your coat, don’t keep him from taking your shirt as well.

³⁰“Make a practice of giving to everyone who asks you for something. And if someone takes something that belongs to you, don’t demand that he return it.^a

³¹“Always treat others in exactly the same way that you want others to treat you.

³²“If you love only those who love you, why should you be praised or rewarded for doing that? Even sinners love those who love them.

³³“If you make a practice of doing good only to those who treat you right, why should you be praised or rewarded for doing that? Even sinners do that.

³⁴“If you lend only to those whom you are sure will pay you back, why should you be praised or rewarded for doing that? Even sinners lend to other sinners if they’re sure they’ll get back what they loaned.

³⁵“But as for you, always be kind and considerate toward your enemies. Do good to them! Lend to them, and don’t feel sorry for yourself if they never pay you back, because then you can look forward to a great reward. You will in that way prove yourselves to be true children of the Most High God, because He is kind even to those who are ungrate-

6:20-23a See parallel passage in Matthew 5:1-12, and the notes there about these statements.

6:24, 25a It’s no sin to be rich, if your heart goes out to the spiritual and physical needs of mankind everywhere, and you work to lay up your treasure in Heaven by faithfully, sincerely and industriously using your financial and other strengths to be a blessing to both God and your fellow men. But if you seek heaven for you and yours here and now, by means of money and your various abilities, with little real regard for God and others, you will lose the eternal *Heaven* and all the indescribable rewards there that you could have gained.

To be converted to Christ means to be totally converted to Him—surrendering everything you are and everything you have or ever will have in this brief life, to be at God’s disposal for His glory and the blessing of mankind. See 14:25-35. You cannot be half born again spiritually, anymore than you can be half born physically.

Are you really converted from pleasing yourself to really pleasing God? Don’t measure yourself by others, and what they claim. Listen to Jesus! Yes, it’s time that we wake up to what Christ’s true teaching is about being converted to Him. See Luke 16:19-

31; Matthew 7:13-14; 19:16-30; Mark 10:23-27.

6:26a The people of the world, both in the church and out of it, who continue to refuse to surrender their lives in full obedience to Christ as Lord, will not speak well of you if you continue to give them Christ’s full message. 2 Timothy 3:12.

6:27a Work toward, and sincerely desire, God’s best for them. As fellow human beings they are your brothers and sisters, though alienated from you at present. Romans 12:20.

6:30a Leave the matter in the hands of the Lord. He will see that it’s returned; or He may more than make it up to you some other way.

6:37a If you have something against someone, be honest and open about it and go to that person and talk it over with him. Don’t talk about someone’s faults to others, talk to the person himself. Talking to people about the faults of others is pure, unadulterated gossip! Help that person at fault by phone, letter, or personal visit. If you write, give your name and address. Only miserable cowards send unsigned letters, or make unidentified phone calls.

6:37b ... *by God*. Galatians 6:7-10.

6:37c Matthew 6:14-15; 18:23-35.

6:38a No doubt God is the One who will see to it

ful and wicked.

³⁶“So always have pity on others, in the same way that your Father has shown pity toward you.

On Judging Others

³⁷“Never unjustly judge others in a careless and judgmental way,^a and you will not be judged.^b Always forgive others, and God will forgive you.^c

³⁸“Make it your practice to give. When you do so, you will find that others will give to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over is the way they will pour it into your lap, because the same measure you use in giving to others will be used in giving back to you.”^a

³⁹Then He gave them this parable: “Can a blind man lead another blind man? If they try that, won’t they both fall into the ditch?^a

⁴⁰“The student doesn’t know more than his teacher, but every student will be just like his teacher after he’s fully trained.^a

⁴¹“And why do you continue to look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye, while you constantly ignore the big log in your own eye?

⁴²“Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take that speck out of your eye,’ when look, you can’t even see the big log in your own eye? You hypocrite! First remove the log from your own eye, then you’ll be able to see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

A Tree and Its Fruits

⁴³“Another way of putting it is: You will never find a good tree that produces poisonous or worthless fruit, nor will you ever find a worthless tree that produces good fruit.

⁴⁴“So every tree is known by the fruit it bears. No one ever gathers figs from thorn bushes, nor grapes from bramble bushes.

⁴⁵“A good person says and does what’s good and right because of all the good thoughts, instructions, and desires that fill his heart. But an evil person says and does what’s evil and wrong because his heart is full of evil thoughts and desires. Because whatever fills a person’s heart comes out when he speaks.

The Wise and Foolish Builders

⁴⁶“And why do you people keep calling Me Lord, but still refuse to do what I tell you?

⁴⁷“Let Me tell you who the person is like who comes to Me and always listens carefully to what I tell him to do, and then makes a practice of always doing^a what I tell him:

⁴⁸“He’s like a man who built a house and dug deep in order to build his foundation on the rock. When the river flooded over and the torrent of water hit that house, it couldn’t even shake it, because it was built upon the rock.

that this happens.

6:39a If a person loves to believe a certain way, in spite of the fact that his belief is contrary to the plain teaching of God’s message, beware. That person is willfully blind to the truth. Make sure that this doesn’t describe you. And make sure that you are not willfully following the teaching of a false teacher, simply because he’s such a nice person, or because you like what he teaches. Remember, the blind student of a blind teacher will receive the same condemnation from the Lord as the blind teacher. You can’t use the excuse that it was your teacher’s fault.

People will sit under the kind of teaching they want to hear. See 2 Timothy 4:3-4 note. Those who are honest, and desire the truth, no matter what the cost, will seek an honest teacher. Those who want the truth watered down or explained away will seek a false prophet who will tell them what they want to hear—and there are many false prophets today. Beware! See 2 Timothy 4:1-5, and the notes. Also Isaiah 9:13-17; Jeremiah 5:30-31.

6:40a This and the following verses are a part of the parable Jesus began in v 39. He is stating that the students of the blind Jewish leaders who oppose

Him will be just as blind and stumbling about the real truth as their teachers are now, after their teachers have finished teaching them. The same is true of those who are willing to constantly absorb the false, anemic, and watered-down preaching in many “Christian” churches today.

For the sake of your children, yourself, and others, do something about it! Search the Scriptures to find out if what is being preached in your church is biblical truth, or not.

6:47&49a To practice selective obedience is to practice disobedience and sin. To confess Christ with the lips, but not with the life, has always been a false confession. Only obedient faith is saving faith.

Jesus taught His followers to tell the whole world about Him and to *Teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you*. Matthew 28:20. Keeping His commandments is not optional for those who desire to enter eternal life. There is no saving faith apart from obedience.

The obedience of even the most godly Christian will be imperfect; but even though imperfect, the intent must nevertheless be real. See Hebrews 5:9.

⁴⁹“But the person who hears what I say yet does nothing about it^a is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the torrent of flood waters from the river hit that house and beat violently against it, it immediately fell apart. So the destruction of that house was total.”

The Faith of the Army Captain

7When Jesus had finished saying all these things to the people, He went back into Capernaum.

²A Roman army captain stationed there had a servant of whom he was very fond, who was sick and very near death.

³He'd heard about Jesus, so He sent some of the leading Jews to plead with Him to come and heal his servant.

⁴When they came to Jesus they pleaded earnestly with Him, saying, “This man deserves your help.

⁵“He loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.”

⁶So Jesus went with them. But He wasn't far from the captain's house when the captain sent some of his friends to Him with a message, “Sir, don't go to any trouble for me, because I'm not worthy even to have You enter my home.

⁷“That's why I didn't consider myself worthy to come to You. But just give the command, and my servant will be healed.

⁸“Because I also am a man under the authority of others, and I have soldiers under my authority. I say, ‘Go,’ to this one, and he goes. To another I say, ‘Come,’ and he comes. I tell my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

⁹When Jesus heard this, He was amazed at the man, and said to the crowd following Him, “I tell you, I haven't found such great faith anywhere, not even among the Jews.”

¹⁰When those who had been sent by the captain returned to the house, they found that the sick servant was already well.

A Widow's Son Brought Back to Life

¹¹The next day Jesus went to the city of Nain. Many of His followers went with Him, and also a large crowd of other people.

¹²As He approached the city gate, a funeral pro-

cession was coming out. A large crowd from the city was with the widowed mother, whose only son was the dead man being carried out.

¹³When the Lord saw her, His heart went out to her with deep tenderness, and He said to her, “Don't cry.”

¹⁴Then He went over to the open coffin^a and touched it, and those carrying it stood still. “Young man,” He said, “I say to you, rise up!”

¹⁵And the man who had been dead a moment before sat up and began to speak! Then Jesus gave him back to his mother.

¹⁶Everyone was overwhelmed with awe,^a and they praised God, saying, “A great prophet has risen up among us! God has again visited His people!”

¹⁷The news about what He had done there spread thruout all of Judea and all the surrounding territory.^a

Messengers from John the Baptizer

¹⁸When John's followers told him about all that was happening,

¹⁹he called two of his followers to him, and sent them to ask Jesus, “Are You the One we were told was coming,^a or are we to continue looking for someone else?”

²⁰When the men arrived where Jesus was, they asked Him John's question.^a

²¹Now during the short time they had been there, Jesus had cured many people of diseases, sicknesses, and evil spirits. He had also caused many who were blind to see.

²²So Jesus replied, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard. Those who were blind now see. Those who were lame are now walking. Those with dreaded skin diseases have been cured. The deaf now hear. The dead are being raised back to life, and the Great News is being preached to the poor.

²³“Happy and blessed by God is the person to whom I will not prove to be a stumbling block.”

²⁴When these men left, Jesus spoke to the crowds about John, “What kind of person were you looking for when you went out into the wilderness? Were you looking for someone like tall grass that is easily swayed this way or that by whichever way the wind is blowing?^a

7:14a The Jews wrapped their dead in linen cloths and laid them on a stretcher-type bier.

7:16a ... as they realized how near God was to them in that happening.

7:17a This happened up in Nain, Galilee. So the

news traveled thruout Israel, way down into Judea.

7:19,20a Deuteronomy 18:15,18; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 9:9.

7:24a Meaning someone who is swayed by every person's opinion or opposition. John was not one

²⁵ “What kind of man did you actually go out to see? Were you looking for someone dressed in expensive clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes and indulge in luxurious living live in expensive homes.

²⁶ “What were you really looking for? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and you found one who is far greater than a prophet.

²⁷ “Because John is the one about whom God was speaking when He said to His Son:

Listen! I will send My messenger ahead of You. He will prepare the people to receive You.^a

²⁸ “I tell you, no woman has ever given birth to a greater prophet than John the Baptizer. But even the lowest person in the Kingdom of God is greater than John is now.”

²⁹ On hearing this, all the people (including the tax collectors) agreed with Jesus that God had indeed sent John. They had earlier been baptized by him.

³⁰ But the Pharisees and the experts in the Law had refused to receive God’s message for themselves, and had refused to be baptized by John.

³¹ “To what then shall I compare the religious leaders of this generation?” the Lord continued. “What are they like?”

³² “They’re like children sitting in a marketplace, whose playmates call out to them and complain,

‘We played wedding music for you on the flute, but you wouldn’t dance! We sang funeral songs, but you wouldn’t cry!’

³³ “Because when John the Baptizer came, he didn’t eat bread or drink wine, and they said, ‘He has a demon.’

³⁴ “But when the Son of Man goes among you both eating and drinking, they say, ‘Look at that man, he’s nothing but a glutton and a drunkard, and a friend of tax collectors and other sinners.’

³⁵ “But wise actions are always later proved to be right by the results.”

A Sinful Woman Forgiven

³⁶ One of the Pharisees then asked Jesus to have dinner with him. So He went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined^a at the table to eat.

³⁷ When a woman in that city who had lived a sin-

ful life found out that Jesus was reclining^a at the table there, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume.

³⁸ She then stood behind Him at the foot of His couch, weeping. And as her tears wet His feet she began wiping them with her hair. Then she affectionately and repeatedly kissed them, after which she poured the perfume on them.

³⁹ When the Pharisee who was Jesus’ host saw this, he thought to himself, “If this man really were a prophet of God, he would know who this woman is that’s touching him, and the kind of woman she is—a vile sinner!”

⁴⁰ So Jesus answered the man’s thoughts by saying, “Simon, I have something to say to you.”

“Yes?” he replied. “What is it, Teacher?”

⁴¹ “A moneylender loaned money to two men—500 silver coins to one and 50 to the other.

⁴² “But neither of them was able to pay him back, so he kindly canceled and forgave both debts. Tell Me now, which of them will love him the most?”

⁴³ “I suppose it would be the one whom he forgave the most,” Simon replied.

“You are right,” Jesus said.

⁴⁴ Then turning toward the woman He said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? When I entered your home, you didn’t even give Me water to wash the dust from My feet.^a But she has washed My feet with her tears and dried them with the hair of her own head.

⁴⁵ “You didn’t greet Me with a kiss of welcome, but this woman hasn’t stopped kissing My feet since I came in.

⁴⁶ “You provided no olive oil for My head, but she has bathed My feet with perfume.

⁴⁷ “Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are indeed many, are forgiven, because she has loved so deeply. But the one who is forgiven little loves little.”

⁴⁸ Then He said to the woman, “Your sins are forgiven.”

⁴⁹ Some of the guests reclining at the table with Him then began to say to themselves, “Who is this who dares to think he can even forgive sins?”

⁵⁰ Then He said to the woman, “Your earnest faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

to doubt what God had told him. See Matthew 3:13-17 and John 1:29-34. John no doubt still believed that Jesus was the Messiah. But he sent his followers to question Jesus in order that *they* might be convinced.

7:27a Malachi 3:1.

7:36,37a The custom was to recline on couches

while eating, reclining on the left elbow and eating with the right hand — and the reverse, no doubt, for left handers.

7:44a Guests were ordinarily offered water and basins to wash their feet, after walking the dusty streets and roads in their sandals. They were also greeted with a kiss on each cheek.

The Parable of the Sower

8 After that, Jesus traveled about with His twelve followers, going thru city after city and town after town, preaching and telling the Great News about the Kingdom of God.

² Several women who had been cured of various diseases and demon possession were also with Him—including Mary, called Magdalene,^a from whom seven demons had been driven out;

³ Joanna, the wife of Chuza, who was Herod's palace manager; Susanna; and many others. These women used their own money to support Jesus and His followers.

⁴ On one occasion when a huge crowd was gathering around Him, and while others continued to arrive from all over the country, Jesus told them this parable:

⁵ "A farmer went out to sow his seed. And in the scattering of the seed, some fell on the hard path alongside the field. It was trampled on, and then the birds flew down and quickly ate it.

⁶ "Some fell on shallow soil covering a rock. But as soon as the sprouts came up they withered away because the thin soil couldn't hold any moisture.

⁷ "Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorn bushes grew up with the grain and choked it.

⁸ "But the seeds that fell on good soil grew and produced a crop a hundred times the amount sown."

When He had finished the parable He called out, "Let the one who has been given ears for the purpose of hearing, pay close attention to what I say!"

⁹ His followers then asked Him, "What's the meaning of that parable?"

¹⁰ "You have been given the privilege of understanding the mysteries of the Kingdom of God," He replied. "But the rest hear only the parable,

because

Although they are looking, they really aren't able to see. And although they are listening, they really aren't able to understand.^a

¹¹ "The meaning of the parable is this: The seed is God's message to mankind.

¹² "The seed that fell on the hard path alongside the field is a picture of people who hear God's message, but they allow the devil to come along and take the words from their hard hearts, so they won't really believe it and be saved.

¹³ "Those who receive the seed in the shallow soil on the rock are people who receive the message with joy when they hear it, but they don't allow the message to take deep root into their lives. They believe for awhile, but when temptations or persecutions come along, they fall away.

¹⁴ "Those who receive the seed among thorns are the people who listen to God's message, but as they go on their way, God's words in their hearts are choked by their anxious concern about their earthly problems and their interest in money and pleasure.^a So they never become mature and produce fruit.^b

¹⁵ "But those who receive the seed in good soil are the people who listen to the message, and with honest and sincere hearts obey it, and then patiently persevere in continuing to bear fruit."^a

Let Your Light Shine

¹⁶ Then He said, "No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a large container or puts it under a bed. No, he puts it on a table or stand, so that everyone coming into the room may be able to see by means of the light.

¹⁷ "Because there's nothing that is now hidden that won't be brought out where it will be clearly seen. And there's nothing that is now kept secret that won't be known and revealed.

8:2a Meaning from *Magdala*.

8:10a Isaiah 6:9.

8:14a This includes concerns about job, business, retirement benefits, investments, etc., more than concern about really obeying God. Romans 2:1-9; 6:16.

It also includes more time spent in sports or watching them, or in other self-pursuits, than in serving God by prayer, Bible reading, witnessing to others about their life and eternity, and in helping those who really need you.

It also includes having more concern about the boat, the car, or the home you live in, and its furnishings, than you have about laying up all the

treasure possible in your future, in Heaven—if you're really expecting, planning, and working out your own salvation (Philippians 2:12-13) to be there.

It's the love and concern for all the things of this life that will keep you from an eternity in Heaven. Where is your heart—really?

8:14b John 15:1-6 states clearly what happens to a person who doesn't bear fruit for God.

8:12-15a According to what Jesus said here: 1) Many people hear God's message, but allow their enemy (Satan) to cause them to neglect it until they've lost it, v 12, resulting in the loss of their soul. 2) Others joyfully receive the message, but

¹⁸“So you must continue to be very concerned about how you are listening to what you are hearing. Because whoever receives the truth and makes it his own, will be given more truth. But whoever doesn’t vigorously take hold of the truth, will have even what truth he thinks he has taken from him.”^a

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

¹⁹One day His mother and brothers came to visit Him, but they couldn’t even get near Him because of the crowd.

²⁰Then someone told Him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, and wish to see You.”

²¹But His reply was, “My mother and My brothers are those who carefully listen to God’s message and obey it.”

Jesus Calms a Storm

²²Another day Jesus said to His followers, “Let’s cross over to the other side of the lake.” So they got into a boat and launched out.

²³As they got under way, He lay down for a nap. But a short while later a violent storm swept down the lake, and the boat began filling with water until they were in very great danger.

²⁴In great fear, they rushed over to Jesus and shook Him awake, saying, “Master! Master! We’re about to die!” He got up and told the wind and the waves to stop their violence. And they stopped! All became perfectly calm.

²⁵“Where is your faith?” He asked them. In fear and amazement they looked at one another, and said, “Who is this Man?^a Why, He even gives orders to the wind and the water, and they obey Him!”

Man with Demons Delivered

²⁶Then they continued on to the territory of the

Gadarenes, which is directly across the lake from Galilee.

²⁷As Jesus stepped ashore, He was met by a demon-possessed man from the nearby town. This man hadn’t worn any clothes for a long time, and didn’t live in a house, but among the tombs in the burial caves.

²⁸Jesus immediately recognized the condition of the man, and commanded the demon to come out of him. When the demon recognized Jesus, the man let out a loud shriek, and then fell to his knees in front of Him and in a loud voice demanded, “What is it that You want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I plead with You, don’t torment me!”

²⁹Many times that demon had controlled the man’s actions. And although he had been bound with chains and leg irons and kept under guard at such times, he had broken the chains and irons and been driven by the demon into the wilderness.

³⁰“What’s your name?” Jesus then asked him.

“Legion,” he replied, because many demons had gone into him.

³¹Then the demons began begging Him not to send them into the Bottomless Pit.^a

³²A large herd of pigs was feeding nearby on a hillside. So they begged Him to let them go into the pigs, and He let them go.

³³So the demons went out of the man and into the pigs. But immediately that whole herd of pigs ran madly down the steep bank and into the lake, and drowned.

³⁴When the men herding the pigs saw this happen, they ran to the town and told the people there and also in the country what had happened.

³⁵And the people rushed out to see for themselves what had actually taken place. When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus’ feet, dressed and in

they don’t allow God’s truths to take full possession of them and obey them. v 13. They make a sincere beginning, but they don’t follow thru. They too are eventually lost. 3) Others also gladly accept God’s message, but they give it only second or third place in their lives. They allow other things to be their first concern in life. v 14. According to John 15:1-6, they too are cut off from Christ and eternal life. 4) Only those who allow God to take full possession of them, and who make a practice of obeying God and serving Him, will inherit eternal life and escape God’s judgment. v 15. Those who are lukewarm toward God will just not make it. This is verified by Revelation 3:14-22 and other Scriptures.

It is a terrifying thing to fall into the bands of the everliving God. Hebrews 10:31. We are not dealing with a dead or absentee God, but with One who is alive and very alert. Romans 2:7.

For a very important extensive note on this parable of Jesus see Appendix 205, page 471. Also read Appendix 247, page 520, *The Amazing Story of God*, and there sincerely make your surrender to Jesus Christ as Lord of your life, thereby taking hold of eternal life in truth.

8:18a Matthew 13:12; Mark 4:25; Luke 19:26.

8:25a Just who is Jesus Christ? See Appendix 246, page 512, for the answer.

8:31a ... *where they would be punished.*

his right mind. That really frightened them.

³⁶Those who had seen what happened then told the others how the demon-possessed man had been healed.

³⁷Then, because of their great fear,^a that whole crowd of Gadarenes asked Jesus to leave their area. So He got into the boat and went back to Galilee.

³⁸But before He left, the man from whom the demons had gone out pleaded with Jesus to let him go with Him.

³⁹But Jesus had sent him on his way, saying, "Return to your home and tell your people about all the great things that God has done for you." So he left and went thruout the whole town, telling everyone about all the great things that Jesus had done for him.

A Sick Woman and a Dead Girl

⁴⁰When Jesus returned across the lake, there was a large crowd there to welcome Him. They had all been waiting for Him to return.

⁴¹Almost immediately an official of the synagogue, named Jairus, came and fell at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his home,

⁴²because his only daughter, a girl of about 12, was dying. But as Jesus went with him the crowd almost crushed Him.

⁴³And in that crowd was a woman who had suffered a severe bleeding problem for 12 years. She had spent all her money on doctors, but still hadn't found anyone who could cure her.

⁴⁴She came up behind Jesus and just touched the fringe of His prayer shawl,^a and immediately her bleeding stopped.

⁴⁵"Who touched Me?" Jesus demanded.

When everyone denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, with all these people pressing in on You, are You really asking, 'Who touched Me?'"

⁴⁶"But someone deliberately touched Me," Jesus replied, "because I felt power going out from Me."

⁴⁷When the woman realized she couldn't hide what she had done, she came trembling to Jesus and fell to her knees in front of Him, and in the presence of all the people told Him why she had touched Him and how she had been instantly

healed.

⁴⁸"Cheer up, My daughter," Jesus told her. "You are healed because you believed. Go in peace."

⁴⁹While He was still speaking to her, someone came from the home of Jairus, the synagogue official, and told him, "Your daughter has died. Don't bother the Teacher any further."

⁵⁰But when Jesus heard it, He told Jairus, "Don't be afraid! Just keep on believing, and she will be healed."

⁵¹When Jesus arrived at the house, He didn't allow anyone to enter with Him except Peter, James, John, and the father and mother of the girl.

⁵²The people inside the house were all wailing and beating their breasts. But Jesus said, "Don't cry, she's not dead; she's only sleeping."

⁵³They were shocked that He'd say such a thing, because they all knew she was dead. And they laughed at Him in scorn.

⁵⁴So He sent them all out. Then He went in and took the girl by the hand and called to her, "Little girl, get up!"

⁵⁵And her life returned to her body, and she immediately got up! Then Jesus ordered that she be given something to eat.

⁵⁶Her parents were ecstatically astounded and completely overwhelmed with amazement. But Jesus ordered them to tell no one what had happened.^a

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

9One day Jesus called His twelve followers together and gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases.

²Then He sent them out to tell people about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

³"Take nothing with you for your trip, not even a walking stick or a knapsack, no money, no food, not even a change of clothes,"^a He told them.

⁴"When people welcome you into their home, stay there until you leave the area.

⁵"But when you come to people who refuse to welcome you, shake off the very dust from your feet when you leave that town or city, as a warning to them^a."

8:37a ... fear of *what else might happen to their possessions* ... They evidently valued pigs more than people.

8:44a See notes for Matthew 9:20.

8:56a For the reason see Matthew 12:16 note.

9:3a The Lord wanted them to experience how He could supply all their needs as they looked to Him while they served Him. Do not spend your life mak-

ing provision for self-support before obeying the call of God. Later (see Luke 10:4; 22:35-36) Jesus instructed His workers to bring along and use anything in their possession that could be used for their support, even a sword for defensive purposes.

9:5a ... of *God's anger and displeasure with them*.

9:8a ... as prophesied in *Malachi 4:5*.

⁶So they went on their way thru the towns, telling the Great News and healing people everywhere.

⁷Now when Herod, the ruler of Galilee, heard about all that Jesus was doing, he was perplexed, because some people were claiming that Jesus was John the Baptizer, who had come back to life.

⁸Others claimed He was Elijah who had now come back, as promised;^a and others, that one of the other prophets of long ago had come back to life.

⁹“I had John’s head cut off,” Herod said. “But who is this about whom I keep hearing such strange reports?” So he kept trying to see Him.

Jesus Feeds More Than 5,000 People

¹⁰When Jesus’ messengers returned, they gave Him a full report of all they had done. Then He took them away privately to a deserted area that belonged to the city of Bethsaida.

¹¹But when the crowds realized where He had gone, they followed Him. He graciously received them and talked to them about the Kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

¹²Late in the afternoon the Twelve came to Him and said, “You’d better send these crowds away, so they can go into the surrounding towns and countryside and find food and a place to stay. There’s nothing here in this deserted place.”

¹³“You feed them,” Jesus replied.

“But we don’t have any food, except for five small loaves of bread and two small fish,” they replied, “unless we go out and buy food for all these people.”^a

¹⁴They were concerned because there were about 5,000 men there. But Jesus told His followers, “Have the people sit down in groups of about 50.”

¹⁵After they did so, and all the people were seated,

¹⁶Jesus took the five loaves^a and the two fish, and looking up to Heaven He thanked God for the food and asked Him to bless it. Then He broke the bread and fish into pieces and began giving them to His followers to distribute to the people.

¹⁷All the people ate until they were fully satisfied!

And when they had gathered up the leftovers, they had 12 full baskets!

Peter’s Declaration About Jesus

¹⁸One day when Jesus was alone, praying with His followers, He asked them, “Who do the people in the crowds say that I am?”

¹⁹“John the Baptizer,” they replied. “But some say you’re Elijah, and others, that You’re one of the other old prophets who’s come back to life.”

²⁰“But what about you?” He asked. “Who do you say I am?”

“You are the Messiah,^a who has come to us from God!” Peter replied.

²¹Jesus then gave them strict orders not to tell this to anyone.

²²Then He said, “I, the Son of Man, must suffer in many ways. I will be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law, and then killed. But on the third day I will rise back to life again.”

²³After that He said to all the people, “Whoever wants to become a follower of Mine^a must no longer live for himself. He must take up and shoulder his own cross^b each day and live for Me.

²⁴“Because if you choose to continue to satisfy your desire to live as you yourself please, you will lose your soul! But if you will make it your definite purpose in life to lose your present life for My sake, you will save your soul.^a

²⁵“Because what good would it all do you even if you gained all the wealth and power and all the flesh-fulfilling experiences in all the world, but then found yourself barred from Heaven and sent to your judgment in Hell?

²⁶“If you are ashamed of Me, ashamed to take a stand and share with others the message of Life that I came from Heaven to earth to give lost mankind, I, the Son of Man, will also be ashamed of you when I come in My glory and in the glory of My Father and of the holy angels.^a

²⁷“But I tell you the truth: Some of you standing here right now will definitely not die before you have had a glimpse of the Kingdom of God.”^a

9:13a See Mark 6:37 note.

9:16a A loaf of bread was generally seven inches in diameter, and a half to one inch thick.

9:20a Or *Christ*.

9:23a See very important note on Mark 8:34 as to the full meaning of this statement.

9:23b See Mark 8:34 note and Appendix 221, page 483, for very important notes on what it really

means to take up our cross.

9:24a What does this really mean? See Mark 8:35 note, and Appendix 207, page 473.

9:26a What will be the fate of those who are ashamed of Christ and are unwilling to take a stand and speak out for Him? See Appendix 209, page 474; also Ezekiel 33:1-9; Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; Revelation 3:14-16; 21:8.

The Transfiguration

²⁸About eight days after Jesus said this, He took Peter, John, and James with Him and went up on a mountain to pray.

²⁹As He was praying, the appearance of His face changed completely,^a and His clothing became most brilliantly and dazzlingly white.

³⁰Suddenly Moses and Elijah were there talking with Him.

³¹They also appeared in glorified form, and talked with Jesus about His departure from this life, which He was soon to carry out in Jerusalem.

³²But Peter and those with him had been overcome with sleep. When they woke up they saw Him in His glory, and the two men standing with Him.

³³And as Moses and Elijah were preparing to leave, Peter spoke up and said, "Master, it's good for us to be here! Allow us to put up three shelters—one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But he was so keyed-up he really didn't know what he was saying.

³⁴And even as he was saying this, a cloud came and wrapped itself around them, which really frightened the three followers.

³⁵Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, whom I love dearly. You must keep on listening to Him."

³⁶When the voice had finished speaking, there stood Jesus, alone. But His three followers kept quiet about the entire event, not telling anyone at that time what they had seen.

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Evil Spirit

³⁷The next day when they came down from the mountain, Jesus was again met by a huge crowd.

³⁸And from the crowd a man burst out with a loud cry, "Teacher, I plead with You, please, do something for my son—my only child!

³⁹"A demon is continually attacking him, causing him to scream and go into convulsions and foam at the mouth. It hardly ever leaves him

alone, and when it does, it leaves him covered with bruises.

⁴⁰"I begged Your followers to drive it out, but they couldn't."

⁴¹"Oh, you unbelieving and perverted people!" Jesus responded. "How long must I continue with you and put up with you? Bring your son here."

⁴²Even as the father was bringing the boy to Him, the demon again threw him to the ground and into a fit. Jesus then sternly commanded the evil spirit to leave, and then He healed the boy and gave him back to his father.

⁴³All the people continued to be utterly amazed at the display of God's mighty power. And while everyone was still overwhelmed by all that Jesus had done, He said to His followers,

⁴⁴"I want you to store up in your memories with extreme care what you are hearing, because the Son of Man is about to be handed over into the grasping clutches of men."

⁴⁵But they didn't understand what He was talking about, since the meaning was deliberately kept from them so they wouldn't understand.^a And they were afraid to ask Him what He meant.

Who Will Be the Greatest

⁴⁶Then an argument erupted among the followers as to which of them would be the greatest.

⁴⁷So Jesus, knowing the thought that was uppermost in their hearts, took hold of a little child and had him stand by Him.

⁴⁸Then He said, "Whoever warmly welcomes one of these little children, to do for him what I would do,^a is welcoming Me. And whoever welcomes Me is welcoming the One who sent Me. So whichever of you is willing to do that which will be least recognized and applauded by people will be the greatest."^b

⁴⁹Then John spoke up and said, "Master, we saw someone driving out demons in Your name, and we told him to stop, because he's not following You with us."

⁵⁰"Don't stop him," Jesus replied, "because any-

9:27a See Mark 9:1 note.

9:29a Matthew 17:2 states, "His face became as brilliant as the sun!" He evidently revealed Himself here in glorified form.

9:45a It was enough that they would remember after He died and rose again that He had prophesied several times that all this would happen.

9:48a Literally *Whoever shall receive this little child in My name ...*

9:48b ... *greatest in the eyes of God*, and will

therefore be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Matthew 18:4.

9:60a Dead spiritually.

9:60b This man wanted to follow Jesus, but wanted to first take care of his father until he had died. Christ wanted this man to know that following and serving Him was of far more importance than any other obligation.

9:62a It appears that this man wanted to get some advice from family and friends as to the advisabili-

one who is not against us is for us.”

A Samaritan Town Refuses Jesus

⁵¹As the time drew near for Him to be taken up to Heaven, He headed for Jerusalem with strong determination.

⁵²One day He sent messengers ahead to reserve rooms for His group in a town in Samaria.

⁵³But when the Samaritans learned that He was on His way to Jerusalem, they wouldn't let Him stay in their town.

⁵⁴When Jesus' two followers James and John saw this rejection of Jesus, they asked Him, “Lord, do You want us to call down fire from Heaven and burn them up, the way Elijah did?”

⁵⁵But He turned and rebuked them, saying, “You don't realize what kind of spirit has prompted you to have such a reaction!

⁵⁶“The Son of Man hasn't come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.” Then they went on to another town.

The Cost of Following Jesus

⁵⁷As they were traveling along the road, a man said to Him, “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.”

⁵⁸“Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests,” Jesus replied, “but the Son of Man has no home or possessions here, not even a pillow He can call His own.”

⁵⁹To another He invited, “Come along with Me.” But the man replied, “Lord, first let me go home and bury my father.”

⁶⁰But Jesus rebuked him. “Let the dead^a bury their own dead!” He emphatically declared. “But as for you, go out and tell everyone everywhere about the Kingdom of God!”^b

⁶¹Another man said, “I will follow You, Lord, but first let me go and say good-bye to my family.”

⁶²But Jesus' answer to him was, “Anyone who starts to plow, but keeps looking back, isn't fit for service in the Kingdom of God.”^a

Jesus Sends Out the 70 Men

10 After this the Lord chose 70 other men, and also sent them out by two's to go ahead of Him into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.

²Before sending them out He told them, “The harvest is indeed great, but there are so few workers. So plead most earnestly with the Lord of the harvest so that He may use His great power to forcibly thrust out^a workers into His great harvest field!

³“Now be on your way. But realize that I am sending you out as lambs among wolves.

⁴“Don't bring a wallet with you to carry money, or a knapsack for food, or extra sandals.^a And don't stop along the way merely to visit with people.^b

⁵“Whenever you enter a house, first of all say, ‘May God's peace rest upon everyone in this house.’

⁶“If the man of the house is truly open to hearing from God, your message of peace with God will refresh his whole family. If he is not open, the peace meant for him will return to you.

⁷“When you are welcomed into a home, don't move around from one home to another, but stay in that one home, eating and drinking whatever they serve you, because the one who works deserves to be paid.

⁸“So when you enter a city and are welcomed, eat whatever they serve you.^a

⁹“Heal the sick there, and tell the people, ‘The Kingdom of God has come very close to you.’

¹⁰“But if you enter a city where they refuse to welcome you, go into their streets and say,

¹¹‘We are wiping off the very dust from your city that clings to us as a public testimony against you. But we want you to know that the Kingdom of God has come very close to you.’

¹²“I assure you that on Judgment Day God will be more merciful to the people of Sodom^a than to the people of that city.

¹³“Woe to you people in Chorazin! Woe to you in

ty of his leaving everything to follow Jesus. Family and friends are to have no part in deciding if one is to follow Christ. Genesis 19:1-26.

10:2a See Matthew 9:38 notes.

10:4a See 9:3 note.

10:4b ... *Attend strictly to the business you are sent to accomplish. Don't waste your time!*

10:8a Remember, you are in a war, so don't be picky about the rations and accommodations.

When the war is over, you'll be welcomed home to banquets, a mansion, and much, much more! This could also refer to not making a fuss about being served non-kosher food.

10:12a The judgment of God upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:16 to 19:29) is a classic symbol of the fiery judgment that awaits all who ignore God, or who claim to know Him, but are not moved by His commands and warnings.

Bethsaida! Because if the great miracles that were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, those people of long ago would have stopped their sinning and worn sackcloth and sat in ashes to show how truly sorry they were.

¹⁴“Those former people of Tyre and Sidon will receive lighter punishment than you will on Judgment Day!

¹⁵“And you people of Capernaum—you have been lifted up to Heaven by what you have both seen and heard, but you will be thrown down into Hell!^a

¹⁶“The person who makes a practice of sincerely listening to what you, My messengers, say, is actually sincerely listening to Me. But whoever continues to say ‘No’ to you is actually saying ‘No’ to Me. And the one who is saying ‘No’ to Me is actually saying ‘No’ to the One who sent Me.”

¹⁷Later the 70 joyfully returned, saying, “Lord, even the demons obey us when we use Your name!”

¹⁸“Yes,” Jesus replied, “I saw Satan fall from Heaven like a bolt of lightning.

¹⁹“But listen! I am the One who gives you the authority that enables you to trample on those snakes and scorpions! And I give you authority over all the power that the enemy^a has. You won’t be hurt in any way when you use that authority.

²⁰“But you must stop finding your delight in the fact that the evil spirits obey you; instead, let your joy be in the fact that your names have been written down in Heaven among those who will be welcomed there.”

²¹At the same time, the Holy Spirit filled Jesus with joy and ecstasy, and He said, “I praise You, My Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, for hiding the truths concerning these things from those who consider themselves so wise and learned, and for revealing them instead to those who are childlike in faith and acceptance. Yes, My Father, because that’s the way You were pleased that it should be.”

²²Then turning to His followers He said to them privately, “Everything has been handed over to Me by My Father. No one has a thorough comprehen-

sion of who the Son really is—only the Father does. And no one has a thorough comprehension of who the Father is, except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.

²³“How fortunate and blessed are the eyes that see what you are now seeing,

²⁴“Because I tell you, many prophets and kings of the past were eager to see what you are seeing and to hear what you are now hearing. But they were never privileged to do so.”^a

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁵One day one of the experts in the Law of Moses stepped forward to test Jesus. “Teacher, what must I do in order to live forever?” he questioned.

²⁶“What’s written in the Scriptures?” Jesus replied. “What does it say there?”

²⁷“The Scripture says,” he responded,

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind.^a And you must love others in the same way that you love yourself.^b

²⁸“You are right,” Jesus replied. “Make a practice of doing what you’ve just said, and you will live forever.”

²⁹But wanting to appear blameless, he then asked Jesus, “And just who are the ‘others’ referred to there?”

³⁰Accepting the challenge, Jesus responded, “A man on his way down to Jericho from Jerusalem was attacked by robbers, who beat him up and robbed him of everything he had, and then left him half dead.

³¹“A certain priest happened to be traveling down the same road, but when he saw the battered and bloodied man, he passed by on the other side.

³²“A Levite also came by. He looked at him lying there, and he also passed by on the other side.^a

³³“But a Samaritan was also traveling down the road, and when he came by and saw the man, he was deeply touched by the man’s plight.

³⁴“He went to him, poured olive oil and wine on his wounds, and bandaged them. Then he put him on his own donkey, brought him to an inn, and

10:15a ... because although you were in attendance at the meetings, you refused to repent and turn from your sinning, and give Me first place in your life!

Jesus had performed a great many of His miracles in the Jewish tri-cities of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida. The people were willing to watch and listen, but most of them refused to surrender to God as their Lord and receive the Savior He had sent.

Those cities were later so thoroughly destroyed that for centuries their whereabouts were unknown. And Jesus had predicted that they would be *thrown down into Hell*.

Where are the people now who lived there and refused to obey and believe God? Where will you be?

10:19a Satan.

10:24a 1 Peter 1:10-12.

took care of him.

³⁵“The next day, before he left, he gave the innkeeper enough money to pay for the man’s room for two more days. ‘Take care of him,’ he said. ‘And if it costs more than this, I’ll pay you when I return.’”

³⁶“Now which of these three men would you say was a true friend to the victim of the robbers?”

³⁷“The one who took pity on him,” he replied.

“You go and do the same,” Jesus told him.

At the Home of Martha and Mary

³⁸As Jesus and His followers continued on their way, they came to a town where a woman named Martha welcomed them into her home.

³⁹Now she had a sister named Mary, who joined the others and sat at Jesus’ feet, listening to what He was saying.

⁴⁰But Martha was so concerned about the meal she was to serve that she came to Jesus and said, “Lord, don’t You care that my sister has left me with all the work of preparing dinner? Tell her to help me!”

⁴¹“Martha, Martha,” Jesus replied, “you are so concerned and troubled about so many things.

⁴²“But there’s only one thing that is really important. And Mary has chosen to be concerned about that which will result in the greatest good, and it will not be taken from her.”

Jesus Teaches How to Pray

11 One day, immediately after Jesus had been praying in a certain place, one of His followers said to Him, “Lord, teach us how to pray, like John taught his followers.”

²So He said to all of them, “When you pray, pray like this:

Our Father, who is in Heaven, may Your name be most highly revered.

Reign as King in every life. May Your will be done here on earth, just as it is in Heaven.

³Continue to give us the food we need for each day.

⁴And forgive us our sins in the same way that we

ourselves also forgive everyone who sins against us.

Don’t allow us to be led into temptation, but rescue us from the Evil One.”

⁵Then, teaching them more about how to pray, He said, “Suppose one of you should go to a friend’s house at midnight and say to him,

⁶‘My friend, please lend me three loaves of bread? A friend of mine has just arrived from a long distance and I don’t have a thing to give him to eat.’

⁷“Then suppose your friend, from an upstairs window, should answer, ‘Don’t bother us at such an atrocious hour! The doors are locked, and we’re all in bed. I can’t come down and give you anything now!’

⁸“But let Me tell you, even if he wouldn’t come down and give you the bread because you’re his friend, if you persisted and kept on knocking loudly on his door, he would get out of bed and give you all you need.

⁹“The same thing happens when you really pray. You must persist and keep on asking.^a And when you do, what you ask for definitely^b will be given you. So keep on seeking,^a and you definitely^b will find what you are looking for. Keep on knocking,^a and the door will be opened for you.

¹⁰“Because everyone who keeps on asking,^a is definitely^b in the process of receiving, and the one who keeps on seeking,^a is definitely^b in the process of finding, and for the one who keeps on knocking,^a the door will be opened.

¹¹“Which of you men who are fathers would give your son a stone if he asked you for bread? Or if he should ask for a fish, would you give him a snake instead?

¹²“Or if he asked for an egg, would you give him a scorpion?

¹³“If you, then, evil as you are, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who persevere in asking^a Him!”

10:27a Deuteronomy 6:5. See note for Mark 12:30.

10:27b Leviticus 19:18.

10:32a Ask the Lord at the beginning of every day to help you to see and to be willing to take the time to say a cheerful, encouraging word, to make the effort to give a helping hand, or whatever is necessary, to someone you see who is hurting.

11:9-10a All are present tense in the Greek, repre-

senting present continuous action.

11:9-10b All are indicative mood, the mood of certainty. You *definitely will* receive—if you have met all the other conditions for answered prayer. Luke 17:5-6; 18:1-8; Psalm 66:18; Matthew 5:23-24; Mark 11:22-26; John 15:1-7; James 1:5-8; 5:16; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 John 5:13-15, etc.

11:13a Present tense in Greek—continuous present action—action that refuses to be denied.

Jesus and Beelzebul

¹⁴One day Jesus drove out a demon that had prevented a man from being able to speak. After the demon left the man, he had no problem speaking, which truly amazed the crowd.

¹⁵But some in the crowd said, “The only reason he’s able to drive out demons is because he’s doing it by power given him by Beelzebul,^a the ruler of the demons.”

¹⁶Others tried to make Him prove Himself by asking Him to cause something miraculous to happen in the sky.

¹⁷But He even knew what they were thinking, so He said to them, “Any nation that allows its different states to fight one another is in the process of being destroyed. And any family that allows internal squabbling won’t last.

¹⁸“So if Satan allowed part of his forces to war against his other forces, how long could his kingdom continue under such conditions? And still you say I drive out demons with Beelzebul’s help.

¹⁹“Also, if I’m driving out demons with power from Beelzebul, who empowers your own followers to drive them out? So even they will refute you and cut the ground out from under your claim.

²⁰“But if I’m driving out demons by the power of God, then surely the Kingdom of God has arrived among you.

²¹“When a strong man, fully armed, is guarding his home, his possessions are safe.

²²“But when someone stronger^a than he comes along and overpowers him, that one can then take all the armor in which he trusted, and also take anything else out of the house that he wants.

²³“Anyone who is not actively with Me is against Me. So anyone who is not gathering souls with Me is actually scattering them abroad.^a

The Return of the Evil Spirit

²⁴“When an evil spirit comes out of a person, it goes thru dry places, looking for a place to rest. But when it doesn’t find any, it says, ‘I’m going back to the house^a I left.’

²⁵“And when it returns, it finds the place all cleaned up, and everything in order.

²⁶“Then it goes out and gets seven other spirits who are more evil than itself, and they all come and live there. As a result, the person is now in worse condition than before.”^a

²⁷As Jesus said this, a woman in the crowd broke in and shouted, “How blessed and happy the woman must be who gave birth to You and nursed You!”

²⁸“Yes,” Jesus replied, “but you would be more correct in saying, ‘How blessed and happy are those who pay close attention to God’s message, and continue to guard, defend, preserve, and obey^a it.’^b”

The Demand for a Miracle

²⁹While the crowd was gathering in increasing numbers, Jesus said, “You people of today are an evil generation! You’re looking for a miraculous sign from Heaven before you’ll believe.^a But you won’t be given a sign, except the sign that will resemble what happened to the prophet Jonah.

³⁰“Because in the way that Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, in that same way the Son of Man will become a sign to the people of today.^a

³¹“The Queen of the South^a will rise up on Judgment Day with you, and she will condemn you, because she came from a great distance to listen to the wisdom of Solomon. And the truth is, One who is far greater than Solomon is here now!^b

³²“The people of Nineveh^a will also stand up on

That’s the kind of prayer God honors. See Luke 18:1-8, and John 3:15 note.

11:15a See Matthew 10:25 notes.

11:22a Jesus is the *stronger* One who can overpower Satan’s demons.

11:23a See Matthew 12:30 note, and Romans 10:9-10.

11:24a The place it calls *the house* is the person it came out of.

11:26a Even after Satan and his demons have been driven out of a person, we cannot continue to be free from those demons by our own strength. We must sincerely invite Jesus to come into our life to take full possession, and to guard and protect us. We must sincerely desire and purpose that our body,

soul and mind become His home, enabling us to live in obedience to all His will, and for His glory!

11:28a This is the full meaning of the word *phulássontes* in the Greek. If the Lord’s only thought here was obedience He would have used the word *hupakoáy*.

11:28b ... *because they are not only blessed and happy now, but will be far more so in God’s eternal Kingdom.*

11:29a They had requested this earlier, v 16.

11:30a Jonah became a sign to Nineveh because he miraculously survived inside a whale for three days and three nights. (See book of Jonah). Likewise, Jesus became a sign by dying and being buried three days and three nights, and then rising back to

Judgment Day and accuse you, because they stopped their sinning and began to obey God when Jonah preached to them.^a And the truth is, One who is far greater than Jonah is here now!^b

Let Your Light Shine!

³³“You don’t light a lamp, and then hide it or cover it with a basket. No, you put it on a table or stand, so that those who come into the room may be able to see by means of its light.

³⁴“Your eyes act as lights for your body. When your eyes are in good physical condition, your whole body is full of light. But if your eyes have gone bad and are now useless, your body is full of darkness.

³⁵“So make sure, then, that the light you claim to have within you isn’t actually darkness instead.^a

³⁶“So, if in your whole being as a person, you are fully open to receive light and truth, with no desire to continue living in darkness in any part of your life, your whole life will become full of light that you can share with others, in the same way that a brightly shining lamp gives light so that everything in a room can be seen.”

Religious Leaders Strongly Warned

³⁷When He stopped speaking, a Pharisee asked Him to eat lunch with him. So He went in and took His place at the table.

³⁸But the Pharisee was surprised when he saw that Jesus didn’t ceremonially wash His hands before eating.^a

³⁹So the Lord said to him, “Listen to Me: You Pharisees are always washing the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of all kinds of robbery and other wickedness.

⁴⁰“How foolish can you all be? Didn’t the One who made the outside make the inside as well?

⁴¹“But now, take what you have gotten dishonestly and give it to the poor. Then you will indeed be altogether clean.

⁴²“Awful trouble awaits you Pharisees! Because

even though you are very careful to give God a tenth of even all of the smallest vegetables from your garden, you have no concern about dealing in a just and honest way with others, nor do you truly love God. These last things are the things you should concentrate on being sure to do, but without stopping the good you are doing.

⁴³“Woe to you Pharisees! Because, oh, how you love the seats of honor in the synagogues, and to be recognized and greeted with honor as you walk thru the markets!

⁴⁴“Frightful trouble awaits you teachers of the Law. And the same applies to you Pharisees! You hypocrites! Because you are like graves that can’t be recognized as graves, and as people walk over them they don’t realize they are walking over dead bodies.”

⁴⁵Upon hearing this, one of the experts in the Mosaic Law challenged Jesus, saying, “Teacher, when you say that, you’re insulting us too.”

⁴⁶“Yes, woe to you also, you experts in the Law!” Jesus replied. “Because you load the people down with heavy religious requirements that almost crush them, but you won’t move even a finger to lighten those burdens.

⁴⁷“Yes, you too face frightful trouble! You honor the graves of the prophets with monuments, but it was your own fathers who killed them!

⁴⁸“In fact, by your actions^a you approve of what your fathers did—they killed the prophets; and then you build monuments in their honor.

⁴⁹“That’s why God by His superior knowledge said, ‘I will send them prophets and messengers, but they will kill some of them and persecute others.’

⁵⁰“For that reason you people living today will be held responsible for all the blood of the prophets that has been shed since the creation of the world,

⁵¹“from the killing of Abel to the killing of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the Temple. Yes, I tell you, you people of today will be punished for all of it!^a

life again.

11:31a 1 Kings 10:1-13.

11:32a Jonah 3:1-10.

11:31-32b ... and you refuse to listen and believe and obey Him.

11:35a He now applies the spiritual truth. Many have accepted *spiritual light which is false*. Such a person is in spiritual darkness! To be in the darkness of physical blindness is tragic, but spiritual blindness is far more devastating, with horrendous eternal consequences. Therefore, the reason for the

warning is to make sure that what you believe and live by is really light, not darkness.

11:38a Christ evidently purposely omitted washing His hands in order to create a situation so He could give the following instructions.

11:48a They would soon prove this statement true by killing Jesus.

11:51a *That present generation would be punished for all of it* because they would perform the final and crowning act of rebellion of rejecting God’s messengers by rejecting the Messiah and

⁵²“Woe to you experts in the Law! Because you have taken away the key that unlocks the door to knowledge about God! You yourselves wouldn’t go in, and you have kept the people out who are trying to get in.”

⁵³When He finished saying all this, the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees began to fiercely attack Him verbally, and to fire many questions at Him to get Him to say what He thought about many things.

⁵⁴They did their best to trip Him up, to get Him to say something they could use against Him in accusing Him.

Warnings and Encouragements

12 Meanwhile an immense crowd had formed—so large, in fact, that people were stepping on each other. Then Jesus began to speak mainly to His close followers. “Above all else,” He said, “you must be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees. I’m referring to the way they fool the people by their hypocrisy.

²“I give you this warning because nothing can now be covered up and ignored^a that won’t one day be uncovered. And there’s nothing hidden that won’t be exposed.

³“So whatever you have said in the dark will one day be heard in broad daylight. And whatever you whisper in private in the back rooms will be shouted from the housetops.

⁴“Now I tell you, My friends, never be afraid of people. They can kill your body, but after that, there is nothing more they can do.

⁵“But the One you must fear is God, because after He has killed, He has power to throw you into

Hell. Believe Me, He is the One you must fear!^a

⁶“Don’t they sell five sparrows for just two copper coins? Still, not one of them is forgotten by God.

⁷“And God even knows the number of hairs on your head. So don’t be fearful, because you are of far more value to God than a vast number of sparrows.

⁸“I also promise you that whoever speaks out and takes a stand for Me when with others, is one whom I, the Son of Man, will confess and claim as My own before God’s angels.

⁹“But whoever ignores or disowns Me when with others^a will be disowned by Me before God’s angels.^b

¹⁰“However, anyone who speaks against the Son of Man can be forgiven,^a but whoever speaks with abusive language against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

¹¹“When they bring you before the rulers of the synagogues and other authorities, don’t worry about how you will answer or what you will say in your defense.

¹²“Because the Holy Spirit will give you the words to use when it’s time for you to speak.”

The Parable of the Rich Fool

¹³Then someone in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the property with me that our father left us when he died.”

¹⁴“Man, who appointed Me to be a judge or a referee to decide such matters?” Jesus replied.

¹⁵Then He said to the crowd, “Watch out and guard yourselves against being greedy and grasping, always wanting more. Because a person’s

clamoring for His death. The awful slaughter and destruction of Jerusalem took place less than 40 years later, in A.D. 70. The Romans killed over one million Jews, burned the city, and drove almost 100,000 Jews into slavery.

12:2a Your greatest concern in your church should be that the truth, and the whole truth, is being taught, preached, and lived. Erroneous teaching will pervade like yeast, and will soon be accepted as truth thruout the whole church, unless detected and removed! See Matthew 16:6-12. Unless you expose the false teaching, you too will be held accountable for it by God.

12:5a People can do very little to harm us, really. They have no power to injure the soul, the immortal part of us, unless we allow them to seduce us to sin. The body is of little consequence in comparison with the soul. The death of the body is a very unimportant thing when compared with eternal

death. So Jesus is encouraging His listeners not to be alarmed at the prospect of even being killed for the stand they take for Him. But they are to truly fear God, who can destroy both soul and body in Hell.

This passage proves that the bodies of the wicked will also be raised. They have sinned with their bodies, and they will be given bodies in which they must be punished in Hell, where there will be no escape. What a frightful thought!

* * *

We shouldn’t fear people, but we definitely should fear displeasing God. To be fearful of the condemnation of God is not being cowardly. It is being sensible and wise, because when God inflicts penalty there is no one who can deliver you out of His hand.

God wants to be your friend. He wants to forgive all your sin. He wants to live within you and help you to live a life that is honorable and worthy of

happiness, contentment, safety, and length of life does not depend on obtaining a great amount of wealth.”

¹⁶Then He told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich farmer produced an immense harvest.

¹⁷“What shall I do?” he thought. “I don’t have room to store all my crops!

¹⁸“I know what I’ll do,” he said. “I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I’ll have plenty of room to store all my grain and other goods.

¹⁹“Then I’ll say to myself, “Man, you’ve got it made! You can retire now! You have enough stored up to last for many years. You can take it easy and just eat, drink, and enjoy the pleasures and other good things of life.””

²⁰“But God said to him, ‘You fool! Tonight you will die. Who then will get all these things you have piled up for yourself?’

²¹“That’s how foolish God considers anyone who continues to store up wealth for himself in this brief life, but has little or no interest in really loving, obeying, and serving God, and thereby laying up wealth in Heaven.”^a

Never Worry!

²²Then He said to His followers, “This is why I tell you not to worry about your needs in this life, about the food you will need to stay alive or about the clothing you will need for your body.

²³“You already have the miracle of life. Isn’t life itself a far greater wonder than food? And what a miracle the body is,^a much more so than the clothing you put on it.

²⁴“Look at the crows. They don’t plant or har-

vest. They don’t have storerooms or barns in which to store their food, but still God feeds them. Just think how much more God treasures you than the birds!

²⁵“And which of you by worry and anxious care can add 18 inches^a to your height?^b

²⁶“If you can’t do anything about that which is really of little importance, why are you so anxious about the rest?

²⁷“Think for a moment about the lilies, how beautifully they grow. They don’t feverishly work to make clothes for themselves, and yet, I tell you that even Solomon, with all the wealth and power he had, was never able to dress himself as handsomely as one of these.

²⁸“Now then, if God provides such beautiful clothes for the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown on the fire tomorrow, can’t He be trusted to provide clothing for you? O you of little faith!

²⁹“And stop worrying about whether you’ll have enough to eat and drink. You must not be anxious at all about these matters.

³⁰“Those are the things that people who don’t know God are always so concerned about. But your Father in Heaven knows all about your continual need for all of them.

³¹“Your main concern must be to continually seek^a the Kingdom of God.^b Then all these material things will also be given you.

³²“So don’t have any fears, little flock,^a because your Father is taking great pleasure in giving you the Kingdom.

³³“Sell what you own and give the money to those who are in need. If you do that you will be

being accepted into His presence. You have only one life to lose and one soul that needs to be saved.

It is insanity to sacrifice the salvation of your soul in order that you may enjoy the pleasures of some particular sin for a brief and uncertain time. *Seek the Lord while He may be found! Call upon Him while He is near!* Isaiah 55:6-7.

12:9a ... *by the way he speaks and acts and by his unwillingness to speak out and take a stand for Me* ...

12:8-9b See Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10 notes, and Appendix 209, page 474.

12:10a ... *if you ask Him to forgive you.* And if you now speak for Him instead of against Him.

12:21a What will be the fate of people like this rich man? Why? Is it possible to be rich or poor in Heaven? Will there be degrees of happiness even in Heaven? See Appendix 210, page 475, and Luke 16:8-9, and the comments there.

12:23a If God gave us the miracle of life and a miraculous body, can’t we trust Him to somehow supply our necessary food and clothing?

12:25a Literally *a cubit* — between 18 and 22 inches.

12:25b See Matthew 6:27 note.

12:31a This is present indicative in the Greek text, meaning positive, continuous concern and action.

12:31b To *continually seek God’s Kingdom* means to continually endeavor to please God in all we think, say, and do, in order to be positively assured of His forgiveness and eternal life with Him in His glory. 2 Peter 1:10. This means that we make pleasing God the object of our supreme choice and pursuit. See Matthew 6:33 note.

12:32a But do make sure that you are included in His *little flock*. Again, 2 Peter 1:10.

12:35a Always live in obedience to your Lord, and

putting your money in purses that will never get old and worn out. You'll have investments in Heaven that will never fail, where no thief or swindler of any kind can steal them, where no moths can destroy them.

³⁴“Because where your treasure is, that's where your heart will be also.

Faithful and Unfaithful Servants

³⁵“Always be ready for action, with your lamps burning.^a

³⁶“Be like servants who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding, always ready to open the door immediately when he returns and knocks.

³⁷“Those servants will be happy indeed if their master finds them awake and alert when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will put on a servant's jacket and have them sit down at the table, and will then proceed to serve them.

³⁸“Whether he comes before midnight or long after midnight, they will be happy indeed if he finds them faithfully waiting for him.^a

³⁹“Also consider this: If the man of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would have been ready for him and wouldn't have allowed his house to be broken into.^a

⁴⁰“You, too, must always be ready, because the Son of Man will come at a time when you are least expecting Him.”^a

serve and witness for Him in the same way you would if you knew He would take you in death today.

12:35-38a What wonderful blessings, rewards and riches await those who are faithful to their Lord! Christ here likens His second coming to the *return* of a master of an eastern household from a *wedding* banquet. The *servants* are pictured as having bound their flowing robes around their thighs and waists in order to accomplish with greater speed and efficiency the work that needs to be done before the master returns. They will faithfully see to it that the lamps are kept burning, trimming the wicks of the oil lamps periodically thru the night, making sure that the brightest flame possible greets the master on his arrival home.

Just such activity should typify the attitude and labor of Jesus' servants. They should prepare themselves properly for the work that must be done before the Master arrives, and must carry out that work with speed and efficiency, so that nothing is left undone. Every Christian has a very special job to do! A Christian should have little interest in serving himself by spending much time, thought, and effort in storing up earthly treasures, instead of faithfully serving his Master. Our hearts must be fixed on treasure that will never lose its value!

The Lord will be greatly pleased with those who are diligent in His service, busy with the work of His Kingdom, yet constantly awaiting His return. The *blessing* He promises such servants is beyond human understanding. That He plans to bring them to His own level and count them as friends rather than servants following that Great Day is beyond comprehension. He will *serve them* as He would a fellow-friend.

The promise to faithful Christians is that they will be *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ*. Romans 8:16-19. Elsewhere the Lord promises, *I no longer call you servants ... but friends*. John

15:14-15. In Revelation 3:21 He reveals even greater details of the future. *To the one who conquers Satan and the temptations of the world, I will give the right to sit with Me on My throne*. What riches!!

The Church has never known the exact hour of the Lord's return. The first watch was from 6 o'clock in the evening to 9 o'clock. It was unlikely that He would return so early, but there was always the possibility. And of course many would return from a wedding *before midnight*, between 9 o'clock and midnight.

But now it is certainly long after midnight. Still the Master has not returned. His return, however, is much more imminent now than it was in the early hours. He must be arriving soon. Likewise, we never know the day nor the hour when we may be taken in death. Keep the lamp burning brightly in your soul, and be busy about the tasks of supplying *food in due season* to those who need your witness, counsel, and direction.

12:39a Imagine the preparations you would make and the precautions you would take if you *knew* that a *thief* was planning to break into your home at a certain hour of the night. You would have lights on thruout the house. No doubt, special police would be hired for that night to guard your property. “If men will take such care of their houses, oh, let us be thus wise for our souls,” states the great commentator, Matthew Henry.

The *thief* who planned to come to your home at a certain hour of the night might not follow thru with his plans. It is an absolute certainty, however, that Jesus Christ will follow thru. He is coming! And every sign points to His coming very soon. Let us be ready in spirit, ready to move with Him at a moment's notice, and actively engaged in His work as we wait.

12:40a This is in the present tense. It is happening every day. You may not be here for another sun-

⁴¹Peter then asked Him, “Does this parable apply only to us, or to everyone?”

⁴²In response, the Lord continued, saying, “Where is the man with good sense who can be trusted? That’s the man the master will appoint as manager, and put in charge of his household to regularly give everyone in the house the proper portion of nourishing food they need.

⁴³“That servant will be a happy man indeed if he is found faithfully doing so when his master returns.

⁴⁴“Because I tell you the truth, his master will then put him in charge of everything he owns.^a

⁴⁵“But suppose that servant says to himself, ‘It will be a long time before my master returns,’ and

then begins to beat the servants in his care, both men and women, and spends his time eating and drinking and getting drunk.

⁴⁶“The master of that servant will return on a day when he’s not expecting him, and at the time of day he wouldn’t expect him. He will most severely punish him^a and sentence him to share the punishment of all who have been unfaithful and disobedient.^b

⁴⁷“The servant who knows what his master wants him to do, but doesn’t get ready to obey him, will be severely punished.

⁴⁸“But the servant who didn’t know what his master wanted, and did things for which he deserved punishment will be given lighter punish-

rise. God may take you from this life before another tomorrow.

This also applies to the end of the age, when Christ will suddenly take His own to be with Himself. Matthew 24:29-51.

12:41-44a Peter wants to know if the Lord is speaking to the apostles only or to all Christians. Jesus’ words were directed to the apostles, but they are certainly directed, as well, to those who would later stand in their place. Each and every follower of Jesus is given the responsibility of taking our Lord’s message into his part of the world and beyond. After giving similar warnings and challenges, as recorded in Mark 13:37, the Lord said, *And what I say to you, I say to everyone: You must continually be awake and vigilantly alert!*

It is altogether wrong for a person to excuse his failure to witness for the Lord or to teach His word or to preach it, by using the plea that he has never been called by the Lord to do so. The Lord called every Christian to witness for Him when He gave the great commission. Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15. All of us are already called—the only question is, where would my Lord have me serve Him? The place to begin is right where you are. **The helmsman cannot guide the ship until it’s under way!**

* * *

There are souls for whom we are responsible to *give the proper portion of nourishing food they need*. Because the day of reckoning is rapidly approaching, it will be the part of wisdom for each one of us to be found faithful, as ministers in our own homes, in our communities, and to the ends of the earth. The Lord promises blessings of great worth to those who have been found *faithful*.

It is to such *faithful servants* that the Lord has given the promise that *He will then put them in charge of everything He owns*. Let us realize that we cannot take these promises for ourselves unless we have met the conditions!

12:46a Literally *will cut him in two*.

12:45-46b These verses serve as a warning to any person who doubts the need to be especially faithful in the Lord’s service while he is young or while Jesus’ coming seems distant. Our Lord warns that *The master of that servant will return on a day when he’s not expecting him, and at the time of day he wouldn’t expect him*. He will then most severely punish him and sentence him to share *the punishment of all who have been unfaithful and disobedient*.

You may say that this is not the way your church believes. Well, it’s the way the Lord believes. And it’s the Lord who will be the Judge in that Great Day—not the hierarchy of one church or another.

The Lord warns here about disunity, bickering, arguing, etc., between His servants. To beat your fellow-servants with words is more damaging than beating with rods. He also warns His servants who become more interested in *eating and drinking* and in the pleasures of life than they are in serving Him.

* * *

These verses are a warning to all preachers, but let us realize that in a lesser or larger degree we are all ministers of God’s message. We have all been called to minister that precious Word of Life. If this Word of Truth is necessary for our salvation, it is necessary for the salvation of our neighbor, our friend, and the stranger we encounter in the marketplace or elsewhere. The Lord has solemnly warned thru the prophet Ezekiel, *When I say to the wicked, “You will surely die!” and you don’t give him any warning, you don’t speak out to warn him about the results of the sinful way in which he is living, in order to save his life, that sinful man will die in his sins; but I will hold you responsible for the death of his soul!* Ezekiel 3:18.

12:47-48a According as we have received, we are

ment. Much will be required of the one who has been given much in the way of instruction and warning. And much more will be required of the one who was entrusted with great responsibility.^a

Expect and Prepare for Trouble

⁴⁹“The effect of My having come will be to cause fire to break out on the earth. And what greater wish could I have than that it had already begun to burn!^a

⁵⁰“But I have a most fearful baptism to undergo,^a and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!

⁵¹“Don’t get the idea that I’ve come to bring peace to the earth. That’s not the way it is at all. Instead, My coming will bring division.^a

⁵²“From now on, where there are five in one family, they will many times be divided in their loyalty, three of them living for Me and two living to please themselves—or the other way around.

⁵³“The division will pit fathers against their sons and sons against their fathers; mothers will oppose their daughters and daughters oppose their mothers; mothers-in-law will clash with their daughters-in-law and daughters-in-law with their mothers-in-law.”^a

Wake up to What Time it is!

⁵⁴Then He said to the crowd, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, ‘It’s going to rain,’ and rain it does.

⁵⁵“And when you feel the south wind blowing, you say, ‘It’ll be a hot one today,’ and it is.

⁵⁶“You hypocrites! You can predict the kind of weather ahead from the wind and sky, but how is it that you can’t determine the period of time in

which you are living?

⁵⁷“Yes, and why don’t you yourselves take the initiative to judge from what you have both seen and heard, and make a right decision?”^a

⁵⁸“When you are taken to court by one who is suing you, make every effort to settle with him before you get there. If he drags you before the judge, the judge may turn you over to the jailer, who in turn will lock you up.

⁵⁹“I assure you, you won’t get out of there until you have paid the last penny you owe.”^a

Turn from Your Sinning or Die!

13 Some who were there at that time told Jesus about some rebellious Galileans whom Pilate had killed, and had then mixed their blood with the sacrifices they were offering at the Temple.

²“Do you think that proves that those Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans,” Jesus replied, “just because of what happened to them?”

³“Not at all! But unless you turn from your rebellion, and have a genuine change of heart and obey God, you too will all perish in a similar horrendous way.”^a

⁴“Or do you think those 18 people who died when the tower of Siloam fell on them were worse sinners than all others living in Jerusalem?”

⁵“Not at all! But unless you turn from your rebellion, and have a genuine change of heart and obey God, you too will all perish in a similar horrendous way.”^a

⁶To make His point clear He told them this parable: “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He kept looking for fruit on it, but never found any.

expected to share. According to the ability and opportunity God has given to each one of us, in that measure He will require faithful performance. There are those who have little knowledge of God’s will. Many of these could have gained knowledge if they had been diligent in study. Therefore they are not excused, but they will be given lighter punishment.

Even the heathen know about God, thru *the things God has made*. And because they have not worshiped the Creator as God, they are guilty. Even though they have little knowledge, they will be punished for ignoring what little knowledge they do have. See Romans 1:18-20.

But to those who have had greater opportunities and have greater capacities of mind than others—having more knowledge and opportunity to learn, more acquaintance and more interchange of

thought with others about the Scriptures—to them *much is given*, and their accounting will be accordingly.

Therefore let us be diligent, for we do not know when our Lord will call us by death, or in the great Rapture of His saints. We have today; let us make it count for Christ to the utmost!

12:49,51a The result of Jesus’ coming has been conflict for many lives. But the conflicts must be allowed to rage, if they must, in order that the Great News may go into all the world. Jesus knew there would be much opposition, but He desires the good that is being accomplished in many hearts in spite of the opposition. This is war—war against evil! So share the message no matter how fierce the opposition. Paul said he preached in order that *some* might be saved. 1 Corinthians 9:22.

12:50a ... *a baptism of rejection by both Jews*

⁷“So finally he said to his gardener, ‘Look, for three years now I’ve been coming here looking for fruit on this fig tree, and I’ve never found any yet. Why continue to waste ground space on it? Cut it down!’”

⁸“But the gardener said, ‘Sir, I urge you to leave it here for one more year. I’ll dig around it and fertilize it well.

⁹‘If it then bears fruit, fine. If not, then you should cut it down.’^a”

Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman

¹⁰One Sabbath Jesus was teaching in a synagogue.

¹¹A woman was there who had been crippled by an evil spirit for 18 years. She was so bent over that she couldn’t straighten up at all.

¹²When Jesus saw her He called her to Him. “Woman,” He said, “you are now set free from your affliction.”

¹³As He said this He placed His hands on her, and immediately she stood up straight and began praising God!

¹⁴But the president of the synagogue was so angry that Jesus had healed someone on the Sabbath that he shouted to the crowd, “There are six days in a week when we can work! So come and be healed on one of those days, but not on the Sabbath!”

¹⁵“You hypocrite!” Jesus countered. “Don’t each of you untie your ox or donkey from the stall on the Sabbath and lead it out to drink?

¹⁶“And look, here’s a daughter of Abraham who has suffered in bondage under Satan for 18 long years. Shouldn’t this woman be set free from this bondage as soon as possible, even if it’s the Sab-

bath?”

¹⁷All who had opposed Him were ashamed of themselves after He pointed out how foolish they had been. But all the rest of the people were rejoicing over all the marvelous things He was doing.

Parables of the Mustard Seed and Yeast

¹⁸Then He said, “What is the Kingdom of God like? What can I compare it with?

¹⁹“It’s like what happens when someone plants a tiny mustard seed in a garden. That little seed grows and becomes a large tree, so large that the birds of the air roost in its branches.^a

²⁰“What can I compare the Kingdom of God with?” He again asked.

²¹“It’s like what happens when a woman mixes yeast into a very large bowl of flour. She works it into every part of the dough, until the whole batch is completely saturated and transformed by it.

The Narrow Gate Leading to Heaven

²²Then He continued on His way thru the cities and towns, teaching the people as He journeyed toward Jerusalem.

²³In one place a man asked Him, “Sir, are only a few people in the process of being saved?”^a

²⁴“You must use extreme effort,” Jesus replied, “in order to gain entrance thru the narrow gate.^a Because I tell you, many will try to enter,^b but will not succeed.

²⁵“When the Master of the house finally gets up and locks the door, it won’t do you any good to stand on the outside knocking and calling out, ‘Lord! Lord! Open the door for us!’ Because His answer will be, ‘I don’t know you or where you are

and Gentiles, and physical pain and suffering and abandonment by God at His trial and on the cross, ...

12:51-53a Christ did not come for the purpose of causing division, but this is one of the effects of His coming. Those who have no desire to believe Him often strongly oppose those who do believe. Their wickedness is the reason this happens.

12:57a ... *and announce that the Messiah has indeed come!*

12:59a See Matthew 5:25-26 notes.

13:3-5a Less than 40 years later, in A.D. 70, the inhabitants of Jerusalem were slaughtered by the Romans, and almost 100,000 led away captive. Christ could have been referring to this, and also to the great Judgment Day coming for all mankind.

13:9a This was an illustration of Israel and her unwillingness to bear fruit for her Lord. They were

given almost 40 more years of grace after they had crucified Christ. Then God turned them over to the Roman army in A.D. 70. This is also a lesson for those who refuse to bear fruit for God today. See John 15:1-8.

13:19a See Matthew 13:31 and Mark 4:32 notes.

13:23a This was a very serious question asked of our Lord. We will do well to consider very seriously our Lord’s reply. It has to do with our future—either to be welcomed into Heaven by Christ or to be driven away from His presence into Hell. This is present tense, representing continuous action, not action that is fully completed in past time.

13:24a ... *that leads to everlasting life.* See Matthew 7:13 note, and Appendix 200A, page 465.

13:24b ... *without exerting thoughtful and extreme effort on their part* ... Matthew 25:1-13.

13:24-25a No easy believism is taught by Jesus in

from.²⁶

²⁶“Then you will begin to plead and say, ‘But Lord, we ate and drank with You! You even taught in our streets!’”

²⁷“But He will reply, ‘I tell you, I don’t know you, or where you are from. Get out of My presence, all of you who have continued in the practice of living in sin and disobedience to Me!’^a”

²⁸“There will then be uncontrollable weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets inside the Kingdom of God, while you yourselves are being driven away.^a”

²⁹“People will come from the east and from the west, from the north and the south, and will take their places at the Feast in the Kingdom of God.^a”

these verses, nor did He ever teach that. Notice what He says is necessary for salvation.

The words *extreme effort* have been translated from the Greek word *agoneezesthe*, which means *to struggle, to compete for a prize, to contend with an enemy, to endeavor to accomplish something, to fight, to labor fervently, to strive*. Arndt and Gingrich translate these beginning words in Luke 13:24, *You must strain every nerve to enter . . .*

The easiest part of becoming a Christian is believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He died for our sins on the cross. The hard part is to truly repent of our sins, and turn from them and obey the Lord. This is the born-again part of the Christian experience. And the Lord has stated, “Unless you are born again, you will never see or experience the Kingdom of God.” John 3:3.

Even in our English dictionary, the word *strive* means, *to try hard, to work hard, to strive for self-control, to strive to succeed, to struggle with, to fight against*. Living the Christian life is a battle! And only the overcomers will enter into the Lord’s Kingdom. Revelation 2:26-28.

The sad state of affairs today is that many preachers, even in so-called “evangelical” churches, give the people only what they want to hear. Their messages are worthless! They are afraid to use the word of God as a sword, cutting at the heart of the sins of the people. Such deceitful preaching will surely receive frightful judgment by God.

* * *

An appalling and horrible thing is being committed in this nation: The preachers are preaching lies, the priests have taken power into their own hands, and My people love it this way. But what will you do when the end comes? Jeremiah 5:30-31. Many churches today are filled with “believers” who are not converted, and are therefore not saved, not born again. They want watered-down messages

Jesus’ Sorrow for Jerusalem

³⁰“In fact, there are some who are now considered to be of little or no importance, who will then be given the highest positions. And some who are now considered great, will then be considered of no importance at all.”

³¹That same day some Pharisees came to Him and said, “You’d better leave here and go somewhere else, because Herod wants you killed.”

³²“You go and tell that fox,” Jesus replied, “Look, today and tomorrow I am driving out demons and healing people. On the third day I will finish My work.”

³³“But I must continue traveling today and tomorrow and the next day, because it’s unthink-

that will not convict them, and a great many of the preachers today are submitting to their wishes. 2 Timothy 4:1-4.

Our Lord admonished and warned in His sermon on the mount, as recorded in Matthew 7:13-14, *You must find and enter the narrow gate in order to get onto the road that leads to eternal life! The gate that leads to Hell and destruction is wide, and the road leading there is broad, and most everyone is traveling that easy road. The reason so many travel the broad road is because of the narrowness of the gate one must enter to get onto the road that leads to life, and because the road that leads to life is also narrow and difficult. So there are few who are looking for it with enough diligence to find it.* The way to eternal life is by both faith and repentance! One without the other leads only to Hell.

When the apostle Paul was reminding the Ephesian elders of his manner of preaching and teaching among them, he stated, *My earnest and emphatic message was always the same: ‘You must both turn from your sinning and obey God, and believe in our Lord Jesus as your Savior the Messiah.’* Acts 20:21. James, our Lord’s half brother, in James 1:22 states, *You must make it your practice to obey what God is telling you, and not just listen to Him. If all you do is listen, you’re just fooling yourselves.*

* * *

So many are looking forward to the joys of eternity in Heaven, who will not be there. Therefore allow us to give you further help and warning from the great commentator, *Matthew Henry*, as he comments concerning these words of our Lord. He states:

“All who will be saved must ‘enter in at the narrow gate.’ They must undergo a change of the whole man, so that it amounts to no less than being

able that a prophet should be put to death anywhere but in Jerusalem.

³⁴“O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! You people who repeatedly kill the prophets and stone the messengers God sent to you. How often I have wanted to gather your people together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you wouldn’t let Me.

³⁵“Look! Your Temple is now being left to you utterly abandoned by God.^a And I tell you the truth when I tell you: There will be no way whatever by which you will then be able to see Me until the time comes when you will say, ‘God bless Him who is coming in the name of the Lord!’”^b

Jesus in a Pharisee’s Home

14 One Sabbath when Jesus went to eat in the home of a leader of the Pharisees, He was being watched very closely,

²because there was a man there who was suffer-

ing from dropsy.

³So Jesus asked the Pharisees and the experts in the Law, “Does our Law allow a person to be healed on the Sabbath?”

⁴But there was no reply. So He took hold of the man and healed him, and then sent him on his way.

⁵Then He asked them, “If your donkey or ox fell into a pit, which of you men wouldn’t immediately pull it out, even if it happened on a Sabbath?”

⁶They couldn’t reply to that.

⁷When He noticed how some of the guests were choosing the places of highest honor, He gave them this advice:

⁸“When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, don’t take the best place, because the host may have invited someone he esteems more highly than you.

⁹“Think how embarrassing it would be if the

born again, and must submit to a strict discipline ... It is a hard matter to get to Heaven, and a point that will not be gained without a great deal of care and pains, of difficulty and diligence. We must strive with God in prayer, wrestle as Jacob, striving against sin and Satan ... Think how many take ‘some things’ for salvation and yet perish because they do not take ‘enough’ ... They ‘seek’ but they do not *‘strive.’*

“Note, the reason why many come short of obtaining God’s grace and glory is because they rest in a ‘lazy seeking’ ... Their desires are cold, and their endeavors feeble, and there is no strength of steadiness in their resolutions; and therefore they ‘come short,’ and lose the prize, because they do not press forward.

“Notice what an ‘assurance’ they had of ‘admission’ ... There they stand and *knock*—*knock* as if they had authority. They *knock* as though they belonged to the house, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us,’ for we think we have a right to enter; take us in among the ‘saved ones,’ for ‘we joined ourselves to them.’ Note, that many are ruined by an ill-grounded hope of Heaven, which they never distrusted or called in question, and therefore conclude that their state is good because they never doubted it. They call Christ ‘Lord’ as if they were His servants.”

13:26-27a Quoting here again from *Matthew Henry*: “What grounds have they for this confidence ...? They had been ‘Christ’s guests’ ... Hypocrites under the disguise of their external profession, they receive the Lord’s supper, and in it partake of the children’s bread, as if they were children. They had been ‘Christ’s hearers,’ had received instructions from Him, and were well acquainted with His doctrine and law. But to these who do not

have a true heart-conversion to the Lord He will say, ‘I tell you, I don’t know you, nor where you are from. Get out of My presence, all of you who have continued in the practice of living in disobedience to Me!’”

13:28a Be sure to read Appendix 200A, page 465, in regard to this entire statement by Christ.

13:28-29a And again, from *Matthew Henry*: “How terrible their punishment will be! ‘There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth,’ the utmost degree of grief and indignation. And that which is the cause of it, and contributes to it, is the sight of the happiness of those who are saved. ‘You will see the patriarchs and prophets in the Kingdom of God, while you yourselves are being driven away.’

“This He was saying to those who were sinners in the Old Testament age. And in the same way, New Testament-age sinners will be ‘driven away’ from the Kingdom of God. It intimates that they will presume that they will surely be admitted, but they will be ‘driven away’ in shame, after being informed that they have no part nor inheritance there ...

“By what Christ said, it appears that ‘only a few will be saved’ of those whom we think will surely be there ... Those who will ‘sit down in the Kingdom of God’ will be those who have taken great pains to get there.”

13:35a See Matthew 23:36 note.

13:35b The Jewish leaders rejected Christ, and *they will not see Him again until* after the Great Tribulation, until after the renovation of the earth and all the resultant judgments upon them. They *will not see Him again until* He appears in the skies in all His glory, coming as King of kings and Lord of lords. Zechariah 12:10-14; Matthew 24:30.

14:14a Who does not desire to receive rewards in

host, who had invited both of you, should say to you, ‘Will you please give this man your place?’ Humiliated, you would then have to take a place at the back of the room.

¹⁰“So when you are invited anywhere, take the least desirable place. Then the host who invited you may say, ‘Friend, take this better place.’ That would cause you to be highly regarded by those at the table with you.

¹¹“Because everyone who seeks honor for himself will be brought down, but the one who humbles himself will be honored.”

¹²Then He said to the host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, don’t invite only your friends, your family, relatives, or your rich neighbors. If you do, they will invite you back and you will be repaid.

¹³“But when you prepare a fine dinner, also invite the poor, the disabled, the lame, and the blind, and you will be repaid richly in return.

¹⁴“They won’t be able to repay you, but you will be repaid by the Lord when you rise back to life again with all others who are in right standing with God.”^a

The Parable of the Great Dinner

¹⁵When one of the men at the table with Him heard this, he said, “Those who will sit down to eat in the Kingdom of God will surely be happy.”

¹⁶Jesus responded, saying, “There was a man who prepared a great dinner to which he invited many guests.

¹⁷“When it was time for the dinner, he sent his servant out to tell those invited, ‘Come now, everything is ready.’

¹⁸“But every one of them began to make excuses. ‘I just bought some land,’ the first one said, ‘and it’s important that I go out and look at it. So I ask that you please excuse me.’

¹⁹‘I’ve just bought five pair of oxen,’ another

said, ‘and I need to try them out. So I must ask you to excuse me.’

²⁰“Still another said, ‘I’ve just gotten married, so I can’t come.’^a

²¹“So the servant returned and told his master all this. The master was furious and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the city, and bring in the poor, the disabled, the lame, and the blind.’

²²“When he returned he said, ‘Sir, I did as you told me, but there is still room for more.’

²³“The master then told him, ‘Go out into the country roads and lanes and compel everyone you see there to come in, so that my house will be full.

²⁴“Because I tell you, none of those who were first invited will get even a small taste of my dinner!”

The Cost of Being a Follower of the Lord

²⁵Great crowds continued to follow Him. So He turned to them and said,

²⁶“Anyone who wants to follow Me must be so thoroughly devoted to Me that he puts My interests, My concerns, and My desires far above his interest in pleasing even his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters—and yes, even above pleasing himself—otherwise he is no follower of Mine!^a

²⁷“And whoever does not persevere in carrying his own cross^a and does not live for the same purpose for which I have lived, cannot be a follower of Mine!^b

²⁸“So count the cost! If any of you decided to put up a building, wouldn’t you first sit down and figure out the cost, and then see if you could raise enough money to finish it?

²⁹“Otherwise, if you laid the foundation but couldn’t finish, you would be the laughingstock of everyone who saw the unfinished building.

³⁰“People would say, ‘Look, there’s the man who started to put up that building, and then found he

Heaven? In these verses Jesus states the means by which some of those rewards may be gained. Aim not at being paid with your own coin. How much better to be paid with the coin of the realm to which the Christian is going. How much better to have invested on this earth in that which will bring great dividends in the life to come.

14:20a Are your excuses for not accepting the Lord’s invitation just as foolish as these?

14:26a Jesus is talking here about being a Christian, about being truly converted—about being born again!

Jesus doesn’t have two standards, one for preach-

ers, priests, missionaries, and other Christian workers, and another for church members. He demands total commitment on the part of everyone who desires to follow Him and gain eternal life! Count the cost, Jesus warned, and be sure you intend to finish. See Mark 8:34-38, and the notes there.

14:27a A cross is not sickness, suffering, trials, disappointment, or adversity of any other kind. A cross is an instrument of death! Christ demands that if you desire to follow Him (be a Christian) you must follow Him in death—that is, you must willingly die to all selfish desires and ambitions, and live and work for the furtherance of His Kingdom

couldn't finish it.

³¹“Or suppose an enemy army is approaching—what king would be so foolish as to not first sit down and figure out if he can defeat the invading army of 20,000 with his army of 10,000?”

³²“If he decides he can't, won't he send a delegation to meet the invaders while they are still a long way off and ask about the conditions for peace?”

³³“And the conditions for being a follower of Mine are that you must make a continual practice of surrendering all that you are and have, and be at My disposal.^a Otherwise you are no follower of Mine!”

³⁴“Salt is very useful. But if the saltiness of your life and testimony has lost its pungently sharp penetrating qualities and healing powers, and has become insipid and useless, how will others be convinced, convicted, saved, and preserved in purity, uprightness, and self control by your influence and help?”

³⁵“Salt that has lost its saltiness is utterly worthless. It can't be allowed on good soil or even on the manure pile. It must be thrown out as garbage.^a If you have been given ears for the purpose of hearing, then think seriously about what you have just heard!”

The Lost Sheep

15 All the tax collectors and other known sinners were continually gathering around to listen to Him,

²causing the Pharisees and teachers of the Law to mutter in complaint, “This man is glad to have sinners as His audience. He even eats with them!”

³So Jesus told them this parable:

⁴“If any of you men had 100 sheep, and one of them got lost, wouldn't you leave the 99 in the pasture and continue to look for the lost sheep until you found it?”

⁵“And when you found it, wouldn't you carry it back on your shoulders, rejoicing?”

⁶“When you got home you would call your friends and neighbors together and say, ‘You must celebrate with me, because I found the sheep that was lost!’”

⁷“And I tell you, the same will be true in Heaven. There will be more rejoicing there over one sinner who turns from his sinning and begins living to please God, than over the 99 persons who are already living for God, and don't need to turn from sin.”

The Lost Coin

⁸“Or think of the woman who has ten silver coins. If she should lose one, wouldn't she light a lamp and sweep the house and keep looking diligently until she found it?”

⁹“And when she found it, she would call her friends and neighbors together and say, ‘You must celebrate with me, because I found the coin I had lost!’”

¹⁰“And I tell you, the angels of God rejoice in Heaven in the same way when even one sinner turns from his sinning and begins to live for God.”

The Lost Son

¹¹Then He said, “There was once a man who had two sons.

¹²“One day the younger son said to his father, ‘Father, I want you to give me my share of what I will inherit from your estate *now*.’ So the man divided what he owned between them.

¹³“A few days later this younger son turned all of his part of the estate into cash, and headed for a distant province. There he squandered his entire inheritance, living it up in sin.

¹⁴“When he had spent everything, a severe famine hit the area where he was, and he was having a hard time even getting enough to eat.

¹⁵“Finally he arranged with a farmer for a place to stay in exchange for feeding the man's pigs.

¹⁶“He was so hungry that he was tempted to eat

and glory, and your future glory. Romans 5:2; 8:18; 1 Corinthians 15:43. See Appendix 221, page 483.

14:27b Christ died for you. He now demands that you die to yourself for His sake and for the sake of all others who need life. He asks for your affection—unto death. Are we worthy of His love and sacrifice for ourselves, if we give Him and our fellow humans anything less? Matthew 10:38.

“The cross is heavy, and hard to carry; but unless we do carry it we are not His.” —*J. Willcock, in The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary.*

14:33a The conditions of peace granted by a king

to a lesser king who didn't dare meet him in battle was always *total submission*. The lesser king became his vassal, paying tribute, with himself and all his possessions subject to the command of his lord. And Christ imposes the same conditions on all who seek His forgiveness and eternal life, and all else that is His to give. See 16:9 note in reference to the teaching of this verse.

14:35a Matthew 5:13-16; Mark 9:49-50. Certainly this is a fearful warning. Again consider Romans 10:9-10.

15:24a Are you the prodigal who has left God?

the pods he was feeding the pigs, because no one gave him anything to eat.

¹⁷“When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘Even my father’s many hired servants have more food than they can eat, and here I am, starving to death!

¹⁸‘I’m going to leave this place and go back to my father. I’ll tell him, ‘Father, I have sinned against God and against you.

¹⁹‘I’m no longer fit to be called your son. Give me a job as one of your hired men.’”

²⁰“So he got up and went back to his father. But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him and his heart went out to him. And he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and fervently kissed him.

²¹“Then the son blurted out, ‘Father, I have sinned against God and against you, and I’m no longer fit to be called your son.’

²²“But his father said to the servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet.

²³“Then bring the calf we’ve been fattening up, and kill it. We’ll have a great banquet and celebrate!

²⁴“Because this son of mine was dead, but now he’s alive again! He was lost, but now he’s been found! And the joyful celebration began.”^a

²⁵“Meanwhile, the older son was out in a field. When he came in and got closer to the house he heard the sound of music and dancing.

²⁶“So he called one of the servants and said, ‘What’s going on here? What’s this all about?’

²⁷‘Your brother has just come back home,’ the servant answered. ‘And because he’s returned safe and sound, your father has killed the calf we’ve been fattening up.’

²⁸“That made the older son furious, and he wouldn’t go into the house. So his father came out and pleaded with him to come in and join the celebration.

²⁹“Look, I’ve been serving you all these years!’ he angrily replied. ‘I’ve never refused to obey you at any time! Still, you never gave me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.

³⁰“But the moment this son of yours who squandered your estate with whores returns, you honor him and celebrate by killing the fattened calf!”

³¹“My son,’ the father reasoned, ‘you are always right here with me. And everything I have is yours

Maybe you have never been truly converted to God, or maybe you have backslidden and fallen back into sin. You have disgraced your God. But be assured that God has been watching all the time, and has been waiting for you to come back to Him.

Many have felt they couldn’t be happy as a Christian. They believe they will miss something if they aren’t out there in the world enjoying the pleasures of sin. But there’s a price to pay for disobedience: emptiness, disgust with one’s self, and the constant conviction by God’s Holy Spirit that you’re in the wrong. Have you told God, your Father (though maybe not in actual words), that you want your fun now; that you aren’t willing to wait for His time, in His Heaven, forever?

But it’s amazing how fast life goes by, and how soon the strength of youth is spent. Are you really willing to forfeit the billions of trillions of endless years of happiness with God, in exchange for the unfulfilling pleasures of this brief and uncertain life—and then Hell?

* * *

There may be pleasure in sin, and indeed there can be, but there is no true joy there. Joy comes when you have returned to God, your Father, and have confessed your sin and asked His forgiveness. Then you will have the joyful assurance that you will be with Him forever. You will find true joy only when you are truly right with God, and are feasting

on His message and obeying His commands.

16:9a Jesus teaches here that we are to make proper use of our riches. And our riches include everything we are and have—money, time, talents, physical strength, ability to think and reason, ability to speak, and whatever else God has given us or causes to come our way. People who live only for this life are often very concerned about preparing for their brief future, while many who claim to love God are very negligent about making preparations for their eternal future.

You cannot take it with you, that’s true, but you can—according to what Jesus says here, and according to what He says in many other places—make sure of your greatest happiness possible in Heaven by the way you invest whatever riches you possess, for your future good. Also, the way we invest our riches indicates where our heart really is.

If we are doing the same as the people of the world, seeking to use our riches for our own benefit, here and now, we prove ourselves to be merely people of the world. Then our time is brief, and our judgment is sure.

* * *

So it’s very important that we obey the first commandment of the Lord, which is *to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength*. That means we are to love the Lord our God with all we

to do with as you please.

³²‘But it’s only right that we should celebrate and be glad, because your brother was dead, but now he’s alive again! He was lost, but now he’s been found!’”

The Dishonest Manager

16 One day Jesus said to His followers, “There was once a rich man who was told that his business manager was squandering his money.

²“So he called him in and said, ‘What’s this I hear about you? Get all the accounts in order and give me a full report, because if what I hear is true, you’re fired!’

³“The manager thought to himself, ‘What can I do now? I’ve lost my job! I can’t do any physical work, and I’d be ashamed to beg.

⁴‘I know what I’ll do, so that when I lose my job here, I’ll have friends who will take me in.’

⁵“So one by one he called in the people who were in debt to his employer. ‘How much do you owe my boss?’ he asked the first one.

⁶‘800 gallons of olive oil,’ he replied.

‘Yes, here’s your contract. Tear it up and sit down here quickly,’ the manager said, ‘and write

up and sign a new contract for 400.’

⁷“To the next one he said, ‘And how much do you owe?’

‘1,000 bushels of wheat,’ he replied.

‘Tear up your bill,’ he told him, ‘and write up a new one here for 800.’

⁸“His employer had to admit that this crooked manager certainly knew how to make plans that might improve his own future. Ironically, those who live only for this life prepare more effectively for their brief and uncertain future here, than those who have seen the light regarding eternal life.

⁹“So I challenge you: Make eternal friends for yourselves in Heaven by means of the eternal investments you can make with the right use of the untrustworthy and precarious riches of this world. Then, when you die, they will be there to welcome you into your everlasting home in Heaven.^a

¹⁰“A person who is faithful in the smallest matters can also be trusted with large responsibilities. And one who is dishonest in small deals will also be dishonest in big deals.

¹¹“So if you have not been faithful in your handling of the untrustworthy, precarious riches of

have and with all we can do. And we show that love by helping others and by bringing the message of the Great News to others. We also show that love by investing what we are and what we have in full obedience to the Lord. By doing so we are laying up treasure for ourselves in Heaven.

Nothing you do for yourself will benefit you in the hereafter. It’s only what you do for others and for the Lord that will be yours forever.

Jesus called the riches of this world *untrustworthy and precarious*; and that’s what they are. All the various riches you have can cause you to rely on them and make them your god. A wrong use of your riches can injure you and those you love.

Yes, wealth is precarious, because there is no assurance that any of the riches you have will be yours tomorrow. You can lose your money, your health, even your talents. But as you use them now in the best and wisest way possible for God’s glory, you can be assured that you are investing them for eternity. In other words, by serving God and others with what you are and have, you are also wisely preparing for your own future.

Some believe the *they* in v 9 means that Jesus, the angels, and others in Heaven will be there to welcome you into your everlasting home. Yes, that’s true, but this implies that the riches of this life that you sent on ahead will also be there to welcome

you. Jesus commanded you to *Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven*. Matthew 6:19-21. So if they are being laid up there, they will be there to welcome you. In other words, they will be there credited to your account.

Jesus definitely taught that there will be degrees of glory and happiness in Heaven and in His eternal Kingdom. Some will be rulers over many cities, others over just a few cities. In fact, He even informs us thru the Apostle Paul that some will be there *as one barely escaping thru the flames*. They barely make it. That causes us to be truly concerned about those who are likely not to make it.

So our great concern for ourselves and others should be to make sure that we are truly converted to the will of God, and that we are making this life count in the greatest way possible for our future with Him.

Don’t be satisfied with barely making it to Heaven. With that attitude, you very likely won’t even be there. Our desire should be to receive *an abundant entrance* into His Kingdom. You have one life to live, one life to invest, so make the most of it! Life is brief, and we will all soon be standing before our God to give an accounting of what we have done with the time and the strengths He has entrusted to us. See Matthew 6:19-21; 25:35,40; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Hebrews 6:10-11; Revelation 14:13.

16:12a ... *because the whole world, and every-*

this world that God has entrusted to you, how can He possibly entrust you with the true riches, which are eternal?

¹²“If you have not been faithful in your handling of that which doesn’t even belong to you,^a how could God possibly be wise and righteous in giving you that which would be your very own?^b”

¹³“No servant can serve two masters, because either he will hate one and love the other, or he will serve one with zeal and have little or no time for the other. You cannot serve both God and money!”

Some Additional Sayings of Jesus

¹⁴But the Pharisees had great love for money. So when they heard Him say all this about money, they ridiculed Him with a passion.

¹⁵“You men are clever at convincing the crowd that whatever you do is right,” Jesus replied. “But God knows exactly how you are thinking and reasoning in your hearts. And be sure of this: Many of the things that people believe are so noble about you are detestable in God’s understanding of the true situation!”

The Rich Man and Lazarus

¹⁶“The teachings written in the books of the Law and in the books of the prophets guided you until John the Baptizer appeared on the scene. But since then, the Great News about how one may enter the Kingdom of God has been more clearly preached. And great throngs are now earnestly and forcefully pressing their way into it.^a”

¹⁷“But in regard to the Law, it would be easier for both Heaven and earth to disappear than for the most insignificant part of the moral requirements of God’s laws to be set aside.

¹⁸“For instance, whoever divorces his wife and marries someone else is guilty of committing adultery. And whoever marries a person who has been

divorced is committing adultery.^a”

¹⁹“There was once a rich man,” Jesus continued, “who dressed himself in the finest and most expensive clothes. He lived a life of luxury in brilliant and merry festivity every day.

²⁰“Someone used to lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, at his front gate.

²¹“And the dogs would come and lick his sores. His only desire was to be fed the scraps of food left by the rich man.

²²“Finally the poor man died and was carried by the angels to be with Abraham in Paradise.

²³“The rich man also died and was buried. But he found himself in Hell, being frightfully tormented.^a When he looked up, he saw Abraham way off in the distance, and Lazarus was with him!

²⁴“So he cried out, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me, and send Lazarus here so that he might at least dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I’m in terrible pain and torment in these flames!’

²⁵“But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember, that in your lifetime you had all the good things, while Lazarus received the bad. But now, he is continually experiencing joy and abundance, while you are continually being tormented.

²⁶“And besides all that, between you and us, an immense chasm has been fixed in place, so that it’s impossible for anyone desiring to go from here to you to do so, and no one can go from where you are to us.’

²⁷“The man replied, ‘Then please, father Abraham, send him to my father’s house.

²⁸‘I have five brothers. Send him to warn them so they don’t also come to this terrible place of constant, unbearable pain.’

²⁹‘They have the books of Moses and the prophets,’ Abraham replied. ‘Let them read them and be warned.’

³⁰“No, father Abraham,’ the man pleaded, ‘they

thing in it, belongs to God ...

16:12b That which we inherit in Heaven will be permanently ours. But God cannot in wisdom and righteousness give such treasure and responsibilities to people who cannot even be trusted to use their temporary riches on earth in an honorable way.

16:16a See Matthew 11:12; Luke 13:24.

16:18a See Matthew 19:9 for clarification.

16:23a Matthew 13:41-42; 25:41; Revelation 14:9-11; 20:10-15.

16:31a Christ rose from the dead. But in spite of that, those who love their sin continue to turn their

backs on the evidence.

17:2a ... *so that what you say or do doesn’t become a stumbling block to someone.* See Matthew 18:6 note.

17:4a Matthew 18:21-35.

17:5a Or *messengers*.

17:6a Imperfect tense (ongoing action).

17:6b ... *with determined, persistent endurance, until the miracle it sets out to accomplish is a reality* ... See Matthew 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:19 to see what a tiny mustard seed can accomplish. It’s not the greatness of our faith that’s important, but how determinedly, tenacious-

won't pay attention or even bother to read the warnings there. But if someone were to rise from the dead and warn them, they would turn from their sinning and live for God!"

³¹ "If they won't listen to Moses and the prophets," Abraham replied, "neither will they listen and be persuaded to change even if someone came back from the dead to warn them."^a

Sin, Faith, and Duty

17 Then He said to His followers, "There will always be people causing others to sin, but woe to the one who is the cause of their sin.

² "It would have been far better for that person if he had been thrown into the sea with a massive millstone tied around his neck, than that he should cause even one of these little ones to stumble.

"So you must always be on your guard."^a

³ "If your brother sins against you, face him with the wrong he has done. If he says he is sorry and will stop his wrongdoing, forgive him.

⁴ "Even if he sins against you seven times in one day, and each time comes to you and says, 'I'm sorry; I won't do it again,' you are to forgive him."^a

⁵ The apostles^a at one time asked the Lord, "Help us to have more faith."

⁶ "If you would continue to exercise^a whatever faith you have, in the same determined, persistent way that a tiny mustard seed goes to work,"^b the Lord replied, "you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

⁷ "Which of you would say to your servant who had just come in from plowing or looking after the sheep, 'Come on in, sit down and eat'?

⁸ "No! Wouldn't you instead say to him, 'Wash up now and put on an apron and prepare my supper, and wait on me while I eat and drink. After

I've finished eating and drinking, then you can eat and drink'?"

⁹ "Would you thank that servant for obeying orders and doing the things you told him to do? I don't think so.

¹⁰ "You should have the same attitude. When you have done all you were told to do, you should say, 'We're not worthy of any praise. We did only our duty.'"

Ten Healed of Leprosy

¹¹ As Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem He went thru the middle of both Samaria and Galilee.

¹² As He was entering one of the towns along the way, ten men who were lepers met Him. They didn't come close, but called to Him from a long way off.

¹³ "Jesus! Master! Have pity on us!" they cried out.

¹⁴ When Jesus saw them He called out to them, "Be on your way, and show yourselves to the priest."^a And as they went, they were healed!

¹⁵ When one of them saw that he was healed, he hurried back to Jesus, loudly shouting praises to God.

¹⁶ Then he threw himself face down at Jesus' feet, and gratefully and profusely thanked Him. And he wasn't even a Jew! He was a despised Samaritan.

¹⁷ "Weren't there ten who were healed?" Jesus questioned. "Where are the other nine?"

¹⁸ "Were none except this foreigner grateful enough to return and praise God?"

¹⁹ Then He said to the man, "Stand up now and be on your way. Your faith has made you well."

The Coming of the Kingdom of God

²⁰ When the Pharisees asked Him when the Kingdom of God would come, He told them, "The Kingdom of God doesn't come at the present time^a in a way that you can see it with your eyes.

²¹ "People won't say, 'Look! Here it is!' or 'See, it's

ly, and persistently we use whatever faith we have. Nor is Christ saying here ... *faith as small as a mustard seed*. The word *small* is not in the Greek text, but has been added here in some translations.

The word commonly translated *as* here is translated from the Greek word *ous*. "It's a comparative particle, indicating the manner in which something proceeds." — *Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich*.

True, a mustard seed doesn't have faith per se, but our faith must go into action and persevere in prayer with *the kind of persevering action* a mustard seed takes. So notice how the tiny mustard seed proceeds with relentless perseverance, once it

is planted in good soil, and is faithfully watered and fertilized. That's the kind of determined, persistent faith we are to exercise. See Luke 11:5-13 and 18:1-8 for illustrations Jesus gave as to how we are to be determined and persistent in the use of our faith, until what we are asking God for is granted.

Someone has said: Perseverance in prayer is the earnest, intense, believing prayer you engage in after you are exhausted after earnest, intense, believing prayer—until the answer comes. True!

17:14a Leviticus 13 and 14.

17:20a Present indicative.

17:21a In every heart (the heart-center of the

over there!' because actually, the Kingdom of God is within you."^a

²²Then He said to His followers, "The time will come when you will wish you could see the Son of Man here with you on earth for even one day. But that won't happen.

²³"People will even tell you, 'Look! He's over here!' or 'Look! He's over there!' Don't make a move to follow them or have anything to do with them.

²⁴"Because when the Son of Man comes to earth to reign, He will be as visible for all to clearly see as lightning is when it flashes in one part of the heavens and then continues in spectacular brilliance across the whole sky."^a

²⁵"However, He must first endure extreme suffering and be rejected by the people of this genera-

tion.

²⁶"Things will be the same on earth during the days when the Son of Man is preparing to return to earth as they were in Noah's day.

²⁷"Even during the days just before the flood, people were eating and drinking as usual. Men were marrying wives, and people were giving their daughters in marriage. They were living as usual even on the very day that Noah and his family entered the big ship he had built. Then the flood came and destroyed every one of them."^a

²⁸"It will also be the same as it was when Lot lived in Sodom. They were eating and drinking as usual. They were buying and selling, planting and building.

²⁹"But the very day that Lot left Sodom, fire and brimstone rained down from the sky and destroyed

emotions, the governing center of the will) there is a throne. Someone is seated upon that throne, governing and directing the thoughts and actions of that life. The rightful Ruler is God, your Creator. But every person has ignored the rightful Ruler, and has usurped the throne for himself. It is the Kingdom within you, belonging to God, that Christ is speaking of here.

There is also an external Kingdom of God, but Christ knew that the Kingdom you need to be concerned about first is the Kingdom within you, as to who is reigning there.

Until you have surrendered the throne of your heart to God, you are not converted. You are still a rebel—reigning where Christ and God should reign—until you make Him the Lord of your life and obey Him in all things. And remember, selective obedience is also rebellion. If Christ is to be the King, He must be obeyed in all things at all times. God will help you accomplish this. See Philippians 2:12-13 and I John 1:5-2:6 notes.

But later, maybe very soon now, God will establish His temporal Kingdom on earth, with His Son, Jesus Christ, reigning as King. Isaiah 40:5; Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14; Zechariah 14:16-21; Matthew 24:29-30; Revelation 1:7-8.

17:22-24a Christ's followers no doubt did not place as much importance upon His presence with them as they should have. But here the Lord tells them that *the time will come* when they will wish they could have Him with them again for even a single day. Their wish, however, will not be granted.

Instead, false Christs would appear. Certain deceivers and the deceived would claim that Christ was in a certain place or another. Jesus instructs His followers not to believe any such declarations, then or ever.

When Christ comes to earth the second time, His coming will be with such glory and power that the whole world will see Him and know that He has come. Having ascended victoriously into the heavens after His resurrection, He will come again, as promised, and every eye on earth will see Him. Revelation 1:7.

* * *

It is a fact that a number of false Christs sought recognition during the early years of the early Church. According to Matthew 24:23-27 and Mark 13:21-22, many more will claim to be Christ during the last 3 1/2 years of this age, just before Christ returns to rule the earth. See Matthew 24:23-31 for a more complete explanation by Christ.

17:27a See Genesis 6:5 to 8:22.

17:29a See Genesis 18:16 to 19:28.

17:26-30a Life went on as usual during the days of Noah, *even on the very day that Noah and his family entered the big ship he had built*. The same was true in the days of Lot. Life went on as usual in Sodom and Gomorrah — *They were eating and drinking as usual. They were buying and selling, planting and building. But the very day that Lot left Sodom, fire and brimstone rained down from the sky and destroyed every one of them*. Jesus seems to be emphasizing the fact that only the watchful, waiting Christians will recognize the times and realize that the Lord's coming is near. Sleepy "Christians" and all non-Christians will have no such discernment, and will live as if everything will continue as it has in the past.

God *destroyed* the earth in Noah's day because of the monstrous wickedness of that generation. It was for that same reason that He later *destroyed* Sodom and Gomorrah. Many claim that one of the signs of the end of the age is the increased wickedness to be seen in the world today. This point is a

every one of them.^a

³⁰“The same usual things will be happening up to the time when the Son of Man is revealed.”^a

³¹“If you are on your roof deck when the warning is sounded,^a and your valuables are inside the house, you must not go down into the house to save anything! The same applies if you are out in the field; you must not go back to the house for anything!

³²“Remember what happened to Lot’s wife when she looked back!

³³“Whoever^a insists at this time on saving what he has gained in life, will lose his life! But whoever, without hesitation, abandons his possessions and runs, will save his life.”^b

³⁴“Two people will be sleeping in the same bed that night. One will be carried off and the other

left.”^a

³⁵“Two women will be grinding grain together. One will be carried off and the other left.”^a

³⁶“Two men will be working together in the field. One will be carried off and the other left.”^a

³⁷“Where will all this happen, Lord?” His followers asked Him.

“You’ll always find vultures gathered together,” Jesus replied, “wherever there’s a body about to die.”^a

The Need for Persistence When Praying

18 One day Jesus told them a parable to teach them that they should always persevere in their praying, and never give up.

²“In a certain city,” He said, “there was a judge who had no fear of God and no desire to help any-

very valid one. The Lord’s point seems to be, however, simply, that life will continue as usual here on the earth until sudden, horrendous destruction overtakes mankind, exactly as was the case in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot.

It is likely that Christ is describing events that will take place in Jerusalem during the days just before Antichrist blows up the altar of sacrifice—removing it and placing in its stead his own image to be worshiped. This will be the beginning of the Great Tribulation. As pointed out in Appendix 245, Antichrist will enter Jerusalem (no doubt peaceably, on some pretext) 110 days before he somehow blows up the altar of sacrifice. Daniel 8:11-12; 9:27.

* * *

The non-Christian Jews will have no idea that Antichrist plans to stop the animal sacrifices, which they have reinstated, and in their place demand that his image be erected and worshiped. Only those who heed the Lord’s warning to flee immediately from Israel when Antichrist commits this *abomination and devastation* (Matthew 24:15-21) will save their lives.

Just as Lot was saved when he left Sodom before it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven and destroyed all (Genesis 18:1 to 19:26), even so will the obedient in Jerusalem find a similar salvation.

Noah and his family were also saved by entering the ark just before the flood came. Genesis 6-8. Obviously, Jesus mentioned both Noah and Lot because of the similarity of their experience to that which is ahead for the Jewish nation and the world.

The Lord will be *revealed* at that time as He stands upon the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4), causing it to divide north and south, thereby making a way of escape for the Jews in Jerusalem to flee into Jordan.

* * *

But Christ could also be speaking here of the attitude of most people even *Immediately after the tribulation of those days ...* (Matthew 24:29), immediately after the great Battle of Armageddon. Most people will very likely continue to go about life as usual. They still won’t realize they have only days left (45 days—Daniel 12:11-12), during which the momentous happenings predicted in Matthew 24:29-31 will be taking place—and then to face Jesus Christ as their Judge. Matthew 25:31-46. And that day is fast approaching. *Prepare to meet your God!*

17:31a Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14.

17:33a Whoever *looks back to the material things of this life* and insists ...

17:33b See Matthew 24:16-18 note for escape instructions for people in Israel.

17:31-37a The *day* of which the Lord speaks is very likely the day in which the Antichrist will turn against the Jews in Jerusalem. Daniel 8:11-12. When the Antichrist blows up the altar of sacrifice and causes his own image to *stand* in its place (Matthew 24:15), the Jews in Israel who know and believe Jesus’ words are to flee to the mountains, not attempting to rescue even one material possession. Mark 13:14-19. Their flight must be immediate and with great speed. In v 33 they are warned that anyone seeking to *preserve* any material things at this time will *lose* his life.

Only those who are willing to sacrifice all material things and flee immediately will be saved. They are to trust God totally for their future.

The three groups of *two* undoubtedly refer to persons who are together when the news is broadcast that the Antichrist has destroyed the altar of sacrifice and has caused his own image to *stand* in the Holy Place. Some in their beds will simply turn over and go back to sleep. Some in the fields, instead of

one.

³“But a widow kept coming to him, continually begging for justice against someone who had wronged her.

⁴“He totally ignored her for a long time. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I have no fear of God and no interest in pleasing anyone,

⁵‘still, because of the way this woman keeps pestering me, I’ll see that she gets justice. Otherwise, her continual pleading will drive me crazy.’

⁶“Think about what that ungodly judge said,” the Lord continued.

⁷“And won’t God grant justice to His own people when they continue to cry day and night to Him? Won’t He patiently listen to them, instead of ignoring them?”

⁸“I tell you, He will indeed see that they get justice, and with great speed. The real question is, when the Son of Man returns, will He find that kind of persevering faith among His followers on earth?”^a

A Pharisee and a Tax Collector Pray

⁹He also told the following parable to some people who were so sure that they themselves were upright, but looked down on everyone else:

¹⁰“Once two men went up to the Temple to pray—one, a Pharisee, the other, a despised tax collector.

¹¹“The Pharisee stood there and began praying about himself, like this: ‘God, I thank You that I’m not like other men—greedy, deceitful and unjust, unfaithful in their marriages, or even like that detestable tax collector over there.

¹²‘I go without eating two days a week, and I give You one tenth of all my income.’

¹³“But the tax collector stood apart from the others, and didn’t think he was good enough to even

lift his eyes to Heaven as he prayed. He was so sorry for what he had done that he just kept beating upon his chest and saying, ‘O God, have pity on me! I’ve been such a terrible sinner!’

¹⁴“I tell you that this man, not the Pharisee, went back to his home in right standing with God. Because everyone who thinks highly of himself will be brought down, and everyone who truly humbles himself before God will be lifted up.”

Jesus Blesses Little Children

¹⁵Some people even brought their babies to Jesus so He could touch and bless them. But when His followers saw this, they scolded the people for bothering Him with babies.

¹⁶But Jesus called the parents and their children over to Him and said, “Let the little children come to Me, and don’t hold them back. Because only those who become like these little children^a will gain entrance into the Kingdom of God.

¹⁷“I tell you the truth, that anyone who refuses to now humbly accept the rule of the Kingdom of God in his heart and life like a little child^a will definitely not be allowed to enter it.”

The Rich Ruler

¹⁸A certain ruler^a once asked Him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to receive everlasting life?”

¹⁹“Why do you call Me ‘good?’” Jesus replied. “There’s only One who is truly good, and that’s God.

²⁰“You know the commandments God has given: ‘Do not commit adultery. Do not murder. Do not steal. Do not tell lies about anyone. Honor your father and mother.’”

²¹“I’ve obeyed all of these from the time I was a child,” the man replied.

taking immediate flight, will continue working or return to their homes to rescue some item.

The warning remains clear: **Only those who flee immediately will be saved!** The others will be either slain or carried off and enslaved by the Antichrist. Zechariah 13:8-9.

* * *

Some believe that vss 34-36 speak of the Rapture of the Church. But inasmuch as this passage is linked closely to the previous verses in which the Lord instructs the Jews to flee from Jerusalem and all Israel when the Antichrist destroys the altar of sacrifice and sets up his *abominable* image to be worshiped (Matthew 24:15-21), it must refer to that situation instead of the Rapture. The very context in which these verses are situated, following the

Lord’s warning to flee, shows that they have nothing to do with the Rapture.

Jesus’ answer to His followers, concerning the question of *where* they would be *carried*, appears to indicate that the entire nation of Israel will be the stage. The vultures of the Antichrist will be everywhere, ready to pounce on their victims. See Matthew 24:15-28; Mark 13:14-23.

18:8a This section of Scripture has at least a twofold purpose. It first shows the power of persevering prayer, and secondly shows how God wants to answer such prayer preceding the coming of Christ, especially on the part of those who will be under the awful persecution from their adversary, the Antichrist and his followers.

In v 7 He states that *He will patiently listen to*

²² Upon hearing his reply, Jesus told him, “You are still failing God in one area of your life. Sell everything you have and give the money to the poor, and you will be rich in Heaven.^a Then come along with Me.”

²³ But when he heard that, his heart sank, because he was very rich.

²⁴ When Jesus saw how sad he became, He said to those standing there as the man left, “It is so difficult for those with money to enter the Kingdom of God!

²⁵ “In fact, it’s easier for a camel to squeeze thru the eye of a needle than for a rich person to gain entrance into the Kingdom of God.”^a

²⁶ Those who heard Him were stunned, and exclaimed, “Well, who then can be saved?”^a

²⁷ “Things that are impossible for men to do are possible with God’s help,”^a Jesus replied.

²⁸ Then Peter spoke up, “Look, we left everything we had and followed You.”

²⁹ “I assure you I’m telling you the truth,” Jesus replied, “when I tell you that there is no one who has left home or parents or brothers or wife or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God,

³⁰ who will not be repaid many times over in this present life, and will receive everlasting life in the age to come.”^a

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

³¹ Then He took the Twelve aside and said to them, “Listen now, we are on our way up to Jerusalem, and all the things that the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will take place when we get there.^a

³² “Because He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and they will mock Him, insult Him, spit on Him, flog Him, and kill Him.

³³ “But three days later, He will rise back to life again.”

³⁴ But they didn’t understand a thing He said. In fact, God had hidden the meaning from them, so that’s the reason they didn’t know what He was talking about.^a

A Blind Beggar is Healed

³⁵ As He was approaching Jericho, a blind man was sitting beside the road begging.

³⁶ When he heard the great crowd going by, he asked those near him what was going on.

³⁷ “Jesus from Nazareth is passing by,” they told him.

³⁸ Upon hearing that, he shouted, “Jesus! Son of David! Have pity on me!”

³⁹ “Stop that! Calm down!” the people at the head of the procession scolded him, but he only shouted louder than ever, “Son of David! Have pity on me!”

⁴⁰ So Jesus stopped and asked someone to bring the man to Him.

⁴¹ When he came near, Jesus asked him, “What is it that you want Me to do for you?”

“Lord,” he said, “I want to be able to see.”

⁴² “Receive your sight!” Jesus responded. “Your faith has made you well.”

⁴³ And immediately he could see! So he too joined the crowd and followed Jesus, praising and thanking God. When all the people saw what had happened, they too praised God.

The Conversion of Zacchaeus

19 Then Jesus went on into Jericho. ² As He was walking thru it, a very rich man named Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, heard He was there.

them. It has been a long time since Christ was here, and many have suffered and died for Him during that time. But then in v 8 He states that *they will get justice, and with great speed.* Therefore, when the time for judgment comes He will make a quick work of it.

We do well to always bear in mind this promise of the Lord to answer persevering prayer. And especially we do well to bear this in mind as the persecutions of the enemy worsen in the days of the end. On effective prayer, see also 11:1-13; 17:5-6, and the notes — also Matthew 7:7-11.

18:16a ... *humble in heart, and willing to learn and obey* ...

18:17a ... *teachable, mild, humble, wanting to please his parents, and free from prejudice* ... See Matthew 18:1-3 note. Christ was not referring to

spoiled brats.

18:18a Evidently a ruler or official of the synagogue.

18:22a See 16:1-9, and the note.

18:25a See Mark 10:22,25 notes.

18:26a See Matthew 19:25 note.

18:27a Jesus is not against riches that are gained in an honorable way, but He points out the extreme danger of making riches one’s god, and of using them for self-satisfying purposes instead of under God’s approval and supervision. See Mark 10:27.

18:29-30a See Mark 10:28-31 note.

18:31a Psalm 22:1-21; 41:9; Isaiah 52:13-15; 53:1-12; Daniel 9:25-26; Zechariah 11:12-13; 12:10.

18:34a It was enough that they would remember after He died and rose again that He had prophesied several times that all this would happen.

³So he went out to the street to get a look at Him, but he wasn't able to because of the crowd. He was too short to look over them.

⁴So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to get a look from there, because Jesus would be passing by that way.

⁵When Jesus came to the tree, He looked up and saw him. "Zacchaeus," He said, "hurry and come down, because I must stay at your house today."

⁶So he hurried and came right down. He was very happy to receive Jesus as his guest.

⁷But when the people saw Jesus go with this man they all began to grumble, saying, "He's gone to be the guest of a man who's a sinner!"^a

⁸*Later that day*^a Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Sir! I here and now give half of my possessions to the poor. If I have cheated anyone out of anything, I will pay him back four times as much as I took."^b

⁹Jesus responded by saying, "Today salvation has come to this house, because you have shown that you are also now a true son of Abraham.

¹⁰"The reason the Son of Man has come to this world is to seek out and to save those who are lost."

Parable of the Ten Gold Coins

¹¹While the people were thinking over what He had just said, He told them another parable in order to correct the idea many had that because He was approaching Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God would now immediately appear on the scene. So He said:

¹²"A certain nobleman went to a distant country where he was to be crowned king, after which he would return.

¹³"Before leaving he called ten of his servants and gave each of them one mina.^a 'Put this money to work,' he told them, 'and see how much profit you can make with it while I'm gone.'

¹⁴"But some of the citizens of his country had a growing hatred for him, and sent a delegation to the emperor to say, 'We absolutely refuse to have this man as our king!'

¹⁵"He returned however as king, and sent for the ten servants to whom he had given the money, to find out how much profit each had made.

¹⁶"The first servant said, 'Sir, your mina has produced ten minas,'

¹⁷'Well done!' the king replied. 'You are a good servant! Because you've been faithful in this very small matter, I am appointing you as governor over ten cities.'

¹⁸"The second servant came and reported, 'Sir, your mina has produced five minas.'

¹⁹"The king praised him as well, saying, 'You will govern five cities.'

²⁰"Another came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina, which I kept hidden safely in a handkerchief.

²¹'I am in constant fear of you, because you are a hard man. You take what doesn't belong to you, and harvest what you didn't sow.'

²²'You worthless, wicked servant!' the king reprimanded him, 'I will judge you by the very words you have spoken. So you know, do you, that I am a hard man, taking what doesn't belong to me, and harvesting what I didn't sow?

²³'Why then didn't you at least put my money in the bank, so that upon my return I could have collected it with interest?'

²⁴"Then he said to his guards, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who gained ten minas.'

²⁵'But, sir,' they objected, 'he already has ten minas!'

²⁶'Yes, and I'm telling you,' the king replied, 'that everyone who has will be given more. But as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken from him.'^a

19:7a In v 10 Jesus explains why He went with Zacchaeus.

19:8a Implied.

19:8b These words were no doubt spoken at the dinner table after Christ had spoken to Zacchaeus for some time, and he had come to realize he must turn from his former life and live to please God if he were to gain eternal life. His willingness to make more than a full restitution shows that he had a true conversion to Jesus as his Lord, Savior, and Messiah.

19:13a A mina was worth about four months' wages of a laboring man.

19:26a Matthew 13:12; Mark 4:25; Luke 8:18.

19:27a The Lord's *enemies* will be judged at both the judgment of the nations upon His return to earth (Matthew 25:31-46) and also following the Millennium, when all the ungodly dead are raised for final judgment. Revelation 20:5a, 11-15.

19:30a The colt and the donkey were viewed as a Messianic sign based on Zechariah 9:9, which reads: *Tell the people of Jerusalem, "Look, your King is coming to you! He is humble, riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the offspring of a beast of burden."* On these animals, Jesus rode into the city on Palm Sunday as a public declaration of His Messi-

²⁷“But now, bring here those enemies of mine who refused to have me as their king, and execute them here in front of me.”^a

The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

²⁸When Jesus finished the parable, He went on ahead of the rest, continuing on His way up to Jerusalem.

²⁹As He was approaching Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His followers on a mission.

³⁰“Go into the town up ahead,” He told them. “As you enter the town you’ll find a colt tied up. No one has ever ridden that colt, but untie it and bring it here.”^a

³¹“If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying that colt?’ just say, ‘Because its true Owner^a needs it.’”

³²So the two men went into the town, and found everything just as Jesus had said.

³³But as they were untying the colt, the owners called out to them, “Hey! What are you doing there, untying that colt?”

³⁴“Its true Owner^a needs it,” they replied.

³⁵Then they brought it to Jesus, threw their robes on its back and helped Jesus get on it.

³⁶And as He rode along, others repeatedly spread their robes on the road.

³⁷Then, as He descended from the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem, that whole crowd following Him began to joyfully and loudly shout praises to God for the great miracles they had seen.

³⁸“God bless the King who comes in the name of the Lord!”^a they were shouting.

“There is peace in Heaven, and glory in the presence of God in the highest Heaven!”

³⁹Some of the Pharisees then called out to Him from the crowd that was watching, “Teacher, tell your followers to stop shouting such nonsense!”^a

⁴⁰“I tell you the truth,” Jesus responded, “if these

people were to keep silent, the very stones would immediately cry out and say exactly what these people are saying.”^a

Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem

⁴¹As He came closer to Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it.^a

⁴²“If only you had known,” He lamented, “at least you, the people of Jerusalem—if only you had known the wonderful peace that could be yours in this Day that was promised you and belongs to you. But now the precious truth is hidden from you!”

⁴³“Because of this, the time will come upon you when your enemies will pile up earth against your walls and surround you and close in on you on every side.

⁴⁴“They will so completely destroy both you and the people within your walls that not even one stone will be left upon another, because you did not recognize your God when He came to save you!”^a

Jesus at the Temple

⁴⁵When He arrived in the city, He went into the Temple area and began to drive out those who were buying and selling there.

⁴⁶“It is written in the Scriptures that God has said,” He protested emphatically, **My house is to be a house of prayer,^a but you have turned it into a place for thieves to do business!^b**”

⁴⁷He taught every day in the Temple area. And all during that time, the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the leaders among the people were trying to find a way to destroy Him.

⁴⁸But they were unable to do anything, because all the people were listening so very carefully to everything He said.^a

ahship. See Matthew 21:1-11 and notes.

19:31,34a Literally *the Lord of it*.

19:38a Psalm 118:26.

19:39a And they may have added, as many feel today when God is praised, “*Such shouting is embarrassing to everyone!*”

19:40a This was a very special time for God to be praised, just before the great and costly sacrifice for our sins. God’s great love for us is worthy of our loudest and most exuberant praise. Let us indeed praise Him now in our day!

19:41a He was overcome with compassion as He viewed the guilty city that he knew would soon

receive one of the most awesome bloodbaths of history, and be left in ruins.

19:44a This prophecy was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when the Romans burned and leveled Jerusalem, and took almost 100,000 prisoners to Rome as slaves.

19:46a Isaiah 56:7.

19:46b Jeremiah 7:11.

19:48a This implies that great numbers of Jews did receive Jesus. Historians claim that as many as a million Jews were followers of Jesus in the first century.

20:16a He here again prophesied the killing,

Jewish Leaders Question Jesus' Authority

20 One day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the Temple courts and telling them the Great News, the chief priests and the teachers of the Law, together with the elders, confronted Him.

²“Tell us,” they demanded, “by whose authority did you do the things you’ve been doing in the Temple area recently? Just who do you think gave you such authority?”

³“First give Me an answer to a question I have for you,” He replied.

⁴“Where did John get his authority to baptize people—from God, or was it just his own idea?”

⁵They talked it over among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘He received it from God,’ He will say, ‘Why, then, didn’t you believe him?’

⁶“But if we say, ‘It was just his own idea,’ this whole mob will stone us to death, because they’re all convinced that John was a prophet.”

⁷So they said, “We don’t know where he got his authority.”

⁸“And neither will I tell you who gave Me the right to do what I do,” He responded.

The Parable of the Sharecroppers

⁹Then He told the people this parable: “There was once a man who planted a vineyard. He rented it out to sharecroppers, and then left the area for a long time.

¹⁰“At harvest time he sent one of his men to the renters to pick up his share of the fruit from the vineyard. But they beat him up and sent him away without a thing.

¹¹“So he sent another man. But they treated him shamefully too, beating him up and sending him away empty-handed.

¹²“He sent a third one. They wounded this one too, and threw him out.

¹³“What shall I do?” the owner of the vineyard wondered. ‘I know,’ he said. ‘I’ll send my son, whom I love so dearly. Maybe they’ll show some respect when they see it’s my son I’m now sending.’

¹⁴“But when the renters saw him coming they went into a huddle and said, ‘Look! Here comes the heir. Let’s kill him, and we’ll get this vineyard for

ourselves.’

¹⁵“So they dragged him out of the vineyard and killed him. Now what do you suppose the owner of the vineyard will do to those men?”

¹⁶“I’ll tell you what he’ll do! He’ll come and utterly destroy those renters and rent the vineyard to others.”^a

When the people heard this, they said, “May such a thing never happen!”

¹⁷But firmly fixing His eyes on them He said, “What does the Scripture mean then that says:

The Stone that the builders threw out as worthless has become the Chief Cornerstone^a?

¹⁸“Everyone who falls on that Stone will be broken, but on whomever It falls, It will grind him to powder!”^a

Paying Taxes to Caesar Questioned

¹⁹Knowing very well that Jesus had spoken that parable against them, the chief priests and teachers of the Law wanted desperately to arrest Him at once, but they were afraid of what the crowd would do if they did.

²⁰So after watching Him closely, they sent spies to Him who pretended to be friendly. But they were actually trying to get Him to say something they could report to the governor, so the governor would arrest Him.

²¹“Teacher,” they said, “we know you always speak the truth, and you teach what’s true. You’re not trying to gain the favor of anyone; but you teach God’s truth as it really is.

²²“So would you tell us: Is it right, according to the Laws God has given us, for us Jews to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor? Or should we refuse to pay them?”

²³But He saw thru the underhanded way they were trying to trap Him, so He said, “Why are you testing Me? Show Me the coin you use to pay the tax.”

²⁴When they handed Him the coin, He said, “Whose picture and name are on here?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

²⁵“In that case,” He said, “give Caesar what belongs to him, and give to God what belongs to God.”

²⁶So they didn’t get Him to say anything they

sacking, and burning of Jerusalem by the Romans, which took place in A.D. 70. He no doubt also referred to His then giving His vineyard to the Gentiles, “until the times of the Gentiles comes to an end.” Luke 21:24.

20:17a Psalm 118:22.

20:18a See Matthew 21:44 note.

20:28a ... *to inherit his property.*

20:36a ... *who never die or need to be replaced by others.*

20:37a Exodus 3:6,15.

20:38a Or *Everyone who ever lived is still alive*

could use against Him, and they were stunned by His answer. It completely silenced them.

The Question about Marriage in Heaven

²⁷Then some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection back to life after death, came to Him with a question.

²⁸“Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote this law for us: ‘If a man dies and leaves a wife but no children, his brother must marry the widow, and raise up a child for his brother.’^a”

²⁹“Once there were seven brothers. The oldest married a wife, but he died without any children.

³⁰“The second married the widow, and he too died childless.

³¹“Then the third married her. In fact, all seven married her, and all died childless.

³²“Finally the woman died too.

³³“Now the question is: Whose wife will she be when those seven brothers are resurrected? After all, each of them was married to her.”

³⁴“The people of this age marry and are given in marriage,” Jesus replied.

³⁵“But those whom God considers worthy to live in the age to come, and are resurrected from the dead, will neither marry nor be given in marriage.

³⁶“Nothing will cause them to die anymore, so they will be immortal like the angels.^a After God raises them back to life, they will all be children of God.

³⁷“Even in the report Moses gave about the burning bush, it is clear that God was revealing that the dead will come back to life, when He told Moses that He’s the **One who is worshiped as God by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**^a”

³⁸“He’s not the God of people who are dead, but of those who are very much alive. And God speaks of all people as being alive somewhere.”^a

³⁹Some of the teachers of the Law then spoke up and agreed, “Teacher, that was a good answer.”

⁴⁰After that no one dared to ask Him any more questions.

Whose Son is the Messiah?

⁴¹Then Jesus asked them a question, “How can the Scripture be true that says that the Messiah is to be a descendant of King David?

⁴²“Because in the Book of Psalms, David himself said:

God said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand

⁴³**until I put Your enemies under Your feet as a footstool for Your feet.’^a”**

⁴⁴“So David calls the Messiah his ‘Lord’. How can He then be his descendant?”^a

⁴⁵Then while all the people were listening, He said to His followers,

⁴⁶“Be on your guard so you don’t become like the teachers of the Law. They love to walk around in long, flowing robes, and be honorably greeted in the markets. They want the prominent seats in the synagogues and a place at the head table at banquets.

⁴⁷“Yet these are the same men who cheat widows out of their homes and other properties, and then pretend to be so godly by making long prayers. But be sure of this, those men will receive greater and more severe sentences on Judgment Day than other sinners!”

The Widow’s Offering

21 As Jesus was later sitting down, He watched as the rich were putting their gifts into the offering box.

²Then He also saw a very poor widow dropping in two tiny brass coins.

³“I tell you the truth,” He said, “that poor widow put in more than all the others.

⁴“Everyone else put in gifts from their surplus, but even though she is poor she put in everything she had—even what she was to live on!”

Signs of the End of the Age

⁵Then some of His followers remarked about the grandeur of the Temple, how beautifully adorned it was with beautiful stones and various gifts that had been dedicated to God.

⁶“As for all the beautiful things you see here,” Jesus replied, “the time will come when not one stone will be left upon another. They will all be torn down.”

⁷“Teacher!” they exclaimed, “when will all that happen? And what signal will there be that it’s about to happen?”^a

⁸“You must always be on your guard,” He

somewhere, and must give an account of himself before God on Judgment Day.

20:43a Psalm 110:1

20:44a See Matthew 22:45 note.

21:5-7a This prophecy was uttered just outside the Temple as Jesus and His followers were leaving.

Though this is similar in many parts to our Lord’s prophecy in the 24th chapter of Matthew, and Mark 13, it is also quite different. This was given in or near the Temple area, while the prophecy in Matthew and Mark was given on the Mount of Olives, after they had left the Temple.

replied, “so that no one deceives you. Because many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ, and the time is near.’^a Have nothing to do with them.

⁹“And don’t be afraid when you hear of wars and revolutions, because these events must take place first. But that doesn’t mean that the end will come immediately.”

¹⁰Then He said to them, “*As the end approaches*,^a many nations will rise up against many other nations, and kingdoms against kingdoms.

¹¹“And there will be great earthquakes, famines, and disease epidemics in various places. There will also be terrifying sights and incredible happenings threatening from the heavens.^a

¹²“But before all these end-time events happen, they will arrest you and treat you brutally with

contempt. You will be dragged into synagogues^a and thrown into jails. And you will be brought before kings and rulers because of the stand you will take for Me.

¹³“But this will all turn out to be your opportunity to tell them the Great News.

¹⁴“So when you are arrested, make up your minds not to worry or even think about what you will say in your defense.

¹⁵“Because I will work thru your mind and mouth, and give you such words of wisdom that none of your enemies will be able to successfully prove you wrong or contradict what you say.^a

¹⁶“But you will be betrayed by even your own parents, brothers, relatives, and friends and turned over to those who want your mouth closed. They will even send some of you to your death.^a

It appears that they immediately asked Him, “Teacher, when will all this happen?”, etc. They were asking about His statement that the Temple would be utterly destroyed. But He does more than answer their question. In vss 9-11 and 25-28 He tells them about events concerning the end of the age and of His coming *with power and great glory*.

* * *

As Christ’s followers were walking up the Mount of Olives, some of them were evidently in deep thought about His remarks about the end of the age and of His second coming, because according to Mark 13, four of them, Peter, James, John, and Andrew, privately came to Him on the Mount of Olives. They did not at that time ask for a sign as to when the Temple would be destroyed. He had already answered that question. Their question on the Mount of Olives, as recorded in Matthew 24 and Mark 13, concerned the end of the age and the second coming of the Lord.

But here now, as they stand in front of the Temple, they are concerned about His prophecy in regard to the Temple’s destruction.

21:8a ... the time is near *for me to reign as King of kings*. The prophecy in this verse is to have a double fulfillment. This fact is very apparent from Matthew 24:4-5, 23-24. A few men arose in the days prior to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, claiming to be *Christ*. But *many* are now appearing in these end time days making that claim. It is not apparent from this verse in Luke to which time Jesus was referring, or if He referred to both in the one statement.

21:10a Implied.

21:9-11a In these three verses Jesus goes into the matter of the end of the age, before we come to v 12 in which He begins to tell them about the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (A.D. 70),

and of events immediately preceding that destruction. In v 9 Jesus emphasizes that they were not to allow themselves to be shaken by every war and commotion, taking them as signs of the end of the age. These wars are natural occurrences between sinful men and nations.

But then in vss 10-11 He gives them signs that He does want them to be concerned about. He lists several signs that are to occur in the end time, indicating that when all of these signs are in evidence at one time, the great day of His appearing in power and glory is close at hand. The signs are as follows: *Nations will rise against nations, and kingdoms against kingdoms. And there will be earthquakes, famines, and disease epidemics in various places.*

In addition to these signs, which are also mentioned in Matthew 24 and Mark 13, He states that further signs of His coming will be *terrifying sights and incredible happenings threatening from the heavens*. See vss 25-26.

* * *

Never before in history had wars involved literally the entire world as it did in World War I and World War II. It appears quite possible that these signs of the end time began in 1914 at the beginning of World War I. This war was followed by great famines. It was followed by the great flu epidemic which took some 20 million lives. *Earthquakes* not only took their toll but have occurred with increasing frequency from that time until now. See the more extensive notes on Matthew 24:7-8.

At this writing the *terrifying sights and incredible happenings threatening from the heavens* are still future. But, there seems to be little doubt that the present day is the time of the end.

21:12a ... *for trial* ...

21:15a If you are imprisoned because of your stand for Christ, awaiting trial, spend your time

¹⁷“And as a rule, you will be hated by people everywhere because of the stand you take for Me.

¹⁸“But not even a single hair from your heads will be lost.^a

¹⁹“You will save your souls by standing firm, and patiently enduring^a whatever God allows to come your way.

²⁰“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, that will be the sign by which you will know that the city will soon be destroyed.^a

²¹“Those living in Judea must then make their escape into the hills. Those in Jerusalem must leave at the earliest opportunity, and those outside the city must not attempt to enter it.

²²“Because this will be the time of the judgment of Israel,^a in fulfillment of all that the prophets have written.^b

²³“And woe to women who are pregnant or have nursing babies at that time, because there will be frightful disaster thruout the land as its people are dreadfully punished by God!

²⁴“Great numbers will be slaughtered by the sword. Others will be led away as slaves into all nations.^a And Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles comes to an end.^b

²⁵“*And as the times of the Gentiles are coming to an end,*^a strange things will happen to the sun, moon, and stars. People in the nations on earth will be utterly confused, baffled, and panic-stricken when mammoth waves surge and roar in the oceans and giant tides violently sweep in over the land.^b

²⁶“Many will die of heart failure because of being

praising the Lord and letting Him know that you are counting on Him to be your defense attorney, as He promised.

This can also be a great opportunity to witness to fellow inmates and prison guards, as many have already done in the past. These were instructions for those living before Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70, but the same applies today. See also Matthew 10:18-20; Luke 12:11-12.

21:16a Even though your defense is perfect, a corrupt government or judge may still send you to prison or death. But to be imprisoned for your stand for Christ will mean only greater rewards for you in Heaven. And to die for Christ will not only mean greater rewards, but to be ushered immediately into God’s presence.

21:18a They can kill the body, but God will resurrect your body in its entirety, even all your hair.

21:19a Refer to the word *patience* in a good Bible concordance. See how much is said in the Bible about patience in regard to your salvation.

21:20-22a It is at this point that the Lord begins answering His followers’ question as to how they would know when the Temple was about to be destroyed, as He had prophesied. The sign would be, *when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies.*

The Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem in A.D. 66, but because of the unrest in Rome, caused by the death of Nero, the armies left. This gave the Christians time to escape. According to Eusebius, in obedience to prophetic instructions given them at that time, the Christians fled east across the Jordan River to Pella and safety. The Romans returned in A.D. 70 and slaughtered the inhabitants of Jerusalem and burned and totally destroyed the city.

21:22b That is, all that the prophets had written about the destruction of Jerusalem. Judgment had

been threatened by almost all the prophets against the people of that city.

21:24a The Romans killed over one million Jews in A.D. 70, and carried almost 100,000 into slavery.

21:24b The times of the Gentiles will not end until Antichrist is defeated at Armageddon. Regarding Armageddon see Isaiah 25:6-7; 66:15-18; Jeremiah 25:30-33; Joel 3:9-16; Zephaniah 3:8; Zechariah 14:12-15; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8; Revelation 14:17-20; 19:11-21. There is yet much distress and chaos ahead for Israel.

21:25a Implied.

21:25b There are many signs of the end time which are yet to come. We can expect *signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars.* And we can expect that the last part of this verse will also be fulfilled literally. Expect to see great *tides* in the sea. Such tides will bring great destruction on land.

Consider Isaiah 13:13-14 in relation to this time, where the Lord says, *Therefore, in the day when I reveal My fierce wrath and burning anger, I will cause the natural forces controlling the planets to violently tremble, and the earth will be shaken out of its orbit and run about in space like a deer escaping the hunters, and wander about like a sheep without a shepherd.*

* * *

If the earth moves out of orbit, think of the tides that would result. The reason for the tidal waves could be that the earth might swing nearer the sun. The gravity of our massive sun would play havoc with the oceans on earth. It would even pull the earth’s crust, causing great earthquakes. Perhaps it’s at this time that the fourth vial of Revelation 16:8-9 will occur, when people on earth will be scorched with great heat. See also Malachi 4:1.

21:26a ... and will no longer keep those bodies

terror-stricken, resulting from the frightful things that are happening to the earth, and as they wonder what will happen next. Because the natural forces in the heavens controlling the planets will be violently shaken.^a

²⁷“And it is during the time of this great chaos that the Son of Man will be seen coming to earth in a cloud, with power and great glory.”^a

²⁸“But even when the end-time happenings are just beginning to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because all of this will mean that the time of the fulfillment of your redemption is near.”^a

²⁹Then He told them another parable. “Look at the fig tree and all the other trees,” He said.

³⁰“When you look at those trees and see them beginning to sprout leaves, you know very well

that summer is almost here.

³¹“In the same way, when you see these things happening you can know that the Kingdom of God is soon to be established on earth.”^a

³²“I tell you the solemn truth, this generation will positively not pass away before all of these things have taken place.”^a

³³“Heaven and earth will indeed pass away, but there’s no possibility whatever that what I say will come to nothing.”^a

³⁴“So you must always be on your guard. Don’t allow yourselves at any time to indulge in harmful and illicit practices—getting drunk, for instance, or even getting so burdened down and depressed by the cares of this life, that the Great Day suddenly overtakes you when you are least expecting

in their courses. Be sure to read the prophecy in Isaiah 13:9-14 regarding this. See also Joel 3:16; Haggai 2:6,21; Hebrews 12:26. Many people on earth will be literally scared to death. And it will be something to be scared about when our stable earth careens in its wild plunge out of orbit. From the last sentence of this verse we realize that the other planets will be freed from their fixed courses as well.

Certainly, with the world gone crazy in its humanity and also in its physical state, there will be much cause for terror-stricken fear, resulting in *many dying of heart failure.*

21:27a The Lord will make His appearance to the world following this extended chaos and the great judgments of fire, earthquakes, great hailstones, meteorites, and darkness that will follow the Battle of Armageddon. Matthew 24:29; 2 Peter 3:10-12; Revelation 6:12; 16:21. The last verses of the book of Daniel indicate that this last judgment may continue for some 45 days following Armageddon.

Then, in the midst of the darkness covering the earth at that time, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, the Messiah expected by Israel will appear, shining in *power and great glory* in the heavens as He approaches the earth.

21:28a As we have stated, in the Matthew 24:6-8 note, we believe that *these things began* to happen with the beginning of World War I in 1914. If this is the case, we are already far along in the days of the end time. The coming of the Lord is indeed drawing near!

21:29-31a Many have taught that *the fig tree* here refers to the Jews. But notice that Jesus also adds the phrase *and all the other trees.* Jesus is simply pointing out the fact that when the trees of the field and forest begin shooting forth leaves, it is obvious that summer is close at hand. Likewise, Christ wants us to know that when we *see these things*

happening, we are to *know that the Kingdom of God is soon to be established on earth.*

21:32a The *generation* Christ is speaking of here must refer to the generation living at the time when these signs begin to appear. The generation living at the time of Christ did not see *all of these things take place.* If this interpretation is true, the generation born in 1914 will not pass away before all is fulfilled. The end is surely close at hand. See notes on Matthew 24:32-34; Mark 13:30.

21:33a Christ gives His solemn promise that His words will absolutely *not come to nothing.* What He has stated in these prophecies will absolutely come to pass, without fail. We can count on it. The devil can count on it, and all other enemies of God can count on it. Many of these prophecies are coming to pass even now!

21:34-35a Here’s a warning to which every Christian must pay constant and earnest heed. We need, with the Apostle Peter, to *be most diligent to make our calling and election to salvation and eternal life with God a sure thing!* 2 Peter 1:10. We need to admonish one another as Christians, and we need to awaken and warn the world of the awful fate that is fast closing in on them *with the suddenness and unexpectedness of the springing of a trap.* See 1 Thessalonians 5:3 and the notes.

Don’t count on getting ready to meet God at the time of your choosing. Your last day in this life could be today! “Prepare to meet your God!” Amos 4:12; Hebrews 3:7-11.

21:36a See Mark 13:33-37; 14:38, and notes.

21:36b Passive voice, in which the subject (you) receives the action. This has nothing to do with your physical position as you stand before the Lord. It has to do with your standing, your status or condition, as you appear before *the Son of Man.*

21:36c Some claim that this verse definitely refers to the Rapture of the Church *before* the Tribulation.

it.

³⁵“Because the end will come upon everyone living upon the face of the entire earth with the suddenness and unexpectedness of the springing of a trap.”^a

³⁶“So you must constantly watch how you live,^a and continually pray that you will have the moral strength to escape being overwhelmed by all the temptations and judgments of the end times, and that you will be one who will stand acquitted^b in the presence of the Son of Man.”^c

³⁷Every day Jesus taught in the Temple courts, and when evening came, He would go out to the hill called the Mount of Olives and spend the night there.

³⁸Then early in the morning, all the people would return to the Temple courts to listen to Him.

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

22 The time was now very near for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover.^a

²And the chief priests and teachers of the Law were still looking for a way to kill Jesus, because they were really afraid of the way the people were taking hold of every word He said.

³Then Satan entered into Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve.

⁴He then went to the chief priests and captains of the Temple guard, and talked with them about how he could betray Jesus to them.

⁵Delighted with his plan, they agreed to give him money.

⁶So he promised them he would indeed turn Jesus over to them, and began looking for a time

But notice that the Lord has made absolutely no mention of the Great Tribulation of the last days in this entire discourse. In vss 12-19 He gave prophecy regarding the persecution of the early Church. This has already been fulfilled. We are now living in the days of the persecution of the latter-day Church, though most of us have not yet been affected by it.

Vss 20-24 prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and the tribulation and the enslavement of the Jews at that time. Those who were awake and obeyed the Lord's instructions escaped that tribulation, but not because the Lord raptured them out of it.

* * *

Christ was giving warning here to His followers to make sure they didn't allow themselves to be caught up in all the sinfulness and subtle temptations of the last days, nor to be shaken by the judgments that would result. In the two verses just previous to v 36, Christ had given warning about the need for being awake and alert to withstand the temptations of Satan in this time.

The Apostle Paul gave similar warning, stating that in the last days some Christians will *abandon their faith in Christ and attentively listen to lying spirits, to teachings that actually come from demons*. 1 Timothy 4:1-2. Also in 2 Timothy 3:13 Paul warned that *evil men, many of them pretending to be Christians, will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived*.

And we are warned in Daniel 8:23 that the latter days will see sin permeating the earth to its fullest extent. It was of these times and temptations of which Christ warned here, challenging His hearers to *watch* their lives most carefully so that they

might continue to please Him and enter eternal life with Him.

* * *

Then consider the discourse given later on the Mount of Olives, as recorded in Matthew 24:12-13, *Because people will be sinning everywhere and in every way, multiplied times worse than ever before, even many of My followers will grow cold in their love for Me. But those who remain faithful to Me to the end of life will be saved*. Christ was vitally concerned, and is still concerned today, that our love for Him does not cool, making us susceptible to the temptations and sins of this world, and thus making us recipients of His judgments.

We are warned in the book of The Revelation that only those who overcome and *conquer Satan and the temptations of the world* will inherit eternal life with Christ. This is why His warning here is so needful, that we continue to *watch* our lives and make sure that we are following the Lord in all things.

So the warning here in Luke 21:36 is that we make sure that when the time comes that we find ourselves standing in the presence of God, it will not be for judgment and eternal loss, but to be welcomed into His presence to receive riches, love, and joy forever. Therefore, this Scripture has nothing to do with Christians being raptured from the earth to escape tribulation and persecution, but to escape the judgments of God upon the ungodly at the Great White Throne judgment. Revelation 20:11-15.

22:1a The seven-day festival beginning with the Feast of Passover, during which only bread made without yeast is eaten.

22:10a See Mark 14:13 note.

and place to do so when there wouldn't be a crowd.

The Last Supper

⁷ Then came the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lambs were to be killed and then eaten with bread made without yeast.

⁸ So Jesus sent Peter and John to Jerusalem, and instructed them, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."

⁹ "Where do You want us to prepare it?" they asked Him.

¹⁰ "As soon as you enter the city," He replied, "you will meet a man carrying a jar of water.^a Follow him into the house he enters.

¹¹ "Then say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher told us to ask you, "Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with My followers?"'"

¹² "He will then show you a large upstairs room, all furnished. Get things ready for us there."

¹³ So they left, and found everything just as Jesus had said. And they went ahead and prepared the Passover meal.

¹⁴ When it was time for the meal, Jesus reclined at the table with His twelve apostles.

¹⁵ Then He said to them, "It has been with fervent desire that I have looked forward to eating this Passover with you before I suffer.

¹⁶ "Because I'm telling you, I will not eat the Passover again until I eat it in the Kingdom of God, after its true meaning has been fulfilled."

¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and after giving thanks to God, He said to His followers, "Take this and share it among yourselves.

¹⁸ "Because I'm telling you, I will not drink again of the produce of the vineyard until the Kingdom of God comes."

¹⁹ Then He took bread, and after giving thanks to God, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This pictures My body^a which is given for you. Eat it in remembrance of Me."

²⁰ In the same way He picked up the cup after supper, saying, "The contents of this cup represents God's New Agreement with you, sealed and guaranteed by My blood which is being poured out for you.

²¹ "But listen! The one who is in the process of betraying Me is at the table here with Me as a

friend!

²² "It's true that the Son of Man will go from this life in the very way the Scriptures have declared,^a but woe to the man by whom He is betrayed!"

²³ The followers then began to ask among themselves which of them would ever do such a thing.

²⁴ Then, too, there was rivalry among them, since they were concerned about which of them would be considered the greatest.

²⁵ So Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over the people. And those who exercise authority over others call themselves *benefactors*.

²⁶ "But that's not the way it's to be among you. The greatest among you must be as humble as if he were the youngest, and let the one who leads act as a servant.

²⁷ "Because who is greater, the one who sits and is served, or the one who serves? Isn't it the one who is served by others? And still, I am among you as a servant.

²⁸ "But you are those who have continued to stand by Me in My trials.

²⁹ "So I will give you authority to rule as kings, just as My Father has given Me authority to rule.

³⁰ "And for that reason you may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

³¹ Then the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Listen carefully! Satan has demanded that he be allowed to thresh all of you^a as wheat.^b

³² "But I have most earnestly prayed for you, Simon, and asked the Father to make sure that your faith doesn't fail. And when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brothers."

³³ "But, Lord," Peter replied, "I'm even ready to go to jail with You! Or even die with You!"

³⁴ "I tell you the truth, Peter," Jesus replied. "Before the rooster crows this morning you will have said three times that you don't even know Me."

³⁵ Then He asked them, "When I sent you out to preach the Great News without money, suitcase, or extra clothing, you didn't lack anything, did you?"

"No, nothing at all," they replied.

³⁶ "But now, if any of you have money, take it along," He said. "Do the same if you have a suitcase. If you don't have a sword, sell some of your clothes if necessary and buy one.^a

³⁷ "Because I tell you that the Scripture about Me

22:19a Meaning *this represents or is a picture of* or *will bring to your remembrance* My body.

22:22a See 24:26 references.

22:31a *You* is plural, so all are included, not just Peter.

22:31b ... *to see if anything remains after he*

that says, He was condemned as a criminal,³ must take place. Because all that has been written about Me has an ultimate purpose in view.”

³⁸“Look, Lord,” His followers then said, “here are two swords.”

“That’s enough,” He replied.

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

³⁹Then He left, and as He had been in the habit of doing, He went out to the Mount of Olives, and His followers went with Him.

⁴⁰On reaching the place, He said to them, “You must pray now that you won’t fall into temptation.”

⁴¹Then He walked away from them about as far as a man can throw a stone, and knelt down, and prayed.

⁴²“Father!” He earnestly prayed, “if there is any possibility at all that You are willing, please take away from Me this horrendous cup of suffering! But I definitely want Your will to be done, not Mine.”

⁴³Then an angel from Heaven appeared, and strengthened Him.

⁴⁴Because He was in such awful agony, He prayed so earnestly that His sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground.

⁴⁵When He got up from praying and went back to His followers, He found them asleep, exhausted as a result of their deep sorrow.

⁴⁶“Why are you sleeping?” He asked them. “Get up and keep on praying, so you won’t fall into temptation!”

The Arrest of Jesus

⁴⁷But while He was still speaking, suddenly there was a crowd of people there. And Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them! He went right up to Jesus and greeted Him with a kiss on the cheek.

⁴⁸“Judas!” Jesus responded, “are you actually betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

⁴⁹When those around Him saw what was about to happen, they exclaimed, “Lord, shall we strike them down with the sword?”

⁵⁰And one of them slashed out at the servant of the High Priest and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹“That’s enough!” Jesus demanded. Then He touched the man’s ear and healed him.

⁵²Then He said to the chief priests and captains of the Temple guard and the elders who had come to arrest Him, “Have you come out to arrest Me

with swords and clubs, as if I were a thief?

⁵³“When I was with you daily in the Temple you didn’t dare to even lay a hand on Me. But this is your brief hour, when the power of darkness is being allowed to take over.”

Peter Disowns Jesus

⁵⁴Then they grabbed hold of Him and led Him away, and brought Him to the house of the High Priest. And following behind at a distance was Peter.

⁵⁵After kindling a fire in the middle of the courtyard, the soldiers and the servants of the High Priest sat down, and Peter sat down with them.

⁵⁶A servant girl saw him sitting there by the fire, and after looking intently at him she said, “This man was also with him.”

⁵⁷But he denied even knowing Him. “Woman,” he said, “I haven’t even met the man.”

⁵⁸A short while later someone else looked at him and said, “You are also one of them.”

“No, sir,” Peter replied, “I most certainly am not!”

⁵⁹About an hour later another person strongly affirmed, “This man has got to be one of those who were with him. It’s very plain that he’s a Galilean.”

⁶⁰“Listen, man!” Peter replied, “I don’t know what you’re talking about.” And immediately, even while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed.

⁶¹The Lord then turned and looked at Peter. Suddenly Peter remembered what the Lord had said when He had told him, “Before the rooster crows this morning you will have said three times that you don’t even know Me.”

⁶²And Peter walked out of there weeping bitterly.

⁶³Meanwhile the men guarding Jesus began mocking and ridiculing Him, and then beating Him.

⁶⁴After blindfolding Him, they kept striking Him in the face, and demanding, “Prophecy! Who hit you that time?”

⁶⁵They also threw many other insults at Him as they abused Him with foul language.

Jesus Before the Council

⁶⁶As soon as daybreak arrived, the elders of the people, and both the chief priests and teachers of the Law, came together and led Jesus before their Council.

⁶⁷“Tell us,” they demanded, “are you the Messiah?”

has finished testing you.

22:36a See Matthew 10:10 note.

22:37a Isaiah 53:12.

22:67a They were willing only to believe what

“If I did tell you,” He replied, “there’s no possibility that you would believe Me.^a

⁶⁸“If, on the other hand, I were to ask you why you are so convinced that I am not the Messiah, you wouldn’t answer Me, or let Me go.

⁶⁹“But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the Almighty God.”

⁷⁰“Are you claiming, then, that you are the Son of God?” they all then demanded.

“You are stating the truth when you say that I am,” He replied.

⁷¹“What more testimony do we need!” they then shouted. “We’ve all heard him say it with his own lips!”

Jesus Before Pilate and Herod

23 Then the entire Council got up and led Him off to Pilate.

²There they began to accuse Him, saying, “This man is misleading our nation! For one thing, he keeps telling the people to refuse to pay taxes to Caesar. And then he claims he’s the Messiah, a King.”

³So Pilate asked Him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

“Yes, what you say is true,” He replied.

⁴Pilate then said to the chief priests and the crowd, “I don’t find this man guilty of any crime.”

⁵“But, Sir!” they fiercely insisted, “he is continually stirring up the people all over Judea with his teaching! He started in Galilee, and he’s been stirring up the people all the way from there to here!”

⁶When Pilate heard about Galilee, he asked if the man were a Galilean.

⁷And as soon as he learned that Jesus was from the region ruled by Herod, he sent Him to Herod, who happened to be in Jerusalem at the time.

⁸When Herod saw Jesus, he was extremely glad, because he had been wanting to see Him for a long time. He had heard so many things about Him that he hoped he could see Him perform a miracle.

⁹So he showered Him with many questions. But Jesus gave him no answer.

¹⁰During all this time, the chief priests and teachers of the Law had been standing there hurling vicious charges against Him.

¹¹Finally Herod and his soldiers began to treat

Him with contempt, and ridicule and mock Him. Last of all, in scorn they dressed Him in a royal robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.

¹²That day marked the beginning of friendship between Pilate and Herod. Before that they had been enemies.

¹³Pilate then called the people together along with the chief priests and other Jewish leaders.

¹⁴“You brought this man to me,” he said to them, “charging him with misleading the people. I have examined him here in your presence, and I have not found him guilty of any of the charges you’ve made against him.

¹⁵“No, and neither did Herod when I sent you up to him. The truth is, he has done nothing to deserve death.

¹⁶“So I will have him severely whipped, and then let him go.”

¹⁷He said this because it was necessary to release one prisoner to the people during the Feast.

¹⁸But the whole crowd immediately shouted, “Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!”

¹⁹Now Barabbas had been thrown in jail for his part in starting a riot in the city, and for murder.

²⁰But Pilate really wanted to release Jesus, so again he appealed to the crowd.

²¹But they just kept shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

²²A third time Pilate called out to them, “Why? What wrong has he done? I haven’t found any reason why he should die! I will therefore have him severely whipped and let him go!”

²³But they kept shouting loudly and insistently, demanding that He be crucified. So the shouting mob and the chief priests finally won out.

²⁴Pilate finally caved in and sentenced Jesus to death, even the kind of death that the mob demanded.

²⁵Surrendering to their persistent demand, he also released Barabbas to them, the one who had been thrown in jail for starting a riot and committing murder. But he turned Jesus over to them to do with as they wished.

Jesus Is Crucified

²⁶As they led Him away, they grabbed hold of a man from Cyrene^a named Simon. He was on his

they wanted to believe. In other words, faith is to a great extent a matter of the will being influenced by one’s emotions. They were not willing to accept the truth and all of its consequences. Are you?

23:26a Cyrene was a city in the ancient province of Cyrenaica, in Libya, North Africa.

23:30a Hosea 10:8; Revelation 6:15-17.

23:31a This appears to be a proverbial expression. It’s not easy to burn a green tree, but a dry one is easily kindled and burns rapidly. The meaning is: “If the Romans do this to Me, One who is innocent and blameless, what will they do later to this guilty

way into the city from the country, and they made Him carry the cross and walk behind Jesus.

²⁷A great crowd of people followed Him, including several grief-stricken women who continued to mourn and weep for Him.

²⁸But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but begin to weep for yourselves and for your children.

²⁹“Because the time will surely come when people will say, ‘Women who couldn’t give birth, and those who never gave birth to children or nursed them are the fortunate ones.’

³⁰“Then is when people will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’^a

³¹“Because if they do this when the wood is green, what will they do when it’s dry?”^a

³²Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with Him to be put to death.

³³When they arrived at the place called The Skull, they nailed Him to a cross. They also crucified the criminals, one on His right, and the other on His left.

³⁴And while hanging there on the cross, Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive these people. They don’t know what they’re doing.” Meanwhile, the soldiers threw dice to decide who would get His clothes.^a

³⁵The people then just stood there, watching. But some were making snide remarks, being joined by the Jewish leaders. “He saved others,” they sneered, “let him save himself now if he’s really the Messiah, God’s Chosen One.”

³⁶The soldiers kept mocking Him too, offering Him vinegar to drink!

³⁷“If you are the King of the Jews,” they jeered, “save yourself!”

³⁸On a board above His head were these words, written in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew:

**THIS IS
THE KING OF THE JEWS**

³⁹Then one of the criminals hanging there also began shouting insults at Him, saying, “If you’re the Messiah, save yourself. And while you’re working that out, how about saving us too?”

⁴⁰But the other criminal rebuked him, saying,

“Don’t you even fear God? You’re in the same predicament He’s in.

⁴¹“After what we did, we deserve what we’re getting. But this man hasn’t done anything wrong!”

⁴²Then he said to Jesus, “Sir, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom.”

⁴³“Yes, I promise you,” Jesus replied, “today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

The Death and Burial of Jesus

⁴⁴Then at 12 noon, an amazing thing happened—the sun stopped shining, and the whole earth was enveloped in darkness until 3 o’clock in the afternoon!

⁴⁵And then suddenly, at 3 o’clock,^a the great curtain separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place in the Temple was torn in two!^b

⁴⁶Then Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Father, I entrust My spirit into Your hands!” After saying this, He died.

⁴⁷When the captain of the soldiers considered all that had happened, he glorified God, and said, “Without a doubt, this Man was innocent!”

⁴⁸And when the whole crowd that had come to see the crucifixion saw all that had taken place, they returned to the city beating their breasts in deep sorrow and consternation.^a

⁴⁹But all who knew Him personally, including the women who had followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching all this take place.

⁵⁰Now there was a man named Joseph, a good, honest, and upright man from the Judean town of Arimathea, who was a member of the Jewish Council.

⁵¹He had not agreed with the rest of the Council in their decision about Jesus, nor in what they had done. He was one who was earnestly waiting for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

⁵²This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

⁵³After getting permission, he took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been carved out of a wall of rock. No one had ever been laid in this tomb before.

nation?” And it was fulfilled in A.D. 70. Luke 21:5-6,20-24.

23:34a See Matthew 27:35; John 19:23-24.

23:45a ... *there was a great earthquake, and* ... See Matthew 27:51.

23:45b The great curtain separated the Holy Place in the Temple from the Most Holy Place. The Most Holy Place has usually been considered to represent

Heaven, and the tearing of the great curtain by the miraculous, Divine hand of God, indicates that the way into Heaven and into the very presence of our Holy God is now open for everyone to enter.

23:48a Even some who had jeered at Him may have now become convinced that they had just seen the Son of God crucified.

23:54a ... that would follow *the Passover*. See

⁵⁴That was the day when preparations were being made for the special Sabbath that would follow.^a

⁵⁵Now the women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed the body to the tomb, so they saw where the tomb was and how the body was laid in it.

⁵⁶Then they went back to where they were staying and prepared spices and perfumes for His burial. And in obedience to God's command, they then rested on the Sabbath.

The Resurrection

24 Then very early on Sunday morning, together with several other women, they went to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared.

²And when they got there, they found that the large stone had already been rolled away from the entrance to the tomb.

³But when they went inside, the body of Jesus was gone!

⁴They were greatly puzzled as to what had happened, when suddenly, two men in the most brilliantly gleaming clothing were standing with them.

⁵Terrified, the women bowed low and stared at the ground. The men then said to them, "Why are you looking among the dead for the One who is alive?"

⁶"He is not here. He has risen back to life! Remember what He told you when He was still in Galilee.

⁷"He said, "The Son of Man must be handed over into the hands of sinful men. He will be crucified, but on the third day He will rise to live again."

⁸Then they remembered that He had told them this.

⁹So they rushed from the tomb to tell the Eleven and all the rest about all that had happened.

¹⁰It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who came to the apostles with the report.

¹¹But the apostles didn't believe them, because the report they gave sounded like nonsense.

¹²But Peter got right up and ran to the tomb. When he got there he leaned inside and looked, but all that was there were the linen cloths. As he left he kept wondering to himself what ever could have happened!

On the Way to Emmaus

¹³Later that same day, two of Jesus' followers were on their way to Emmaus, a town about seven miles from Jerusalem.

¹⁴As they walked along, they were talking with each other about all the bewildering events of the last few days.

¹⁵And while they were discussing these things, trying to figure out just what had happened, Jesus came alongside and began walking with them.

¹⁶But God made it impossible for them to recognize Him.

¹⁷"What are you men discussing that causes you to look so sad as you walk along?" He asked them.

¹⁸One of them, named Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only visitor^a in Jerusalem who doesn't know anything about the things that have been happening there the last few days."

¹⁹"What things?" He asked them.

"The things that happened to Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was acknowledged by God and recognized by the people as being a powerful prophet, both because of what He did and what He said.

²⁰"But the chief priests and our rulers turned Him over to the Romans to be condemned to death. And they crucified Him!

²¹"But we had been hoping that He was the One thru whom Israel would regain her freedom. But now it's been three days since He died.

²²"And not only that, but some of our women who went to the tomb early this morning, have now deeply shaken us with their report.

²³"When they didn't find His body in the tomb, they came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels who had told them that He's alive!

²⁴"So some of our men hurried off to the tomb, and they found everything just as the women had

Matthew 28:1 note.

24:18a They likely recognized Him as a visitor to Jerusalem by His Galilean accent.

24:26a Psalm 22:1-21; 41:9; Isaiah 52:13-15; 53:1-12; Daniel 9:25-26; Zechariah 11:12-13; 12:10.

24:36a Jesus had earlier promised them the same peace He enjoyed. John 14:27; 16:33. And now, because He was alive, they could have the peace and assurance that no matter what happened, they

would live with Him forever.

24:46a See v 26 note. *It was necessary* for Him to suffer and die in fulfillment of the Scriptures, and in order to save His people from their sins. But it was also *necessary* that He rise from the dead the third day after being crucified, even if the Old Testament Scriptures make no specific mention of His rising again. It was *necessary* because it should be understood that the Son of God could not be held by

reported, but they found no trace of Him at all.”

²⁵“Oh, how foolish you men are!” Jesus replied. “You are so slow to allow the heart-center of your emotions to lead you to believe all that the prophets have said would happen!”

²⁶“Haven’t the prophets plainly told us that the Messiah must suffer these things,^a and that then He would enter into the brilliance and splendor of His glory?”

²⁷And beginning with the very first books of the Bible and going thru the writings of all the prophets, He clearly pointed out to them what had been written about Himself in all the Scriptures.

²⁸As they approached Emmaus, it became clear that Jesus planned to continue on down the road.

²⁹But they urgently pleaded with Him. “Stay with us!” they said. “It’s late, and it will soon be dark.” So He accepted their invitation and went in with them.

³⁰As He sat at the table with them, He took a loaf of bread in His hands and thanked God for the food. Then He broke the loaf and began giving it to them.

³¹The instant He did that, they recognized Him—and just as instantly He vanished from their sight.

³²“So that’s why His words burned inside us as He was talking to us on the road and explaining the Scriptures to us!” they agreed with each other.

³³So they got right up and went back to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those who had come to Jerusalem with them, all gathered together.

³⁴“It’s true!” the crowd there shouted. “The Lord has indeed risen! Peter saw Him!”

³⁵Then the two reported all that had happened to them on the road to Emmaus, and how they had recognized Him when He broke the bread.

Jesus Appears to His Followers

³⁶And while they were telling this, Jesus suddenly appeared, standing there among them! “Peace be with you,”^a He said.

³⁷They were terrified! They were frightened because they thought they were seeing a ghost.

³⁸“Why are you all so shaken up?” He asked them. “And why are you still allowing doubts to come into your minds?”

³⁹“Look at My hands and My feet. You can certainly tell by looking at the wounds in them that this is I Myself. Handle Me and see for yourselves that I am real. A spirit doesn’t have flesh and bones, as you can clearly see that I have.”

⁴⁰As He said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

⁴¹And as they kept looking at Him in amazement, overjoyed—but still doubting, because it was just too good to be true—He asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?”

⁴²So they gave Him a piece of broiled fish and part of a honeycomb.

⁴³He accepted the food and ate it as they watched.

⁴⁴Then He said, “What happened was what I told you must happen when I was still with you. I said, ‘Everything must take place that was written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.’”

⁴⁵Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures that referred to Him.

⁴⁶“This is what has been written about Me,” He said. “So it was necessary^a for the Messiah to both suffer and to rise from the dead the third day.

⁴⁷“So it is also necessary that as My messengers you now inform people in all nations, beginning right here in Jerusalem, that they must both repent and turn from their sinning, and accept the pardon offered them by means of My suffering and death for them, if they are to live.^a

⁴⁸“I am sending you out as eyewitnesses of all that has happened.

⁴⁹“And look, I will send upon you the gift that My Father has promised.^a Now then, you are to remain here in the city of Jerusalem until you are given power from Heaven.”

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

⁵⁰After He had led them out as far as Bethany, He lifted up His hands and blessed them.

⁵¹And while He was standing there blessing them,

death, but also because the many prophecies telling of His glorious eternal reign as King over all the earth imply that He must be alive to do so.

The word *necessary* is not in some of the later Greek texts. But it’s in the Received Text. It belongs.

24:47a There is no forgiveness of sin apart from repentance (a turning from sin). And repentance involves the whole of life. It is concerned, not mere-

ly with sorrow for the past, but even more with our intention for the future. It is the abandoning of our selfish way to go God’s way in full obedience and fellowship with Him.

For further information on this see Acts 20:20-21 note.

24:49a Joel 2:28-29; Matthew 3:11; John 1:31-33; 7:37-39; 14:15-17,26; 15:26; 16:7; Acts 1 and 2; 5:32; 10:44-48; 19:1-7.

He began to rise from the earth! He was parted from them there and carried up into Heaven. ⁵³And they were continually in the Temple, praising and thanking God.^a Amen.

24:48-53a What is said and what happened in these six verses took place about 40 days after what Christ had said in the previous verses. After v 47 Christ's followers went back to Galilee. Peter even went briefly back into the fishing business. John 21:1-25. Christ met them after an unsuccessful night of fishing. Then He told them to meet Him later at a certain mountain. Matthew 28:16-20. It may be that here is where He told them to return to Jerusalem. It was when they returned to Jerusalem that Christ told them to now stay in Jerusalem until they received power from Heaven. See Acts 1 and 2.

So I challenge you: Make eternal friends for yourselves in Heaven by means of the eternal investments you can make with the right use of the untrustworthy and precarious riches of this world. Then, when you die, they will be there to welcome you into your everlasting home in Heaven.

—Luke 16:9

Some believe the *they* here means that Jesus, the angels, and others in Heaven will be there to welcome you into your everlasting home. Yes, that's true, but this implies that the riches of this life that you sent on ahead will also be there to welcome you. Jesus commanded you to *Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven*. Matthew 6:19-21. So if they are being laid up there, they will be there to welcome you. In other words, they will be there credited to your account. So when you give as a servant of the Lord, you are not only giving, you are making an investment in your own greater joy in heaven with the Lord.

Jesus definitely taught that there will be degrees of glory and happiness in Heaven and in His eternal Kingdom. Some will be rulers over many cities, others over just a few cities. In fact, He even informs us thru the Apostle Paul that some will be there *as one barely escaping thru the flames*. They barely make it. That causes us to be truly concerned about those who are likely not to make it.

So our great concern for ourselves and others should be to make sure that we are truly converted to the will of God, and that we are making this life count in the greatest way possible for our future with Him.

Don't be satisfied with barely making it to Heaven. With that attitude, you very likely won't even be there. Our desire should be to receive *an abundant entrance* into His Kingdom. You have one life to live, one life to invest, so make the most of it! Life is brief, and we will all soon be standing before our God to give an accounting of what we have done with the time and the strengths He has entrusted to us. Matthew 6:19-21; 25:35-40; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Hebrews 6:10-11; Revelation 14:13.

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Read Jesus' full story here in Luke 16:1-13, and the additional comments for verse 9, on pages 140, 141 and 142.