

The Holy New Covenant

The Good News as given by Luke

Chapter 1

⁰¹ Dear Theophilus, since many people have tried to give an account of the things, which have happened among us, ⁰² they have written the same things that we learned from others that saw those things from the beginning and preached the word. ⁰³ I too thought, after I studied everything carefully from the beginning, your Excellency that I should write it down for you. Therefore, I put it in order in a book ⁰⁴ so you may be sure that the words you have been taught are true.

⁰⁵ During the time when Herod the Great ruled Judea, there was a Jewish priest named Zechariah. He belonged to Abijah's section. His wife came from the family of Aaron. Her name was Elizabeth. ⁰⁶ They were truly being made right before God, doing everything, which was right, and everything the Lord God commanded. They were spiritually spotless, ⁰⁷ but they had no children; Elizabeth could not have a baby. Both of them were very old, too. ⁰⁸ Zechariah was serving as a priest before God for his priestly division of Abijah. ⁰⁹ The other priests chose him to offer the incense; so he went into the holy place of the temple sanctuary of the Lord God. ¹⁰ There was a large group of people outside. They were praying at the time the incense was being offered.

¹¹ Then, standing on the right side of the incense table, an angel of the Lord God appeared to him. ¹² When Zechariah saw the angel, he was disturbed and overcome with fear. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Zechariah, don't be afraid. Your prayer has been heard. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give birth to a son. You will name him John. ¹⁴ You will be very, very happy. Many people will rejoice because of his birth. ¹⁵ John will be a great man in the presence of the Lord God. He will never drink wine or liquor. Even at the time when he is being born, he will be

filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ He will help many Jewish people turn back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ John himself will go ahead of the Lord in a powerful way, like Elijah. He will have the same forceful spirit that Elijah had. He will make peace between fathers and their children. He will bring those people who are not obeying God back to the right way that people should think. He will make ready a people for the coming of the Lord."

¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man, and my wife is old too." ¹⁹ The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand before God. God sent me to talk to you and to tell you this good news. ²⁰ Now listen! You won't be able to talk until the day when these things occur. You will lose your speech because you didn't believe what I told you. Nevertheless, these things will come true in their proper time."

²¹ Outside, the people were still waiting for Zechariah. They were surprised that he was staying so long inside the temple sanctuary. ²² Then he came outside, but he could not speak to them. Then the people realized that he had seen a vision inside the holy place. Zechariah couldn't speak; he could only make signs to the people.

²³ When his time of service was over, he went home. ²⁴ Later, Elizabeth, Zechariah's wife, became pregnant. So she didn't go out of her house for five months. She said, ²⁵ "Look what the Lord God has done for me! My people were ashamed of me, but now the Lord God has taken that shame away."

²⁶⁻²⁷ During Elizabeth's sixth month of pregnancy, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a virgin who lived in Nazareth, a town in the Galilee. The virgin girl was engaged to marry a man named Joseph from the family of David. Her name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel came to her and said, "Greetings! The Lord God is with you. He has blessed you." ²⁹ But Mary was very disturbed about what the angel said. She wondered, "What does this mean?" ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary, because God has blessed you. ³¹ Listen! You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. And you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great. People will call him the Son of the Highest One. The Lord God will give him the authority of King David, his ancestor. ³³ Jesus will rule over the people of Jacob forever. His kingdom will never end."

³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen? I have had no sexual relations with any man." ³⁵ The angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will

come upon you and the power of the Highest One will cover you. The holy baby will be called God's Son. ³⁶ Now listen to this: you know that Elizabeth, your relative, is very old but she is already pregnant with a son. The woman who could not have a baby has been pregnant for six months! ³⁷ With God, nothing is impossible!" ³⁸ Mary said, "I am the slave girl of the Lord God. Let what you said happen to me!" Then the angel went away.

³⁹ Mary got up and went quickly to a town in the hill country of Judea. ⁴⁰ She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the unborn baby kicked inside Elizabeth's body and she was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² Then Elizabeth said with a loud voice, "Mary, you have been blessed more than any other woman.

The baby to which you will give birth has also been blessed. ⁴³ You are the mother of my Lord, and you have come to me! How could something this good happen to me? ⁴⁴ When I heard your voice, the baby inside me jumped for joy. ⁴⁵ You are blessed, because you believed that what the Lord God said to you would actually take place."

⁴⁶ Then Mary said, "My life praises the Lord God; ⁴⁷ my heart is happy because God is my Savior. ⁴⁸ Though I am not important, God has looked upon me, His slave girl. Listen! From now on, all generations will be happy for me ⁴⁹ because the Powerful One has done great things for me! His name is holy. ⁵⁰ God will always give His mercy to those who worship Him. ⁵¹ His arm is strong. He scatters those who are proud and boastful. ⁵² He pulls men down from their thrones and He raises up the humble. ⁵³ He fills hungry people with good things, but He sends rich, selfish people away with nothing. ⁵⁴ He has always helped His people who served Him. He always gave them His mercy. ⁵⁵ It was just as God said to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his children forever."

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months; then Mary returned home. ⁵⁷ When it was time for Elizabeth to give birth, she had a son. ⁵⁸ Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord God had been very good to her. They rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹ Eight days later they came to circumcise the child. They wanted to name him Zechariah because this was his father's name. ⁶⁰ But his mother said, "No! He will be called John instead." ⁶¹ The people said to Elizabeth, "But no one in your family is named John!" ⁶² Then they

began to make signs to his father, asking, "What would you like to name him?" ⁶³ Zechariah asked for something to write on. Then he wrote, "His name is John." All of the people were surprised.

⁶⁴ Then Zechariah could talk again. He began to praise God. ⁶⁵ All of their neighbors became afraid. Throughout the hill country of Judea, people continued to talk about all these events. ⁶⁶ All of the people who heard about these things wondered about them. They thought, "What will this little child become when he grows up?" The people could see that the Lord God's hand was with this child.

⁶⁷ Then Zechariah, John's father, was filled with the Holy Spirit. He told them what was going to take place: ⁶⁸ "Praise the Lord God of Israel. He watches over His people and He has given them freedom. ⁶⁹ He has given us a powerful Savior from the family of David, His special Servant. ⁷⁰ God's holy prophets who lived long ago said that He would do this. ⁷¹ He will save us from our enemies and from the power of all those who hate us. ⁷² God said that He would give mercy to our fathers and remember His holy promise. ⁷³ God vowed to Abraham, our ancestor, ⁷⁴ that He would rescue us from the control of our enemies so that we could serve Him without being afraid. ⁷⁵ We will be holy and being made right before God as long as we live.

⁷⁶ "Now you, little boy, will be called a prophet of the Highest One. You will go ahead of the Lord to make His ways ready. ⁷⁷ You will make His people know that they can be saved, through the forgiveness of their sins. ⁷⁸ With the loving mercy of our God, a new day from heaven will shine upon us. ⁷⁹ God will help those people who don't understand, people who dread death. He will lead us in the way which goes toward peace."

⁸⁰ And so the little boy was growing up and becoming stronger in spirit. John lived in the desert, away from other people, until the time when he came out to preach to Israel.

Chapter 2

⁰¹ About that time, Augustus Caesar sent out an order to everyone in the empire that everyone must register. ⁰² This was the first registration. It occurred while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ⁰³ Each person traveled to be registered in the town where he was born.

⁰⁴ So Joseph left Nazareth, a town in the Galilee. He went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. This was known as David's town. Joseph went there because he was from the family of David — a direct descendant. ⁰⁵ Joseph registered with Mary because she was engaged to marry him. (Mary was expecting a child.) ⁰⁶ While they were in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary to have the baby. ⁰⁷ She gave birth to her first son and wrapped him with cloths. There were no rooms left in the inn. So she laid the baby in a box where cattle are fed.

⁰⁸ Some shepherds were in the fields there, watching their flock of sheep that night. ⁰⁹ An angel of the Lord God stood in front of the shepherds. The glory of the Lord shined around them. They were very frightened. ¹⁰ The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am telling you good news. It will make all the people very happy. ¹¹ Today your Savior was born in David's hometown. He is Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This is how you will know him: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a box where cattle are fed."

¹³ Suddenly a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. They were all praising God: ¹⁴ "Give glory to God in heaven, and on earth, let there be peace among those who please God."

¹⁵ The angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven. The shepherds kept saying to each other, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this event which has occurred which the Lord God has revealed to us." ¹⁶ So the shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph.

The baby was lying in the feeding box. ¹⁷ The shepherds saw the baby. Then they revealed what the angels had said about this child. ¹⁸ Everyone was amazed when they heard what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ Mary was keeping all these things in her heart; she continued to think about them. ²⁰ The shepherds went back, singing to God and praising Him for everything they had seen and heard. It was just as the angel had told them.

²¹ When the baby was eight days old, he was circumcised. Then he was named Jesus. (This name was given by the angel before the baby began to grow inside Mary's womb.)

²² The time came for Mary and the baby to be made pure, according to the law of Moses. Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to Jerusalem so that they could present him to the Lord God. ²³ It is written in the law of the Lord: "When the first male in every family is born, he will be called 'holy for the Lord God.'" ²⁴ The law of the Lord also says that the people must give a sacrifice: "You must sacrifice two young doves or two young pigeons."

²⁵ A man named Simeon lived in Jerusalem. He was a good man and very devout. Simeon was waiting for the time when God would comfort Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that Simeon would not die before he saw the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ The Spirit led Simeon to the temple. The parents of the child went to the temple to do what the Jewish law said that they must do about the child. ²⁸ Simeon held the baby in his arms and thanked God: ²⁹ "Now, Master, You can let me, Your slave, die in peace, just as You said. ³⁰ I have seen Your Safety from danger with my own eyes. ³¹ You prepared him before all people everywhere. ³² He is light for all the people of the world to see and honor for Your people, Israel."

³³ Jesus' mother and Joseph were surprised at what Simeon said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, the baby's mother, "Many Jewish people will fall and many will rise because of this boy. He will be a proof from God which some people will not accept. ³⁵ The things which people think in secret will be revealed. The things which will happen will slice through your heart."

³⁶ Anna, a prophetess, was there at the temple. She was from the family of Phanuel in the Asher tribe. Anna was very old. She had lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage. ³⁷ She was a widow and was 84 years old at that time. Anna was always at the temple; she never left. She worshipped God day and night by fasting and praying. ³⁸ Anna came up to them at that same moment, thanking God. She began to talk about Jesus to everyone who was waiting for God to bring safety from danger to Jerusalem.

³⁹ Joseph and Mary finished doing everything which the law of the Lord commanded. Then they returned home to Nazareth, their own town in

the Galilee. ⁴⁰ The little boy began to grow up. He became stronger and wiser. God's help in time of need was upon him.

⁴¹ Every year Jesus' parents traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. ⁴² When Jesus was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem to the feast as they always did. ⁴³ When the feast days were over, they were returning home but the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't know about it. ⁴⁴ Joseph and Mary traveled for a whole day. They thought that Jesus was with them in the caravan. They began to look for him among their relatives and close friends, ⁴⁵ but Joseph and Mary didn't find Jesus. So they went back to Jerusalem to look for him there.

⁴⁶ After three days, they found him. Jesus was sitting in the temple courtyard among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ Everyone heard him. They were amazed at his understanding and wise answers. ⁴⁸ When Jesus' parents saw him, they were very surprised. His mother said to him, "Son, why did you treat us like this? Your father and I were very worried about you. We were looking everywhere for you." ⁴⁹ Jesus asked them, "Why did you have to look for me? You should have known that I must be where my Father's work is!" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand the meaning of what he said to them.

⁵¹ Jesus went down with them and came to Nazareth. He always obeyed them. His mother was still thinking about all of these things. ⁵² Jesus grew taller and continued to learn more and more. People liked him, and he pleased God.

Chapter 3

⁰¹⁻⁰² While John, Zechariah's son, was in the desert, the message of God came to him. This occurred during the 15th year of the rule of Tiberius Caesar. These men were ruling for Caesar: Pontius Pilate ruled Judea; Herod Antipas ruled the Galilee; Philip, Herod's brother, ruled Iturea and Trachonities; Lysanias ruled Abilene. Annas and Caiaphas were high priests at that time.

⁰³ John went through the whole area around the Jordan River. He was preaching to the people: "Change your hearts and be immersed for the forgiveness of sins." ⁰⁴ As the words in the book of Isaiah the prophet are written: "There is a voice shouting in the desert: 'Prepare the Lord's way. Make His paths straight. ⁰⁵ Every valley will be filled and every mountain and hill will be flattened. Crooked roads will become straight and rough roads will become smooth. ⁰⁶ Everyone will see the safety from danger of God!'"

⁰⁷ People were coming to be immersed by John. John said to them, "You are like poisonous snakes! Who told you to run away from God's punishment which is coming? ⁰⁸ You must do the things which will show that you have really changed your hearts. Don't start thinking this to yourselves: 'Abraham is our father.' I tell you, God could make children for Abraham from these rocks here. ⁰⁹ The ax is now ready to cut down the trees. Every tree which does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into fire."

¹⁰ The people asked John, "What should we do?" ¹¹ John answered, "If you have two shirts, share with the person who doesn't have one. If you have food, share that too." ¹² Even the tax collectors came to John. They wanted to be immersed. They asked John, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ John answered them, "Don't take more taxes from anyone than you have been ordered to take." ¹⁴ The soldiers asked John, "What about us? What should we do?" John said to them, "Don't do violence to anyone; don't accuse falsely. Be happy with the pay you receive."

¹⁵ All of the people were hoping for the Messiah to come, and they were wondering about John. They thought, "Perhaps he is the Messiah?" ¹⁶ John answered everyone, "I immerse you in water but there is one coming who is more important than I am. I am not worthy to untie his shoe. He will immerse you in the Holy Spirit and in fire. ¹⁷ He will come ready to clean the grain, separating the good grain from the straw. He will put the good part into his barn. Then he will burn the part which is

not good. He will burn it with a fire which cannot be put out!" ¹⁸ John continued to preach the Good News, saying many different things to encourage the people.

¹⁹ (Later John denounced Herod Antipas, the ruler, by saying, "You were wrong to marry Herodias. Herodias is your brother's wife!" John also rebuked Herod for the many other evil things which Herod had done. ²⁰ Then Herod did another evil thing (it was the worst thing of all) – he put John in prison.

²¹ Before John was put in prison, many of the people were immersed by him. Then Jesus came and was immersed too. While Jesus was praying, the sky opened up. ²² The Holy Spirit came down upon him in a physical form, as a dove. Then a Voice came from heaven and said, "You are My Son, and I give Myself to you, for your good, expecting nothing in return. I am very pleased with you!"

²³ Jesus was about 30 years old when he began to teach. People thought that Jesus was Joseph's son. Joseph was Eli's son; ²⁴ Eli was Matthat's son; Matthat was Levi's son; Levi was Melchi's son; Melchi was Jannai's son; Jannai was Joseph's son; ²⁵ Joseph was Mattathias' son; Mattathias was Amos' son; Amos was Nahum's son; Nahum was Esli's son; Esli was Naggai's son; ²⁶ Naggai was Maath's son; Maath was Mattathias' son; Mattathias was Semein's son; Semein was Josech's son; Josech was Joda's son; ²⁷ Joda was Joanan's son; Joanan was Rhesa's son; Rhesa was Zerubbabel's son; Zerubbabel was Shealtiel's son; Shealtiel was Neri's son; ²⁸ Neri was Melchi's son; Melchi was Addi's son; Addi was Cosam's son; Cosam was Elmadam's son; Elmadam was Er's son; ²⁹ Er was Joshua's son; Joshua was Eliezer's son; Eliezer was Jorim's son; Jorim was Matthat's son; Matthat was Levi's son; ³⁰ Levi was Simeon's son; Simeon was Judah's son; Judah was Joseph's son; Joseph was Jonam's son; Jonam was Eliakim's son; ³¹ Eliakim was Melea's son; Melea was Menna's son; Menna was Mattatha's son; Mattatha was Nathan's son; Nathan was David's son; ³² David was Jesse's son; Jesse was Obed's son; Obed was Boaz' son; Boaz was Salmon's son; Salmon was Nahshon's son; ³³ Nahshon was Amminadab's son; Amminadab was Admin's son; Admin was Arni's son; Arni was Hezron's son; Hezron was Perez' son; Perez was Judah's son; ³⁴ Judah was Jacob's son; Jacob was Isaac's son; Isaac was Abraham's son; Abraham was Terah's son; Terah was Nahor's son; ³⁵ Nahor was Serug's son; Serug was Reu's son; Reu was Peleg's son; Peleg was Eber's son; Eber was Shelah's son; ³⁶ Shelah was Cainan's son; Cainan was Arphaxad's son; Arphaxad was Shem's son; Shem was Noah's son; Noah was Lamech's son; ³⁷ Lamech

was Methuselah's son; Methuselah was Enoch's son; Enoch was Jared's son; Jared was Mahalaleel's son; Mahalaleel was Cainan's son; ³⁸ Cainan was Enos' son; Enos was Seth's son; Seth was Adam's son; Adam was God's son.

Chapter 4

⁰¹ Jesus returned from the Jordan River. He was full of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was leading Jesus into the wilderness. ⁰² The devil tempted Jesus for 40 days. Jesus didn't eat anything during that time. When those days were over, Jesus was very hungry. ⁰³ The devil said to him, "Since you are the Son of God, command this rock to become food." ⁰⁴ Jesus answered him, "It is written: 'A person does not live on bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

⁰⁵ The devil took Jesus and showed him in a moment of time all of the kingdoms of the world. ⁰⁶ The devil said to him, "I will give you all of these kingdoms and all the power and glory which is in them. It has all been given to me. I may give it to anyone I want. ⁰⁷ It will all belong to you, if you will only bow down in front of me." ⁰⁸ Jesus answered him, "Get behind me, Satan! It is written: 'You must worship the Lord God. Serve only Him!'"

⁰⁹ The devil led Jesus to Jerusalem and stood him on a very high place of the temple. He said to Jesus, "Since you are the Son of God, jump off, ¹⁰ because it is written: 'God will command His angels to take care of you.' ¹¹ It is also written: 'Their hands will catch you so that you won't hit your foot on a rock.'" ¹² Jesus answered him, "But it also says: 'You must not test the Lord your God.'" ¹³ The devil finished tempting Jesus and went away from him to wait until a better time.

¹⁴ Jesus went back to the Galilee with the power of the Holy Spirit. Stories about Jesus went all over the area around the Galilee. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their houses of worship. All of the people were praising him.

¹⁶ Jesus came to Nazareth, the town where he grew up. On the Sabbath day he went into the house of worship; that is what Jesus always did. He stood up to read. ¹⁷ The book of Isaiah the prophet was given to him. Jesus opened the scroll and found the place where this was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me. He chose me to tell the Good News to poor people. He sent me to preach freedom to captives and to help blind people see again. He sent me to lift up broken-hearted people ¹⁹ and to announce the welcome year of the Lord God."

²⁰ Jesus rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the keeper. Then Jesus sat down. Every person in the house of worship was watching Jesus

very closely. ²¹ Jesus began to speak to them. He said, "While you heard me reading these words just now, the words were coming true!"

²² All of the people were saying good things about Jesus. They continued to be amazed at the beautiful words which were coming from his mouth. The people asked, "Isn't this Jesus, the son of Joseph?" ²³ Jesus said to them, "Surely you will tell me this old saying: 'Doctor, heal yourself.' You would like to say, 'We have heard about some of the things you did in Capernaum. Do those things here in your own hometown too!'"

²⁴ Then Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: a prophet is not accepted in his own hometown.

²⁵ "I am telling you the truth: during Elijah's time it did not rain in Israel for three and one half years. There was very little food anywhere in the whole country. There were many widows in Israel during that time ²⁶ but Elijah was sent to none of those widows. He was sent only to a widow in Zarephath, a town in the land of Sidon.

²⁷ "And there were many people with leprosy living in Israel during the time of the prophet Elisha. However, not one of those people was healed; the only one was Naaman. And Naaman was from the country of Syria, not from Israel."

²⁸ All the people in the house of worship heard these things. The people became very, very angry. ²⁹ Their town was built on a hill. They got up and forced Jesus out of town, bringing Jesus to the edge of a cliff. They wanted to throw him over, ³⁰ but Jesus walked through the middle of them and went away.

³¹ On the Sabbath day Jesus went down to Capernaum, a town in the Galilee. Jesus was teaching the people. ³² They were amazed at what he taught; this message had authority. ³³ In the house of worship there was a man who had an evil spirit inside him. The man shouted with a loud voice, ³⁴ "Bah! Jesus of Nazareth! What do you want with us? Did you come here to destroy us? I know who you are — God's Holy One!" ³⁵ But Jesus stopped the evil spirit. Jesus said, "Stop talking and come out of the man!" The demon threw the man down on the ground in front of all the people. Then the evil spirit left the man without hurting him.

³⁶ The people were shocked. They continued to ask each other, "What does this mean? With such authority and power Jesus commands evil

spirits and they come out!" ³⁷ And so the news about Jesus was spreading to every place in the whole area.

³⁸ Jesus left the house of worship. He went into Simon's house. Simon's mother-in-law was very sick; she had a high fever. They asked Jesus to do something to help her. ³⁹ Jesus stood very close to her and commanded the fever to leave her. It left her immediately and she got up and began to serve them.

⁴⁰ When the sun went down, the people brought their sick friends to Jesus. They had many different kinds of sicknesses.

He put his hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹ Demons were coming out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But Jesus wouldn't let the demons say anything more; the demons knew that Jesus was the Messiah.

⁴² The next day Jesus traveled to a place to be alone. The people were looking for Jesus. When they found him, they wouldn't let him leave. ⁴³ But Jesus said to them, "I must tell the Good News about God's kingdom to other towns too. This is why I was sent." ⁴⁴ Then Jesus began to preach in the houses of worship of Judea.

Chapter 5

⁰¹ Jesus stood beside Lake Gennesaret. Many people pushed to get all around him. They wanted to hear the message of God. ⁰² Jesus saw two boats at the shore of the lake. The fishermen were washing their nets. ⁰³ Jesus climbed into the boat which belonged to Simon. He asked Simon to push away from the shore a little. Then Jesus sat down and, from the boat, continued to teach the people on the shore.

⁰⁴ Jesus finished speaking. He said to Simon, "Take the boat into the deep water. If all of you will drop your nets into the water, you will catch some fish." ⁰⁵ Simon answered, "Teacher, we worked hard all night long trying to catch fish, but we caught nothing. But you say I should lower the nets into the water so I will do it." ⁰⁶ The fishermen dropped their nets into the water.

They caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to rip. ⁰⁷ They called to some friends in another boat to come and help them. The friends came and both boats were filled so full of fish that they were almost sinking. ⁰⁸⁻⁰⁹ The fishermen were shocked because of the large number of fish that they caught. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell down in front of Jesus and said, "Go away from me, Lord. I am a sinful man!"

¹⁰ Jacob and John, the sons of Zebedee, were amazed too. (Jacob and John were partners with Simon.) Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid. From now on, you will catch people instead of fish!" ¹¹ The men brought their boats to the shore. They left everything and followed Jesus.

¹² Once, Jesus was in a town; there was a man who was covered with leprosy. When the man saw Jesus, he bowed down in front of Jesus and begged him, saying, "Lord, you can heal me if you want to." ¹³ Jesus said, "I do want to heal you – be healed!" Then Jesus stretched out his hand and touched the man. The leprosy disappeared immediately. ¹⁴ Then Jesus said, "Don't tell anyone about what happened. Instead, go show yourself to the priest. Then offer a gift to God because you have been healed. This is what the law of Moses commands. This will prove to the priests that you are healed."

¹⁵ But the news about Jesus was spreading more and more. Many people were coming to listen to him and to be healed of their sicknesses. ¹⁶ Often Jesus went away to other places to be alone so that he could pray.

¹⁷ One day Jesus was teaching the people. The Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there too. They had come from every village in the Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. The Lord God was giving Jesus the power to heal people. ¹⁸ There was a man who was paralyzed. Some men carried him on a small bed. The men were trying to bring him and put him down in front of Jesus ¹⁹ but there were so many people that the men couldn't find a way to get to Jesus. So the men went up on top of the roof. They lowered the crippled man on his small bed down through a hole in the roof into the room in front of Jesus. ²⁰ Jesus saw that these men believed. He said to the sick man, "My son, your sins are forgiven!"

²¹ The teachers of the law and the Pharisees began to think to themselves, "Who is this man? He speaks such an evil thing! Only God can forgive sins!" ²² But Jesus knew what they were thinking. He answered them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier to say: 'Your sins are forgiven', or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? ²⁴ I will prove to you that I have the authority to forgive sins on earth."

So Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, stand up! Pick up your bed and go home!" ²⁵ Immediately the man got up in front of all of them. He took his bed and went home, praising God. ²⁶ All of the people were completely amazed. They began to praise God. They were filled with awe. They said, "Today we have seen amazing things!"

²⁷ After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector sitting at the tax office. His name was Levi. Jesus said to him, "Follow me!" ²⁸ Levi got up, left everything, and started to follow Jesus. ²⁹ Then Levi, in his own home, gave a big feast in honor of Jesus. At the table there were many tax collectors and some other people. ³⁰ The Pharisees and those men who taught the law for the Pharisees began to complain to the students of Jesus, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

³¹ Jesus answered them, "Healthy people do not need a doctor but sick people do. ³² I have not come to ask people being made right to change their hearts; I have come to call sinners."

³³ They said to Jesus, "John's students often fast and pray, the same as the Pharisees, but your students are always eating and drinking!" ³⁴ Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of a groom be sad while he is still with them? ³⁵ However, the time will come when the groom will be taken away from them. Then his friends will fast during that time."

³⁶ Jesus told this example: "No one takes cloth off a new robe to cover a hole in an old robe. If he does, the new piece of cloth will shrink and tear and not match the old cloth. ³⁷ No one puts new wine into old wine bags. If he does, the old wine bags will break open. The wine will spill out and the wine bags will be ruined. ³⁸ Instead, new wine should be put inside new wine bags. ³⁹ No one who drinks old wine wants new wine because he says, 'The old is better.'"

Chapter 6

⁰¹ Once on a Sabbath day, Jesus was passing through a field of grain. His students were picking some of the grain, rubbing it in their hands, and eating it. ⁰² Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing this? You are doing what is not right to do on the Sabbath day." ⁰³ Jesus answered them, "Do you remember reading about what David did when he and his men were hungry? ⁰⁴ David went into the house of God. He took the holy loaves of bread and ate them. The law says that only the priests can eat them but David gave some to his men." ⁰⁵ Then Jesus said to the Pharisees, "I am Lord over the Sabbath day."

⁰⁶ On another Sabbath day, Jesus went into the house of worship to teach the people. A man with a crippled right hand was there. ⁰⁷ The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were waiting to see whether Jesus would heal on the Sabbath day. They wanted to see Jesus do something wrong so that they could accuse him. ⁰⁸ But Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said to the man with the crippled hand, "Arise and stand in the middle." The man got up and stood there. ⁰⁹ Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, which is right on the Sabbath day – to do good or to do evil? Is it right to save a life or to destroy one?" ¹⁰ Jesus looked around at all of them and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand!" The man did this; his hand was restored. ¹¹ The Pharisees and the teachers of the law became very, very angry. They started saying to each other, "What can we do to Jesus?"

¹² At that time Jesus went out to a hillside to pray. He stayed there all night long praying to God. ¹³ When morning came, Jesus called his students and chose twelve of them and named them "delegates". They were: ¹⁴ Simon (Jesus named him Peter.), Andrew (Peter's brother), Jacob, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, Jacob (the son of Alphaeus), Simon (He was named The Revolutionary.) ¹⁶ Judas (the son of Jacob), Judas Iscariot (the one who turned against Jesus).

¹⁷ Jesus and the delegates came down from the hillside. Jesus stood on a level place. A large group of his students were there. Also there were many, many people from all around Judea, Jerusalem, and the seacoast cities of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They all came to listen to Jesus and to be healed of their diseases. Jesus healed those people who were troubled by evil spirits.

¹⁹ All of the people were trying to touch Jesus because power was coming out of him. Jesus healed them all! ²⁰ Jesus looked up at his

students and began to speak: "Poor people, be happy, because God's kingdom belongs to you! ²¹ You who are hungry now, be happy, because you will be satisfied. You who are crying now, be happy, because you will laugh. ²² Be happy when people hate you and are cruel to you. Be happy even when they pull away from you as being evil and throw you out because you are my friend. ²³ At that time you should jump for joy, because you will have a great reward in heaven. Their ancestors treated the prophets the same way that these people treat you.

²⁴ "Nevertheless it will be horrible for you, you rich and selfish people, because you've had your comfort. ²⁵ It will be horrible for you, you people who are full now, because you will be hungry. It will be horrible for you people who are laughing now, because you will mourn and cry aloud. ²⁶ How horrible it is when everyone says good things about you; their ancestors always did that to the false prophets!

²⁷ "However, I say to you people who are listening to me, give yourselves to your enemies, for their good, expecting nothing in return. Do good to those who hate you. ²⁸ Bless those people who curse you. Pray for those people who are cruel to you. ²⁹ If a person hits you on one side of your face, offer the other side too. If someone takes away your robe, let him have your shirt too. ³⁰ Give to every person who asks you. When a person takes something that belongs to you, don't ask for it back.

³¹ "Treat other people the way you want them to treat you. ³² If you give yourself, expecting something in return, to those who give themselves to you for their good, expecting something in return — then you are not any better than anyone else. Even tax collectors do the same thing! ³³ If you do good only to those who do good to you, you are no better than anyone else. Even 'sinners' do that! ³⁴ If you lend something to someone, always hoping to get something back, what good have you done? Even 'sinners' lend to other 'sinners' so that they may get the same amount back!

³⁵ "So give yourself to your enemies, for their good, expecting nothing in return, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting anything in return. God is good, even to the people who are full of sin and who are not thankful. If you do these things, you will have a great reward. You will be sons of the Highest One.

³⁶ "Give mercy as your heavenly Father gives mercy. ³⁷ Don't pass judgment on other people, and you won't be judged. Do not condemn

other people, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give to others, and it will be given to you. You will be given much. It will be poured into your hands, shaken, and pressed down — more than you can hold. It will be so much that it will spill over into your lap. The measure you use to measure will be used to measure back to you."

³⁹ Jesus gave them this example: "Can a blind man guide a blind man? Both of them will fall into a pit. ⁴⁰ A student is not higher than his teacher. However, when the student has learned, he will be like his teacher.

⁴¹ "Why do you see the speck of dust which is in your brother's eye but do not notice the wooden pole which is in your own eye? ⁴² How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take that speck out of your eye,' while you still have that pole in your own eye? Can't you see it? You hypocrite! First take the pole out of your own eye. Then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

⁴³ "A good tree does not produce rotten fruit; neither does a rotten tree produce good fruit. ⁴⁴ Each tree can be known by its fruit. Do people gather figs from thorny weeds? Do people get grapes from bushes? ⁴⁵ A good man brings good out of the good treasure of his heart, but an evil man brings out evil from an evil treasure. A person speaks what flows out of his heart.

⁴⁶ "Why do you call me, 'Lord! Lord!' yet you do not obey what I say! ⁴⁷ Everyone who comes to me and listens to my words and obeys them ⁴⁸ is like a man building a house. He digs down deep and builds his house on strong rock. Then the floods come, and the water tries to wash the house away, but the flood cannot move the house because it was built well. ⁴⁹ However, the person who hears my words and does not obey them is like a man who does not build his house on rock. There is no solid foundation. When the floods come, the house quickly falls down, and that house is completely destroyed."

Chapter 7

⁰¹ Jesus finished saying all these things to the people. Then he went into Capernaum. ⁰² The slave of a Roman army officer was very sick – near death. The officer honored him very much. ⁰³ When the officer heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him to ask Jesus to come and save the life of his slave. ⁰⁴ When the men came to Jesus, they begged him earnestly, "This officer deserves to have your help. ⁰⁵ He built the house of worship for us; he gives himself to our people, for their good, expecting nothing in return."

⁰⁶ So Jesus went with the men. He was coming near to the officer's house when the officer sent friends to say, "Lord, don't bother to come into my house. I am not worthy to be with you. ⁰⁷ That is why I did not come to you myself. Just give the order and my slave will be healed. ⁰⁸ I am a person under authority too, and I have soldiers below me whom I command. I can say to one, 'Go!' and he goes. I can say to another, 'Come!' and he comes. Or, if I say to my slave, 'Do this!' he does it. ⁰⁹ When Jesus heard this, he was surprised. Jesus turned to the crowd that was following him. He said, "I tell you, I have not found this much faith anywhere – not even in Israel!" ¹⁰ The group that was sent to Jesus went back to the house. They found that the slave was made well.

¹¹ The next day Jesus went to a town called Nain. His students and a large group of people were traveling with him. ¹² When Jesus came near the town gate, he saw a funeral procession. A mother had lost her only son. She was also a widow. A large crowd from the town was there with the mother while the dead son was being carried out. ¹³ When the Lord Jesus saw her, he felt very sorry for her. He said to her, "Don't cry." ¹⁴ Jesus came near the coffin and touched it. The men who were carrying it stopped. Jesus said, "Young man, I tell you, get up!" ¹⁵ Then the dead son sat up and began to talk. Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ All of the people felt much respect. They were praising God. They said, "A great prophet has come to us!" and, "God is taking care of His people."

¹⁷ This news about Jesus spread into all Judea and throughout all the places around there. ¹⁸ John's students told John about all of these things. He called for two of his students. ¹⁹ John sent them to the Lord Jesus to ask, "Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for someone else?"

²⁰ So the men came to Jesus. They said, "John (the one who immerses people) sent us to you with this question: 'Are you the one who is

coming, or should we wait for another person?"²¹ At that time Jesus healed many people of their sicknesses, diseases, and evil spirits. He gave sight to many blind people.²² Then Jesus said to John's students, "Go tell John the things you have seen and heard. Blind people can see again. Crippled people can walk. Those with leprosy are made well. The deaf can hear; dead people are given life; and the Good News is given to the poor people.²³ The person who is not ashamed of me is truly happy!"

²⁴ After John's messengers left, Jesus began to tell the crowds about John: "What did you people go out into the wilderness to see? A stalk of grass being blown by the wind?²⁵ Why did you go out there? Did you go to see a man dressed in fine clothes? The people who have fine, nice clothes live in palaces.²⁶ Really, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you – John is even more than a prophet.²⁷ This was written about John: 'Listen! I am sending my messenger to go ahead of you. He will prepare the way for you.'

²⁸ "I tell you, John is greater than any man ever born. However, the person who is the least important in God's kingdom is greater than John!"

²⁹ (All of the people and the tax collectors who heard this agreed that God's command was good; they had allowed themselves to be immersed by John.³⁰ But the Pharisees and teachers of the law refused to obey God's plan; they did not allow themselves to be immersed by John.)

³¹ Then Jesus said, "Now I will compare the people of this time to something. What are they like?³² The people of this time are like little children sitting in the marketplace, calling to each other, 'We played a happy song, but you wouldn't dance. We played a sad song, but you wouldn't cry.'³³ John (the one who immersed people) came, not eating normal food or drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!'

³⁴ I came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, he eats too much, and he drinks too much wine! He is the friend of tax collectors and other sinners!' ³⁵ True wisdom is shown to be right by all the things it does."

³⁶ One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him. Jesus went into the Pharisee's house and sat down at the table.³⁷ At that time there was a sinful woman in town. She knew that Jesus was having dinner at the Pharisee's house; so the woman brought some expensive perfume.³⁸

She stood crying at Jesus' feet. Then she began to wash his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. She kissed his feet again and again and rubbed them with perfume.

³⁹ The Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this. He thought to himself, "If Jesus really were a prophet, he would know that the woman who is touching him is a sinner!" ⁴⁰ Then Jesus said to the Pharisee, "Simon, I have something to say to you." Simon said, "Say it, teacher." ⁴¹ Jesus said, "There were two men. Both men owed money to the same moneylender. One man owed him 500 silver coins. The other man owed him 50 silver coins. ⁴² The men didn't have any money to pay back the moneylender. So the moneylender told the men that they didn't have to pay him. Which one of them will want to give himself to the moneylender, for his good, expecting nothing more from him?" ⁴³ Simon answered, "I think it would be the one who owed him the most money." Jesus said to him, "You are correct."

⁴⁴ Then Jesus turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? When I came into your house, you provided me with no water for my feet, but she washed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You didn't give me the kiss of friendship, but she has not stopped kissing my feet since I came in! ⁴⁶ You did not rub my head with oil, but she rubbed my feet with perfume. ⁴⁷ Because of her great giving to me, for my good, expecting nothing in return — I tell you, her many sins are forgiven. The person who has only a little need to be forgiven will only give himself a little to others, for their good, expecting nothing in return, when he is forgiven." ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹ The guests at the table began to think to themselves, "Who does Jesus think he is? How can he forgive sins?" ⁵⁰ Jesus said to the woman, "Because you believed, you are forgiven. Go in peace."

Chapter 8

⁰¹ Later, Jesus was traveling through each town and village. He was preaching and telling the Good News about God's kingdom. The twelve delegates were with him. ⁰² There were also some women with him. Jesus had healed these women of evil spirits and sicknesses. One of the women was Mary from a town called Magdala. Seven demons had come out of her. ⁰³ Also, there were: Joanna, the wife of Chuza (Herod Antipas' business manager), Suzanna, and other women. These women used their own money to help Jesus and his delegates.

⁰⁴ Many people came together. People came to Jesus from every town. He gave the people this example: ⁰⁵ "A farmer went out to plant his seed. While he was planting, some seeds fell along the road. People walked on the seeds, and the wild birds ate them up. ⁰⁶ Some seeds fell on rocky soil. They began to grow, but they died because they did not have any water. ⁰⁷ Some other seeds fell among thorny weeds. They grew, but the weeds choked them off later. ⁰⁸ And some seeds fell on good soil. They grew and produced fruit a hundred times more." After saying these things, Jesus called out, "The person who has an ear to hear with should use it."

⁰⁹ Jesus' students asked him, "What does this story mean?" ¹⁰ And Jesus said, "You have been chosen to know the secrets of the kingdom of God. However, these secrets are given to other people in stories so that 'They will see, but they won't understand! They will hear, but they won't understand!'

¹¹ "This is what the story means – 'The seed is God's message. ¹² Those along the road are the people who hear, but then the devil comes and takes away the message from their hearts so that those people cannot believe it and be saved. ¹³ The seeds which fell on rocky soil are like the people who hear the message and accept it gladly, but they do not have deep roots. They believe for a while but, in time, temptation comes and they turn away from God. ¹⁴ The seeds which fell among the thorny weeds are like the people who heard God's message, but they are gradually choked by the worries, riches, and pleasures of life. They never produce fruit. ¹⁵ But the seeds which fell on good soil are like the people who, when they listen to the message with a good, honest heart, obey it and patiently produce fruit.'

¹⁶ "No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a basket or hides it underneath a bed. Instead, he puts the lamp on a table so that the

people who come in will have enough light to see by. ¹⁷ Everything which is hidden will become clear. Every secret thing will be made known. ¹⁸ So be careful how you listen, because the person who has something will get more. But this will happen to the person who has almost nothing: even what he thinks he has will be taken away from him!"

¹⁹ Jesus' mother and brothers came to visit him. They could not get to him because there were so many people. ²⁰ Someone told Jesus, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside. They want to see you." ²¹ Jesus answered them, "My mother and my brothers are those people who listen to God's message and obey it!"

²² One day Jesus and his students climbed into a boat. He said to them, "Let us go across the lake." And so they sailed. ²³ While they were sailing, Jesus was asleep. Then a big storm blew down on the lake. The boat began to fill with water. They were in danger. ²⁴ The students went to Jesus and woke him. They said, "Master! Master! We are going to drown!" Jesus woke up and gave an order to the wind and the waves. Everything stopped; the lake became calm. ²⁵ He asked his students, "Where is your faith?" The students were afraid and amazed. They asked each other, "What kind of man is this? Even wind and water obey him!"

²⁶ Jesus and his students sailed across the lake from the Galilee. They reached the land where the Gerasene people lived. ²⁷ When Jesus went ashore, a man from the town met him. This man was full of demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes. He was living in the tombs, not in a house. ²⁸⁻²⁹ He had often been taken, put in jail, and tied with chains and shackles, but the man would always break the bonds and the demon inside him would force him to go out to the desert places. Then Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of this man. The man fell before Jesus and shouted, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Please, don't punish me!" ³⁰ Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion" (because many demons had gone into him). ³¹ The demons begged Jesus not to order them into the bottomless pit.

³² On that hill there was a large herd of pigs feeding. The demons begged Jesus to allow them to go into the pigs; so Jesus let them. ³³ Then the demons came out of the man and went into the pigs. The herd ran down the steep hill into the lake and drowned. ³⁴ Some men had been taking care of the pigs.

When they saw what happened, they ran away. They told the story in the fields and in the town. ³⁵ People went out to see what had occurred. They came to Jesus and found the man sitting there at Jesus' feet. The man had clothes on and he was in his right mind – the demons were gone. The people became afraid. ³⁶ The men who saw these things happen told the other people all about how Jesus had healed the man with demons. ³⁷ All the people of the surrounding Gerasene area asked Jesus to go away from them. They were all very frightened. So he climbed into a boat and went back to the Galilee. ³⁸ The demon-free man begged to stay with Jesus. But Jesus sent the man away, saying, ³⁹ "Go back home and tell what God did for you." So the man went all over town telling what Jesus had done for him.

⁴⁰ When Jesus returned to the Galilee, a crowd of people welcomed him. Everyone was waiting for him. ⁴¹ A man named Jairus came too. He was a ruler of the house of worship. He bowed down at Jesus' feet and kept begging him to come to his house. ⁴² Jairus had only one daughter. She was twelve years old, and she was dying. While Jesus was going to Jairus' house, the crowds were pressing in upon him.

⁴³ There was a woman who had a sore which had been bleeding for twelve years. She had spent all of her money on doctors but no one was able to heal her. ⁴⁴ She went behind Jesus and touched the tassel of his robe. At that moment her bleeding stopped. ⁴⁵ Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" Everyone denied touching Jesus. Peter said, "Teacher, the people are all around you and they are pressing against you." ⁴⁶ But Jesus said, "Someone did touch me! I felt it when power left me." ⁴⁷ When the woman saw that she could not hide, she came forward trembling. She bowed down before Jesus. While all the people listened, she told why she touched Jesus and how she was healed immediately. ⁴⁸ Jesus said to her, "Dear woman, you are made well because you believed. Go in peace."

⁴⁹ While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of the worship ruler and said, "Your daughter has just died! Don't bother the Teacher anymore." ⁵⁰ When Jesus heard this, he said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid! Just believe and your daughter will be well again." ⁵¹ Jesus came to the house. He allowed only Peter, John, Jacob, and the girl's father and mother to go with him. He did not allow anyone else inside. ⁵² Everyone was crying and showing great sadness because of the girl. But Jesus said, "Stop crying, because she is not dead; she is only sleeping!" ⁵³ They laughed at Jesus because they knew that the girl was dead. ⁵⁴ But Jesus took hold of her hand and called to her, "Little girl, get up!" ⁵⁵ Her

spirit came back into her and she stood up immediately. Jesus said, "Give her something to eat." ⁵⁶ The girl's parents were amazed. Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about what had occurred.

Chapter 9

⁰¹ Jesus called the twelve delegates together. He gave them authority over all demons and power to heal sicknesses. ⁰² Jesus sent them to preach about God's kingdom and to heal sick people. ⁰³ He said to them, "When you travel, don't carry a walking staff. Also, don't carry a bag, food, or money. Don't even bring an extra set of clothes. ⁰⁴ When you go into a house, stay there until it is time to leave that town. ⁰⁵ If the people there won't welcome you, go outside the town and shake off the dust from your feet. This will be a warning to them."

⁰⁶ So the delegates went out, traveling through each village. They told the Good News and healed people everywhere. ⁰⁷ Herod Antipas, the ruler, heard about all these things which were happening. He was confused, because some people said, "John has come back to life!" ⁰⁸ Others said, "Elijah has appeared!" And some others said, "One of the prophets from long ago has risen from death." ⁰⁹ Herod said, "I cut off John's head. So who is this man I hear such things about?" Herod kept trying to see Jesus.

¹⁰ The delegates came back. They told Jesus what they had done on their trip. Then Jesus took them away to a town called Bethsaida where they could be all alone. ¹¹ But the crowds found out where Jesus had gone and they followed him. Jesus welcomed them and began to talk with them about God's kingdom. He healed the people who were sick.

¹² Late in the afternoon the twelve delegates came to Jesus and said, "No one lives here. Send the people away. They need to find food and places to sleep in the farms and small towns around here." ¹³ But Jesus said to them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish. Do you want us to go buy some food for all these people?" ¹⁴ (There were about 5,000 men there.) Jesus said to his students, "Have them sit down in groups of about 50." ¹⁵ So the students did this and all the people sat down. ¹⁶ Then Jesus took the five loaves of bread and two fish. He looked up to heaven. Jesus thanked God for the food and divided it. Then he began giving the food to the students. The students gave it to the crowd. ¹⁷ Everyone ate and was satisfied. They gathered up all the pieces of food which were left over. They filled twelve large baskets with them.

¹⁸ One time when Jesus was all alone praying, his students came together. Jesus asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" ¹⁹ The students answered, "Some people say you are John (the one who

immersed people). Others say you are Elijah. And some people say you are one of the prophets from long ago who has come back to life." ²⁰ Then Jesus said to his students, "But who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are God's Messiah."

²¹ Jesus warned them not to tell this to anyone. Then Jesus said, ²² "I must suffer many things. I will be rejected by the Jewish elders, the most important priests, and the teachers of the law. I will be killed. However, after three days I will be raised from death."

²³ Jesus kept saying to all of them, "If anyone wants to follow me, he must carry his cross every day. He must say no to himself, and follow me. ²⁴ The person who wants to save his life will lose it, but every person who gives his life to others for me will save it. ²⁵ What good is it if a person gets the whole world but loses or wrecks his own life? ²⁶ If a person is ashamed of me or my words, then I will be ashamed of him when I come with my glory and the glory of my Father and the holy angels. ²⁷ I am telling you the truth: there are some people standing here who will see the kingdom of God before they die!"

²⁸ After saying these things, about eight days later, Jesus took Peter, Jacob, and John and went up on top of a mountain to pray. ²⁹ While Jesus was praying, his appearance began to change. His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. ³⁰ Suddenly, two men were talking with Jesus. They were Moses and Elijah. ³¹ Moses and Elijah were shining brightly too. They were talking with Jesus about his death which was about to be fulfilled in Jerusalem. ³² Peter and the others were deep in sleep but they woke up and saw the glory of Jesus. They also saw the two men who were standing with Jesus.

³³ As Moses and Elijah were about to leave, Peter said, "Teacher, it is good that we are here. We will set up three holy tents — one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (Peter didn't know what he was saying.)

³⁴ While Peter was saying these things, a cloud came all around them. Peter, Jacob, and John became afraid when the cloud covered them. ³⁵ A Voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is My Son; he is My chosen one. Listen to what he says!" ³⁶ When the Voice finished, only Jesus was there. Peter, Jacob, and John said nothing. At that time they told no one about what they had seen.

³⁷ The next day they came down from the mountain. A large group of people met Jesus. ³⁸ A man from the crowd cried out to Jesus, "Teacher, please come and look at my son. He is the only child I have. ³⁹ An evil spirit gets hold of my son and suddenly he shouts. He loses control of himself and he foams at the mouth. It hurts him and it will almost never leave him. ⁴⁰ I begged your students to make it leave him, but they were not able to do this." ⁴¹ Jesus answered, "You people are a generation with no faith. You are disobedient. How long must I be with you and put up with you?" Then Jesus said to the man, "Bring your son here." ⁴² While the boy was coming, the demon threw him on the ground. The boy lost control of himself. Jesus gave a command to the evil spirit and healed the boy. Then Jesus gave him back to his father.

⁴³ All of the people were shocked at the great power of God. The people were still amazed about all of the things which Jesus was doing. Jesus said to his students, ⁴⁴ "Remember these words: I am about to be handed over to some men." ⁴⁵ But the students did not know what Jesus meant. The meaning was hidden from them so that they couldn't understand it, but they were afraid to ask Jesus about what he had said.

⁴⁶ The delegates began to have an argument about which one of them was the most important. ⁴⁷ Jesus understood what the argument was about. He knew what was in their hearts. So he took a little child and stood the child beside him. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to them, "The person who welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me. And when a person welcomes me, this person welcomes the One who sent me. The one who is the most humble among you is the most important person."

⁴⁹ John answered, "Teacher, we saw someone who was casting demons out by using your name. We kept telling him to stop because he is not one of your students as we are." ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Don't stop him, because if someone is not against you — he is for you."

⁵¹ The time was coming near when Jesus would leave and go back up to heaven. He traveled toward Jerusalem. ⁵² Jesus sent some men ahead of him. The men went into a village in Samaria to make everything ready for Jesus. ⁵³ But the people there would not welcome him because he was heading toward Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ Jacob and John, the students of Jesus, saw this. They asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven and burn up these people as Elijah did?" ⁵⁵ But Jesus turned and reprimanded them. Jesus answered, "You don't know what kind of spirit that you have. The Son of Man did not come to destroy the souls of men, but to save them." ⁵⁶ They all went to another village.

⁵⁷ As they were all traveling along the road, someone said to Jesus, "I will follow you wherever you go!" ⁵⁸ Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes to live in. The wild birds have nests. I have no place where I may rest my head." ⁵⁹ Jesus said to another man, "Follow me!" But the man answered, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ⁶⁰ But Jesus said to him, "Let the 'dead' bury their own dead! You must go and tell about the kingdom of God." ⁶¹ Another man said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me go and say goodbye to my family." ⁶² Jesus said, "If anyone begins to plow a field but then looks back, he is not qualified for the kingdom of God."

Chapter 10

⁰¹ After this, the Lord Jesus chose 72 more men. He sent the men out in pairs ahead of him into every town and place where he was planning to go. ⁰² Jesus said to them, "The harvest is great but there are not many workers. Pray that the Owner of the harvest will send more workers out into the harvest field. ⁰³ So you may go now. But listen, I am sending you like lambs into a pack of wolves. ⁰⁴ Don't carry a pack, a bag, or extra shoes. Don't stop to talk with people along the road. ⁰⁵ Before you go into a house, say, 'Peace be to this home.' ⁰⁶ If a peaceful man lives there, your blessing of peace will stay upon him. However, if he is not peaceful, then your blessing of peace will come back upon you. ⁰⁷ Stay in the peaceful house. Eat and drink what the people there give you. A worker should be given his pay. Don't move from that house to stay in another house. ⁰⁸ If you go into a town and the people welcome you, eat what they give you.

⁰⁹ "Heal the sick people who live there. Then tell them: 'The kingdom of God is very near to you!' ¹⁰ But if you go into a town and the people don't welcome you, then go out into the streets of that town and say: ¹¹ 'Even the dust from your town which sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. But know this: the kingdom of God is very near!' ¹² I tell you, on the Judgment Day, God will punish the people of that town more than He will punish the people of Sodom!

¹³ "How horrible it will be for you, O town of Chorazin! How horrible it will be for you, Bethsaida! Many miracles have occurred in you. If these same miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon, then those people in Tyre and Sidon would have changed their hearts and actions long ago. ¹⁴ But on the Judgment Day, God will punish you more than the people of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁵ And you, Capernaum, do you think you will be lifted up to heaven? You will be thrown down to Hades! ¹⁶ When a person listens to what you say, he is really listening to me. When a person rejects you, I am the one he is rejecting. When a person rejects me, he is actually rejecting the One who sent me."

¹⁷ When the 72 men returned, they were very happy. They said, "Lord, when we used your name, even the demons obeyed us!" ¹⁸ Jesus said to them, "I was watching Satan fall, as lightning falls from the sky. ¹⁹ Listen! I have given you the authority to walk on dangerous snakes and scorpions — even more power than the enemy has. Nothing will ever hurt you! ²⁰ The evil spirits obey you. This is true, but don't be happy

for that reason. Instead, be happy because your names are written in heaven."

²¹ In that hour the Holy Spirit made Jesus rejoice. Jesus said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I praise You because You have hidden these teachings from the 'wise' and 'intelligent' people, yet You reveal Your teachings to little children. Yes, Father, I praise You because this is what You really wanted to do.

²² "My Father has given me all things. Only the Father knows who the Son is. And only the Son knows who the Father is. The only people who will know about the Father are those whom the Son chooses to tell."

²³ Then Jesus turned to his students who were there alone with him. Jesus said, "You are very blessed to see what you now see! ²⁴ I tell you, many prophets and kings wanted to see what you now see. And many prophets and kings wanted to hear what you now hear but they didn't." ²⁵ Then a teacher of the law stood up. (He was trying to test Jesus.) He asked Jesus, "Teacher, what must I do to get eternal life?" ²⁶ Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" ²⁷ The man answered, "You must give yourself to the Lord your God, for His good, expecting nothing in return, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind.' Also, 'You must give yourself to your neighbor, for his good, expecting nothing in return, the same way you do to yourself.'" ²⁸ Jesus said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this and you will have life forever." ²⁹ But the man wanted to make himself look good. So he said to Jesus, "But ... who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Jesus understood what the man meant. So Jesus said, "A man was going down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Some bandits surrounded him. They tore off his clothes and beat him up. Then they left him lying there on the ground. He was almost dead. ³¹ By chance, a Jewish priest was going down that same road. When the priest saw the man, he just walked away. ³² Next, a Levite came to the spot too. The Levite saw him but he went around him; he also walked away. ³³ A Samaritan man was traveling down the road. He came to the place where the man was lying. When he saw the man, he felt sorry for him. ³⁴ The Samaritan went to him and poured olive oil and wine on his wounds. Then he bandaged the man's wounds.

"The Samaritan had a donkey. He put the man on his donkey and took him to an inn where he took care of him. ³⁵ The next day the Samaritan brought out two silver coins and gave them to the person who worked

at the inn. The Samaritan said, 'Take care of this man. If you spend any more money on him than this, I'll pay you back when I return.'

³⁶ Then Jesus said, "Which one of these three men do you think was a real neighbor to the one who was hurt by the thieves?" ³⁷ The teacher of the law answered, "The one who showed mercy to him." Jesus said to him, "Then you go and do the same thing!"

³⁸ While Jesus and his students were traveling, Jesus went into a village. A woman named Martha welcomed him. ³⁹ Martha had a sister named Mary. Mary was sitting at Jesus' feet and listening to his message but her sister Martha was doing the housework. ⁴⁰ Martha became angry because she had so much work to do. She went in and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me alone to do all the housework? Tell her to help me!" ⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are getting worried and upset about too many things. ⁴² Only one thing is important. Mary has made the right choice; and this will never be taken away from her."

Chapter 11

⁰¹ One time Jesus was somewhere praying. When he stopped, one of his students said to him, "John taught his students how to pray. Lord, please teach us how to pray too."

⁰² Jesus said to them, "When you pray, pray like this: 'Our Father who is in heaven, may Your name always be kept holy. May Your kingdom come. May Your will be done in earth as in heaven. ⁰³ Give us the food we need each day. ⁰⁴ Forgive us of the sins we have committed because we, too, forgive everyone who has done wrong to us. And don't lead us into temptation, but rescue us from evil.'"

⁰⁵⁻⁰⁶ Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose one of you went to your friend's house in the middle of the night and said to him, 'A friend of mine has come into town to visit me but I have nothing for him to eat. Please give me three loaves of bread.' ⁰⁷ Your friend inside the house answers, 'Go away! Don't bother me! The door is already locked. My children and I are in bed. I cannot get up and give it to you.' ⁰⁸ I tell you, perhaps friendship is not enough to make him get up to give you the bread. However, he will surely get up to give you what you need because you are not ashamed to continue asking. ⁰⁹ So I tell you, continue asking and it will be given to you. Keep searching and you will find. Knock and the door will open for you. ¹⁰ You will receive if you will always ask. You will find if you keep looking. And the door will open for you if you continue knocking.

¹¹ "Do any of you have a son? What would you do if your son asked you for a fish? Would any father give his son a snake? No, you would give him a fish. ¹² Or if your son asks for an egg, would you give him a scorpion? ¹³ You are evil men, yet you know how to give good gifts to your children. Surely your heavenly Father knows how to give the Holy Spirit to those people who ask Him."

¹⁴ One time Jesus was casting a demon out of a man who couldn't talk. When the demon came out, the man was able to speak. The crowds were amazed. ¹⁵ But some of the people said, "Jesus throws demons out by using the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of demons." ¹⁶ Other people were trying to make Jesus prove that he came from God.

¹⁷ But Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said to them, "Every kingdom which is divided against itself will be ruined. And a family that does not work together will break apart. ¹⁸ So if Satan is fighting

against himself, then he is divided. How could his kingdom stay together? You claim that I throw out demons by using the power of Beelzebub; ¹⁹ but if I cast out demons by using the power of Beelzebub, than by whose power do your own sons cast them out? Because of this, your own people prove you are wrong. ²⁰ However, if it is true that I use the finger of God to cast out demons, then God's kingdom has come upon you!

21 "When a strong man guards his own house with many weapons, his house is safe. **22** But suppose a stronger man comes and defeats him. The stronger man will take away the weapons in which the first man had trusted to keep his house safe. Then the stronger man will keep the things he wants. **23** If a person is not with me, he is against me. The person, who does not work with me, scatters.

²⁴ "When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through dry places looking for a place to rest. If the spirit does not find a place, it says, 'I will go back to the house from which I came.' ²⁵ And so it goes and finds that house cleaned up and orderly. ²⁶ Then the evil spirit goes and brings seven other spirits worse than itself. They go into that man and live there. And that man has even more trouble than he had before."

²⁷ When Jesus said these things, a woman from the crowd spoke up, "Your mother, who gave birth to you and nursed you, must be very happy!" ²⁸ But Jesus said, "The people who hear the message of God and keep it are the ones who are truly happy!"

²⁹ The group of people grew larger and larger. Jesus said, "The people living today are evil. They ask for proof from God but no proof will be given to them except the Jonah miracle. ³⁰ Jonah's coming was a warning to those people who lived in the city of Nineveh. It is the same with me. I am the warning to the people of this time.

³¹ "The Queen of Sheba will rise up on the Judgment Day with the men of this time and she will condemn them. Why? Because she came a very long way to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, yet I am greater than Solomon! ³² On the Judgment Day the men from the city of Nineveh will condemn the people of this time because when Jonah preached to them, they changed their hearts. I am greater than Jonah!

³³ "No one puts a light under a basket and hides it. Instead, a person puts the light on the table so that everyone who comes in may see. ³⁴ Your eye is like a lamp for the body. When your eye sees clearly, the

whole body is made bright. However, if your eye is dark with sin, then your whole body is dark. ³⁵ So be careful! Don't let the light in you become dark. ³⁶ If your whole body is bright, and none of it is dark, then you will shine brightly as lightning does."

³⁷ While Jesus spoke, a Pharisee asked Jesus to eat with him. So Jesus came and sat at the table. ³⁸ But the Pharisee was surprised when he saw that Jesus didn't wash his hands before the meal. ³⁹ The Lord Jesus said to him, "You Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are greedy and full of evil. ⁴⁰ You are foolish! The same One who made the outside of you also made the inside. ⁴¹ The next time you give to the poor people, give yourself (heart) too. Then you will be completely clean.

⁴² "But it will be horrible for you, you Pharisees! It is true that you give God ten percent of everything you have. You even give Him ten percent of all the little plants in your gardens – mint, rue, or other seasoning herbs, but you forget to give to Him, for His good, expecting nothing in return, and you forget to be fair to other people. You should always tithe, but you must remember to do the more important things too.

⁴³ "It will be horrible for you, you Pharisees, because you give yourselves to things, to have the most important seats in the houses of worship. You give yourselves to feelings, to have the respect that people give you in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴ It will be horrible for you because you are like hidden graves. People walk on them without knowing it."

⁴⁵ One of the teachers of the law said to Jesus, "Teacher, when you say these things about the Pharisees, you are insulting our group too."

⁴⁶ Jesus answered, "It will be horrible for you too, you teachers of the law! You put heavy loads on people which are hard for them to carry, but you yourselves don't even begin to help people carry those loads. ⁴⁷ It will be horrible for you because you build tombs for the prophets, but these are the same prophets whom your ancestors killed! ⁴⁸ And now you show everyone that you agree with what your fathers did. They killed the prophets, and you build tombs for the prophets!

⁴⁹ "This is why the wisdom of God said, 'I will send prophets and delegates to them. Some of my prophets and delegates will be killed by evil men. Others will be hunted down.' ⁵⁰ But you people will have to answer for the deaths of all the prophets who were killed since the beginning of the world. ⁵¹ You will have to answer for everything from

the murder of Abel to the murder of Zechariah. (Zechariah was killed between the altar and the temple.) ⁵² It will be horrible for you, you teachers of the law! You have hidden the key to learning about God. You yourselves would not learn and you also stopped others from learning."

⁵³ As Jesus was leaving, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees began to give him a lot of trouble. They asked Jesus questions about many things. ⁵⁴ They hoped that Jesus would say something wrong. They were trying to trap him with something that he might say.

Chapter 12

⁰¹ Many thousands of people came together. There were so many people that they were stepping on each other. Before Jesus began to speak to the people, he said to his students, "Be careful of the yeast of the Pharisees – they act as if they are good men, but they are not. ⁰² Everything which is hidden will be found out, and everything that is secret will be made known. ⁰³ The things you say in the dark will be heard in the light. The things you whisper in secret rooms will be proclaimed from the tops of houses."

⁰⁴ "I tell you, my children, don't be afraid of people. People can kill the body but, after that, they can do nothing more to hurt you. ⁰⁵ I will show you the One for whom to have awesome respect. You should have awesome respect for God who has authority over you to throw you into hell after you die. Yes, I tell you, He is the One you should have awesome respect for. ⁰⁶ Five sparrows are sold for only a few small coins, but God doesn't forget about any of them. ⁰⁷ Yes, God even knows how many hairs you have on your head. Don't be afraid. You are worth much more than many sparrows.

⁰⁸ "I tell you, if anyone says he believes in me in front of other people, then I will speak for him in front of the angels of God. ⁰⁹ But if anyone denies me in front of people, then I will deny him in front of the angels of God. ¹⁰ If a person says something against me, he may be forgiven. However, a person who says evil things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

¹¹ "When people bring you into the houses of worship before the leaders and other men with authority, don't worry about how you will answer their questions. Don't worry about what you will say. ¹² At that time the Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say."

¹³ One of the men in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to share my father's money with me!" ¹⁴ But Jesus said to him, "Sir, no one chose me to be a judge between you two." ¹⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "Be careful and guard against all kinds of greed. A person's life is not measured by the things he owns."

¹⁶ Then Jesus used this example: "There was a rich man who had some land which grew a very good crop. ¹⁷ The rich man was thinking to himself, 'What will I do? I have no place in which to keep all my crops.'
¹⁸ Then the rich man said, 'I know what I will do. I will tear down my

barns and build bigger ones! I will put together all of my wheat and good things in my new barns. ¹⁹ Then I can say to myself, "I have many good things stored. I have saved enough for many years. Relax, eat, drink, celebrate!"'

²⁰ But God said to that man, 'Foolish man! Tonight you will die. So what about the things you prepared? Who will own those things now?'

²¹ "This is how it will be for the one who saves things only for himself. To God he is not rich." ²² Jesus said to his students, "I say this to you because you shouldn't worry about what you will eat to stay alive. You shouldn't worry about what clothes you will wear. ²³ You shouldn't worry, because life is more important than food. The body is more important than clothes.

²⁴ "Notice the birds: they don't plant seeds or harvest them. Birds do not store their food in barns, yet God takes care of them. And you are worth so much more than birds. ²⁵ None of you can grow a half meter taller by worrying about it. ²⁶ If you cannot do a little thing like that, then why worry about the big things? ²⁷ Notice how the wild flowers grow. They don't work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you, even Solomon, with all his beautiful clothes, was not dressed as well as one of these flowers. ²⁸ Why do you have so little faith? Look at how well God clothes the grass in the fields, but the grass is here today and thrown into the oven tomorrow to be burned. Wouldn't God dress you so much better? You are much more important than the grass in the fields. Don't have so little faith!

²⁹ "So don't be wondering or worrying about what you will eat or what you will drink. ³⁰ People without God put all these things first but your heavenly Father knows you need these things. ³¹ So put His kingdom first and all of the things you need will be given to you.

³² "Don't be afraid, little flock, your heavenly Father wants to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell the things you have and give that money to people who need it. Money does not last so don't trust in it. Let your riches be the treasure which is in heaven where it will never be stolen or destroyed. ³⁴ The place where your treasure is will also be the place where your heart is.

³⁵ "Be ready; be completely dressed and have your lights on. ³⁶ Be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from a wedding party. The master comes and knocks. The slaves open the door for the

master. ³⁷ Those slaves will be blessed when their master comes home because he sees that his slaves are ready for him. I am telling you the truth: the master will dress for work and tell the slaves to sit at the table. Then the master will come and serve them. ³⁸ Those slaves might have to wait all night long for their master, but they will be happy when their master comes in and finds them still waiting.

³⁹ "Pay attention to this: suppose a man has a house. If the man knew the exact time a thief would come to rob him, the man would not allow the thief to break into his house.

⁴⁰ So be ready! I will come at a time when you don't expect me!"

⁴¹ Peter said, "Lord, did you give this example for us or for everyone?" ⁴² The Lord Jesus said, "Well, who is the wise and trusted servant? Who is the servant whom the master can choose to take care of the master's family and the other servants, to give out the proper amount of food at the right time? ⁴³ When the master comes and finds him doing the work he gave him, that slave will be very happy. ⁴⁴ I am telling the truth: the master will choose him to take care of everything the master owns.

⁴⁵ "But if that slave thinks that his master will not come back soon, then he will begin to beat the other slaves, both men and women. He will also eat too much and get drunk. ⁴⁶ Then the master of that slave will come when he is not ready, at a time when he is not expecting the master. Then the master will punish him and send him away. This is what the master does to all of the slaves he cannot trust. ⁴⁷ That slave knew what his master wanted him to do but he didn't try to do it. So he will be punished with a hard whipping! ⁴⁸ What about the slave who didn't know what his master wanted? Although the slave did things which deserve punishment, he will get less punishment. Any person who has been given much will be responsible for much. Much more will be expected from the person who has been given more.

⁴⁹ "I came to set the world on fire; I wish it were already burning! ⁵⁰ I must be immersed with one more immersion; how hard pressed I feel until it is finished! ⁵¹ Do you think I came to bring peace to the world? No! I came to divide the world! ⁵² From now on a family with five people will be divided, three against two, and two against three. ⁵³ A father and son will be divided: the son will be against his father; the father will be against his son. A mother and her daughter will be divided: the daughter will be against her mother; the mother will be against her daughter. A mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law will be

divided: the daughter-in-law will be against her mother-in-law; the mother-in-law will be against her daughter-in-law."

⁵⁴ Then Jesus said to the crowds, "When you see clouds in the west growing bigger, immediately you say, 'A rainstorm is coming.' And soon it starts to rain. ⁵⁵ When you feel the wind begin to blow from the south, you say, 'It will be a hot day.' And it happens. ⁵⁶ You hypocrites! You can understand the weather but you don't know the importance of what is happening now. ⁵⁷ Can't you decide for yourselves what is right?"

⁵⁸ "When a person is suing you, and you are going with him to court, try hard to settle it on the way to court. If you don't, then he may take you to the judge, and the judge will throw you in jail. ⁵⁹ And you will never get out of there until they have taken everything you have."

Chapter 13

⁰¹ At that time some people came to Jesus. They told Jesus about what had happened to some people from the Galilee: Pilate had killed those people while they were worshipping, mixing their own blood with the blood of the animals that they were sacrificing. ⁰² Jesus answered, "Do you think this happened to those Galileans because they were more sinful than all others from the Galilee? ⁰³ No, they were not! However, I am telling you, if all of you don't change your hearts, then you will be destroyed as they were! ⁰⁴ What about those 18 people who died when the tower of Siloam fell on them? Do you think those people were more sinful than all others who live in Jerusalem? ⁰⁵ They were not! But I tell you, if all of you don't change your hearts, then you will be destroyed too!"

⁰⁶ Jesus gave this example: "A man had a fig tree. He planted the tree in his field. The man came looking for some fruit on the tree but he found none. ⁰⁷ So the man said to his servant who took care of the field, 'Listen, I have been looking for fruit on this fig tree for three years but I never find any. Chop it down! Why should it waste the ground?' ⁰⁸ But the servant answered, 'Master, let the tree have one more year to produce fruit. Let me dig up the dirt around it and put on some fertilizer. ⁰⁹ Perhaps the tree will yield fruit next year. If it still does not produce, then you can chop it down.'"

¹⁰ Jesus was teaching in one of the houses of worship on the Sabbath day. ¹¹ In that house of worship there was a woman who had a spirit that made her sick for 18 years. Her back was always bent; she couldn't stand up straight. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called to her, "Woman, your sickness has left you!" ¹³ Jesus put his hands on her. Immediately she was able to stand upright. She began to praise God.

¹⁴ The house of worship leader was angry because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day. The leader began to say to the crowds, "There are six days for work, so come to be healed on one of those days. Do not come for healing on the Sabbath day!" ¹⁵ The Lord Jesus answered, "You hypocrites! All of you untie your ox or your donkey from the stall and lead them to drink water every day — even on the Sabbath day! ¹⁶ This woman whom I healed is our Jewish sister but Satan has held her for 18 years. Why can't she be untied from her sickness on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷ When Jesus said this, all the people who were opposing him felt ashamed of themselves. The whole crowd was happy. They were thanking God for the wonderful things Jesus was doing.

¹⁸ Then Jesus said, "What is God's kingdom like? With what can I compare it? ¹⁹ God's kingdom is like the seed of the mustard plant. A person plants this seed in his garden. The seed grows and becomes a large tree. The wild birds build nests among its branches."

²⁰ Again Jesus said, "With what can I compare God's kingdom? ²¹ It is like yeast which a woman puts into a tub of flour to make the bread rise."

²² Jesus was teaching in every town and village. He continued to travel toward Jerusalem. ²³ Someone asked Jesus, "Lord, how many people will be saved? Only a few?" Jesus said, ²⁴ "Try hard to get through the narrow door! I tell you, many people will try to get in, but most of them won't be strong enough to enter. ²⁵ If a man locks the door of his house, then you can stand outside and knock on the door but he won't open it. You can say, 'Master! Open the door for us!' But the man will answer, 'I don't know where you come from!' ²⁶ Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank with you. You taught in the streets of our town.' ²⁷ Then he will say to you, 'Where do you come from? I don't know you. Go away from me! All of you are troublemakers!' ²⁸ You will see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all of the prophets in God's kingdom, but you won't be allowed to come in. Then you will scream and grind your teeth. ²⁹ People will come from the east, west, north, and south. They will sit down at the table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ Those who seem as though they are not important now will be important at that time. Those who seem important now will not be important then."

³¹ At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said, "Go away from here and hide! Herod Antipas wants to kill you!" ³² Jesus said to them, "Go tell that fox: 'Listen, today and tomorrow I am throwing out demons and finishing my work of healing. Then the next day the work will be finished. ³³ I must keep going today, tomorrow, and the next day for all prophets should die in Jerusalem.'

³⁴ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You killed the prophets. God sent you His men but you stoned them to death. I have often wanted to gather up your people like a hen gathers her baby chicks under her wings, but you wouldn't let me. ³⁵ Listen! Your house is completely empty. I tell you, you will never see me again until you say, 'Praise be to the one who is coming with the authority of the Lord God.'"

Chapter 14

⁰¹ During a Sabbath day Jesus went to the home of an important Pharisee to eat with him. The Pharisees were all watching Jesus very closely. ⁰² A man had a swelling disease. He was put before Jesus. ⁰³ Jesus asked the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, "Is it right or wrong to heal on the Sabbath day?" ⁰⁴ But they kept quiet. So Jesus took the man and healed him. Then he sent the man away. ⁰⁵ Jesus said to them, "If your son or ox falls into a well on the Sabbath day, you know that you would quickly pull him out." ⁰⁶ The Pharisees and teachers of the law were not able to say anything against what Jesus said.

⁰⁷ Then Jesus noticed that some of the guests were choosing the best places to sit. So Jesus gave this example: ⁰⁸ "When a person invites you to a wedding, don't sit in the most important seat. He may have invited someone more important than you. ⁰⁹ If you do sit in the most important seat, then the one who invited you may come to you and say, 'Give this man your seat!' Then you will start to move down to the last place. And you will be very embarrassed. ¹⁰ Instead, when a person invites you, go sit in the seat which is least important. The one who invited you will come to you and say, 'Friend, move up here to a more important seat!' Then all of the other guests will respect you. ¹¹ Every person who acts as if he is important will be made ashamed, but every person who truly humbles himself will be made important."

¹² Then Jesus said to the Pharisee who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, don't invite only your friends, brothers, relatives, and rich neighbors. They will just invite you back to eat with them. Then you will have your reward. ¹³ Instead, when you give a party, invite the poor people, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴ Then you will be happy because these people cannot pay you back. They have nothing. However, you will be rewarded when those being made right rise from death."

¹⁵ One of the men at the table with Jesus heard these things. The man said to Jesus, "A person who eats bread in God's kingdom will be very happy!" ¹⁶ Jesus said to him, "A man was giving a big dinner. He invited many people. ¹⁷ When it was time to eat, the man sent his slave to tell the guests, saying, 'Come! Dinner is ready!' ¹⁸ But all the guests said they couldn't come. Each man gave an excuse. The first man said to him, 'I have just bought a field; I must go out and see it. Please excuse me.' ¹⁹ Another man said, 'I have just bought five pair of oxen; I must go

and try them out. Please excuse me.' ²⁰ A third man said, 'I have just gotten married; I can't come.'

²¹ "So the slave returned. He told his master what had happened. Then the master became angry and said, 'Hurry! Go into the streets and alleys of the town. Bring me the poor people, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' ²² Later, the slave said to him, 'Master, I did what you told me to do, but we still have room for more people!' ²³ The master said to the slave, 'Go out to the highways and country roads. Make them come. I want my house to be full! ²⁴ I tell you, none of those men I invited first will ever eat with me!"

²⁵ Many people were traveling with Jesus. He turned around and said to them, ²⁶ "If someone comes to me, yet that person prefers his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters more than he prefers me, he cannot be my student. A person must prefer me more than he prefers himself! ²⁷ The person who does not carry his own cross cannot be my student.

²⁸ "If you wanted to build a building, you would sit down first and add up how much it would cost to see if you had enough money to finish the job. ²⁹ If you didn't do that, you might begin the work but you wouldn't be able to finish it. Then all of the people watching you would laugh at you. ³⁰ They would say, 'This man began to build but he wasn't able to finish!'

³¹ "If a king is going to fight against another king, first he will sit down and plan. If the king has only 10,000 men, he will see if he is able to defeat the other king who is opposing him with 20,000 men. ³² If he cannot defeat the other king, then he will send a group of men to ask for terms of peace from the other king while he is far away. ³³ In the same way all of you must first count the cost. You must give up everything you have for me. If you don't, you cannot be my student!

³⁴ "Salt is a good thing but if the salt loses its salty taste, then it is no good. You cannot make it salty again. ³⁵ You can't even use it for dirt or fertilizer. People just throw it away. The person who has ears to hear with should use them!"

Chapter 15

⁰¹ Tax collectors and "sinners" all came near to listen to Jesus. ⁰² Then the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to complain, "This man welcomes sinners! He even eats with them!" ⁰³ Then Jesus gave them this example: ⁰⁴ "Suppose a man has 100 sheep but he loses one of them. He will leave the other 99 sheep in the open country, and go out and look for the lost one. The man will continue to search for the lost sheep until he finds it. ⁰⁵ And when he finds the sheep, the man is very happy. The man carries it home on his shoulders. ⁰⁶ He goes to his friends and neighbors and says to them, 'Rejoice with me because I found my lost sheep!' ⁰⁷ I tell you, there is much joy in heaven when one sinner changes his heart. There is more joy for that one sinner than there is for 99 good people who don't need to change their hearts.

⁰⁸ "Suppose a woman has ten silver coins but she loses one of them. The woman gets a light and sweeps the house. She will look carefully for the coin until she finds it. ⁰⁹ And when she finds the lost coin, she will call her friends and neighbors and say to them, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found the coin which I lost!' ¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, there will be joy before the angels of God when one sinner changes his heart."

¹¹ Then Jesus said, "A man had two sons. ¹² The younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me my part of all our holdings!' So the father divided the property with his two sons. ¹³ Not long afterward the younger son gathered up all that he had and left. He traveled far away to another country. There the son wasted his money like a fool; ¹⁴ he spent everything he had. Then the land became very dry and it did not rain. There was not enough food to eat anywhere in that country. He began to starve. ¹⁵ So he went and got a job with one of the important men of that country. The man sent him into the fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ The boy was so hungry that he wanted to stuff himself with the food which the pigs were eating. No one was giving him anything.

¹⁷ "Finally, the boy realized that he had been very foolish. He thought, 'All of my father's hired servants have plenty of food; yet here I am about to die because I have nothing to eat. ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father. I will say to him: "Father, I sinned against God and in front of you. ¹⁹ I'm not worthy to be called your son anymore. Treat me as one of your paid servants.'" ²⁰ So the son got up and went to his father.

"While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. He felt sorry for his son. So the father ran to him. He hugged and kissed his

son. ²¹ The son said, 'Father, I sinned against God and in front of you. I'm not worthy to be called your son anymore.' ²² But the father said to his slaves, 'Hurry! Bring the best robe and dress him. Put a ring on his finger and good shoes on his feet too. ²³ Bring our fattened calf. We will kill it and have plenty to eat. Then we can have a party! ²⁴ My son was dead, but now he is alive again. He was lost, but now he is found!' So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ "The older son was in the field. As he came closer to the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. ²⁶ So the older son called to one of the servant boys and asked, 'What does all this mean?' ²⁷ The servant said, 'Your brother has come back. Your father killed the fattened calf for him to eat. Your father was happy because your brother came back home safely!' ²⁸ The older son was angry and wouldn't go inside to join the party so his father went out to beg him to come in. ²⁹ But the son said to his father, 'Look, I have served you like a slave for many years! I have obeyed every one of your commands but you never even killed a goat for me so that I could have a party with my friends. ³⁰ But this other son of yours has wasted all of your money on whores. Then he comes home and you kill the fattened calf for him!'

³¹ "But the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me. All that I have is yours. ³² We must be happy and celebrate, because your brother was dead but now he is alive. He was lost, but now he is found!'"

Chapter 16

⁰¹ Jesus said to his students, "Once there was a rich man who hired a manager to take care of his business. Later the rich man learned that his manager was cheating him. ⁰² So he called in the manager and said to him, 'I have heard some bad things about you. Give me a report of what you have done with my money. You're fired!' ⁰³ Later, the manager thought to himself, 'What will I do?

My master is taking my job away from me! I'm not strong enough to dig ditches, and I'm too proud to beg. ⁰⁴⁻⁰⁵ I know what I will do! I will do something so that, when I lose my job, other people will welcome me into their homes.'

"So the manager called in each person who owed the master some money. He said to the first one, 'How much do you owe my master?' ⁰⁶ The man answered, 'I owe him 100 barrels of olive oil.' The manager said to him, 'Here is your bill; hurry, sit down and change it to 50 barrels.' ⁰⁷ Then the manager said to another man, 'How much do you owe my master?' The man answered, 'I owe him 1,000 bushels of wheat.' Then the manager said to him, 'Here is your bill; change it to 800 bushels.' ⁰⁸ The master learned about this later. The master thought the dishonest manager had done a shrewd thing. Worldly people use their knowledge about worldly things better than spiritual people do.

⁰⁹ "I ask you, should you make friends for yourselves with dishonest money? When the money is all gone, can they welcome you into homes which last forever? ¹⁰ I tell you, if a person can be trusted with small things, he may also be trusted with big things. If a person is dishonest in little things, then he will be dishonest in big things too. ¹¹ If you cannot be trusted with worldly money, no one will trust you with true wealth. ¹² And if you cannot be trusted with the things which belong to someone else, then no one will give you things for yourself.

¹³ "No slave can serve two masters at the same time. The slave will give himself to one, for his good, expecting nothing in return, over the other. Or, he will be more loyal to one and look down on the other. You cannot be a slave for God and Money at the same time."

¹⁴ The Pharisees were listening to all these things. They were criticizing Jesus, because they all loved money. ¹⁵ Jesus said to the Pharisees, "You make yourselves look good in front of people but God knows what is

really in your hearts. The things which are very important to people are worthless to God.

¹⁶ "Until the time of John there was the law and the prophets. Since then, the Good News about the kingdom of God is being told. Everyone is trying hard to get into the kingdom of God. ¹⁷ Even the smallest part of the law cannot be changed. It would be easier for the world to pass away. ¹⁸ If a man divorces his wife and marries another woman, he is committing unlawful sexual intercourse. And the man who marries a divorced woman is also committing unlawful sexual intercourse."

¹⁹ Jesus said, "There was a rich man who always dressed up in the finest clothes. He was so rich that he was able to feast and have a party every day. ²⁰ There was also a beggar named Lazarus. His body was covered with sores. He was often put at the rich man's gate. ²¹ Lazarus only wanted to eat the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Instead, the dogs came and licked his sores!

²² "After a while, Lazarus died. The angels took Lazarus and placed him in the arms of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ He was sent to Hades and was in much pain. The rich man saw Abraham far away with Lazarus in his arms. ²⁴ He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me! Send Lazarus to me so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am suffering in this fire!' ²⁵ But Abraham said, 'My child, do you remember when you lived on earth? You had all the good things in life but all the bad things happened to Lazarus. Now he is comforted here and you are suffering. ²⁶ Also there is a great canyon set up between you and us. No one can cross over to help you; and no one can come over here from there.'

²⁷ "The rich man said, 'Then, father Abraham, please send Lazarus to my father's house on earth! ²⁸ I have five brothers. Lazarus could warn my brothers so that they won't come to this place of pain.' ²⁹ But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets to read; let them learn from that!' ³⁰ But the rich man said, 'No, father Abraham! If only someone could come back to them from death, then they would change their hearts.' ³¹ But Abraham said to him, 'No! If your brothers won't listen to Moses and the prophets, then they wouldn't be persuaded by anyone who might come back from death!'"

Chapter 17

⁰¹ Jesus said to his students, "Things will surely occur which will cause people to sin, but it will be horrible for the person who causes this to happen. ⁰² If he causes one of these little ones to sin, it would be better for him to drown with a big rock tied to his neck.

⁰³ "Be careful! If your brother sins, tell him he is wrong; but if he changes his heart, forgive him. ⁰⁴ If your brother does something wrong to you seven times in one day, but each time he says that he is sorry, then you should forgive him."

⁰⁵ The delegates said to the Lord Jesus, "Give us more faith!" ⁰⁶ The Lord said, "If your faith were the size of the seed of the mustard plant, then you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Dig yourself up and plant yourself in the sea!' and the tree would obey you."

⁰⁷ "Suppose one of you has a slave who has been working in the field, plowing the ground or caring for the sheep. When the slave comes in, what would you say to him? Would you say, 'Hurry, come in! Sit down to eat!?' ⁰⁸ No, you would say this to your slave: 'Prepare something for me to eat. Then get dressed up and serve me. When I finish eating and drinking, then you may eat.' ⁰⁹ The slave does not get any special thanks for doing his job. He is only doing what his master told him to do. ¹⁰ It is the same with you too. When you do all of the things you are told to do, you should think: 'We are not good slaves; we have only done our duty and nothing more.'"

¹¹ Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem, going from the Galilee through Samaria. ¹² He came into a village. Ten men met him there. These men did not come close to Jesus because they all had leprosy. ¹³ But the men shouted to Jesus, "Jesus! Teacher! Take pity on us!" ¹⁴ When Jesus saw the men, he said, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." As the ten men were going to the priests, they were healed.

¹⁵ When one of the men saw that he had been healed, he went back to Jesus and praised God with a loud voice. ¹⁶ He bowed down at Jesus' feet and thanked Jesus. (This man was a Samaritan.) ¹⁷ Jesus answered, "Ten men were healed; where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Is this Samaritan man the only one who came back to give glory to God?" ¹⁹ Then Jesus said to him, "Stand up! You may go. You were healed because you believed."

20 Some of the Pharisees asked Jesus, "When will the kingdom of God come?" Jesus answered, "God's kingdom is not coming in such a way that you will be able to watch it. 21 People will not say, 'Look, God's kingdom is here!' or, 'There it is!' No, God's kingdom is inside of you."

22 Then Jesus said to his students, "The time will come when you will want very much to re-live one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not be able to. 23 People will say to you, 'Look, there it is!' or, 'Look, here it is!' Stay where you are; don't go away and search."

24 "I will come again. On the day when I come, I will shine as lightning flashes across the sky. 25 But first I must suffer many things and be rejected by the people of this time. 26 "When I come again, it will be the same as it was when Noah lived. 27 In the time of Noah, people were eating, drinking, getting married, and giving their daughters away in marriage – even on the day when Noah entered the ship. Then the flood came and killed everyone else.

28 "It will be just like it was in the time of Lot. Those people were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building houses. 29 The people were doing these things even on the day when Lot left Sodom. Then fire and sulfur rained down from the sky and killed them all.

30 "This is exactly how it will be when I come again. 31 On that day if a man is on his roof, he won't have time to go inside and get his things. If a man is in the field, he must not go back home.

32 "Remember Lot's wife. 33 The person who tries to save his life will lose it, but the person who gives his life to others will save it.

34 "I tell you, when I come again, there may be two men sleeping in one room: one man will be taken and the other man will be left. 35 There may be two women working together; one woman will be taken and the other will be left. 36 There will be two men in the field; the one will be taken and the other will be left."

37 The students asked Jesus, "Where will this be, Lord?" Jesus answered, "People can always tell where a dead body is; they can see the vultures gathering."

Chapter 18

⁰¹ Then Jesus used this story to teach the students that they should always pray and never give up: ⁰² "Once there was a judge in a town. He didn't respect God. The judge didn't care what people thought about him, either. ⁰³ In that same town there was a woman who was a widow. The woman was always coming to this judge and saying, 'There is a man who is trying to ruin me. Give me my rights!' ⁰⁴ The judge didn't want to help the woman. However, after a long time the judge thought to himself, 'Even though I don't respect God, and I don't care what people think, ⁰⁵ this woman is beginning to bother me. If I give her what she wants, then she will leave me alone. If I don't give her what she wants, she will keep coming back until I get sick!'"

⁰⁶ The Lord Jesus said, "Listen to what the bad judge said."

⁰⁷ "God's chosen people cry out to Him night and day. God will always give them what is right; He will not be slow to answer His people. ⁰⁸ I am telling you, God will soon help His people! Nevertheless, when I come again, will I find people on earth who have faith in me? ⁰⁹ There were some people who were sure that they were being made right on their own. They acted as if they were better than other people."

Jesus gave this example to teach: ¹⁰ "Once there was a Pharisee and a tax collector. They both went up into the temple courtyard one day to pray. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood there alone. He was praying like this: 'O God, I thank you that I am not like other people. I am not like men who steal, cheat, commit unlawful sexual intercourse, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and I give ten percent of everything I make!' ¹³ The tax collector stood alone too. However, when he prayed, he wouldn't even look up to heaven. The tax collector felt very humble before God. He said, 'O God, have mercy on me. I am a sinner!' ¹⁴ I am telling you, when this man went back home, he had been made upright with God. The Pharisee was not right with God.

Every person who acts as if he is important will be made ashamed, but every person who humbles himself will be made very important."

¹⁵ Some people were bringing their small children to Jesus so that he could touch them. When his students saw this, they told the people not to do this. ¹⁶ But Jesus called the little children to him and said to his students, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them because the kingdom of God belongs to people who are like these children. ¹⁷ I am

telling you the truth: you must accept God's kingdom as a little child accepts things, or you will never enter it!"

¹⁸ A rich leader asked Jesus, "Good Teacher, what must I do to get eternal life?" ¹⁹ Jesus asked him, "Why did you call me 'good'? Only God is good!" ²⁰ But I will answer your question. You know the commands: 'You must not commit unlawful sexual intercourse.', 'You must not commit murder.', 'You must not steal.', 'You must not lie.', 'You must honor and obey your father and mother...'" ²¹ But the leader said, "I have obeyed all these commands since I was a boy!" ²² When Jesus heard that, he said to the leader, "But there is still one more thing you need to do. Sell everything you have and distribute it to the poor people. Then you will have a treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me!" ²³ But when the man heard this, he was very sad. (The man was very rich and wanted to keep his money.)

²⁴ When Jesus saw that the man was very sad, he said, "It will be so hard for people with a lot of money to enter the kingdom of God!" ²⁵ It would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God!" ²⁶ When the people heard this, they asked, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷ Jesus answered, "God can do things which don't seem possible to men!" ²⁸ Peter said, "Look, we have left everything we had and followed you!" ²⁹ Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: every person who has left his home, wife, brothers, parents, or children because of God's kingdom ³⁰ will surely be rewarded many times in this time and, in the age to come, with eternal life."

³¹ Then Jesus took the twelve delegates aside. He said to them, "Listen! We are going up to Jerusalem. Everything which God told the prophets to write about me will take place!" ³² The Jewish people will turn against me and give me to the non-Jewish men. They will laugh at me and spit on me, and insult me. ³³ They will beat me with whips and then kill me! But on the third day after my death, I will rise." ³⁴ The delegates tried to understand this but they could not; the meaning was hidden from them. They did not know what Jesus was talking about.

³⁵ Jesus came near the city of Jericho. There was a blind man sitting beside the road. The man was begging people for money. ³⁶ When this man heard the crowd coming down the road, he asked, "What's happening?" ³⁷ The people told him, "Jesus, the one from Nazareth, is coming here." ³⁸ The blind man became excited and cried out, "Jesus! Son of David! Take pity on me!" ³⁹ The people who were in front leading the group told the blind man to be quiet, but he shouted even louder,

"Son of David! Take pity on me!" ⁴⁰ Jesus stopped there and said, "Bring that man to me!" When the blind man came near, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹ "What do you want of me?" The blind man said, "Lord, heal me! Let me be able to see again." ⁴² Jesus said to him, "See again! You are made well because you believed." ⁴³ Immediately the man was able to see again. He followed Jesus, giving glory to God. All of the people who saw this praised God for what had occurred.

Chapter 19

⁰¹ Jesus was going through the city of Jericho. ⁰² In Jericho there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a very important, rich tax collector. ⁰³ He wanted to see Jesus, but there were also many other people and Zacchaeus was too short to see over them. ⁰⁴ So he ran ahead to a place where he knew Jesus would pass. Then he climbed a sycamore-fig tree so that he could see Jesus. ⁰⁵ When Jesus came to that spot, he looked up. Jesus said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry! Come down! I must stay at your house today!" ⁰⁶ Then Zacchaeus came down quickly. He was so happy to have Jesus in his house. ⁰⁷ All of the people saw this. They began to complain, saying, "Look at the type of person Jesus stays with. Zacchaeus is a sinner!"

⁰⁸ Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord Jesus, "Lord, I am now giving half of my money to the poor. If I have cheated anyone, I am now paying him back four times more!" ⁰⁹ Jesus said, "This man is a son of Abraham. Today, safety from danger has come to this house! ¹⁰ I came to find lost people and to save them."

¹¹ Jesus traveled closer to Jerusalem. Some of the people thought that God's kingdom would soon appear. Jesus knew that the people thought this so, while the people were listening to these things, he continued with a story: ¹² "A very important man was preparing to go to a far away country to be made a king. After that the man planned to return home and rule. ¹³ So the man called ten of his slaves together. He gave a gold coin to each slave. The man said, 'Do business with this money until I come back.' ¹⁴ But the people in his kingdom hated the man, so the people sent a group of their own men to follow the man to the other country. There these men said, 'We don't want that man to rule over us!'

¹⁵ "However, he did become king. When he came home, he said, 'Call those slaves who have my money. I want to know how much more money they earned with it.' ¹⁶ The first slave came and said, 'Sir, I earned ten gold coins with the coin you gave me!' ¹⁷ The king said to the slave, 'Fine! You are a good slave. I see that I can trust you with small things. So now I will let you have authority over ten of my cities!' ¹⁸ The second slave said, 'Sir, with the one gold coin which belongs to you, I earned five coins!' ¹⁹ The king said to this slave, 'You may rule over five cities!' ²⁰ Then the next slave came in. The slave said to the king, 'Sir, here is your gold coin. I hid it in a piece of cloth. ²¹ I was afraid of you; you are a hard man. You take money which you didn't earn and gather

food you didn't even grow!' ²² Then the king said to the slave, 'You evil slave! I will use your own words to condemn you. You said that I am a hard man. You said I take money which I didn't earn and gather food I didn't even grow. ²³ If this is true, then you should have put my money in the bank. Then after I came back, my money would have earned some interest.'

²⁴ "The king said to the men who were watching, 'Take the gold coin away from this slave and give it to the slave who earned ten coins.' ²⁵ The men said to the king, 'But, sir, that slave already has ten gold coins!' ²⁶ The king said, 'The person who uses what he has will get more, but the person who doesn't use what he has will have everything taken away from him!'

²⁷ "Now, where are my enemies? Where are the people who didn't want me to rule over them? Bring my enemies here and kill them. I will watch them die!"

²⁸ After Jesus said these things, he continued traveling upward toward Jerusalem. ²⁹ He came near to Bethphage and Bethany, villages close to the Hill of Olives. Jesus sent two of his students on ahead. ³⁰ He said, "Go into that village over there. You will find a young donkey tied there that has not been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me here. ³¹ If someone asks you why you are taking the donkey, you will say, 'The Lord, its owner, needs it.'" ³² The two students went into town. They found the donkey exactly as Jesus had told them. ³³ The students untied the donkey, but its owners came out. They asked the students, "Why are you untying our donkey?" ³⁴ Jesus' students answered, "The Lord, its owner, needs it."

³⁵ Then the students brought it to Jesus. They put some of their clothes on the donkey's back. Then they helped Jesus get on top of it. ³⁶ While Jesus was riding along the road toward Jerusalem, the students were spreading their robes on the road in front of him. ³⁷ Jesus was coming close to Jerusalem. He was already near the bottom of the Hill of Olives. The whole group of students were happy. They were very excited and they praised God for all the powerful things they had seen. They said, ³⁸ "Give praise to this king who is coming with the authority of the Lord God! Let there be peace in heaven and glory to God!"

³⁹ From the crowd some of the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell your students not to say such things!" ⁴⁰ But Jesus answered, "I am

telling you, these things must be said. If my students don't say them, then these very stones will shout!"

⁴¹ Jesus came near to Jerusalem and saw it. He began to cry over the city. ⁴² Jesus spoke to Jerusalem, "I wish you knew today what would bring you peace but it is hidden from your eyes! ⁴³ A time is coming when your enemies will build a wall around you. Your enemies will hold you in on all sides. ⁴⁴ They will completely destroy you and all of your children. Not one stone will remain on top of another. All this will happen because you didn't know the time when God came to save you." ⁴⁵ Jesus went into the temple courtyard. He began to throw out the people who were selling things there. ⁴⁶ Jesus said, "It is written, 'My house will be a place for praying.' But you have changed it into a hiding place for thieves!"

⁴⁷ Every day, Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courtyard. The most important priests, the teachers of the law, and some of the leaders of the people were trying to kill Jesus, ⁴⁸ but they didn't know how they could do it because all of the people were listening closely to Jesus. The people were very interested in what Jesus had to say.

Chapter 20

⁰¹ One day Jesus was in the temple courtyard teaching the people. Jesus told them the Good News. The most important priests, teachers of the law, and Jewish elders came. ⁰² They said to Jesus, "Tell us! What sort of authority do you have to do these things? Who gave you this authority?" ⁰³ Jesus answered, "I will also ask you a question. Tell me: ⁰⁴ when John immersed people, did that authority come from God or from man?" ⁰⁵ They all talked about this. They said to each other, "If we answer, 'From God', then Jesus will say, 'Then why didn't you believe John?' ⁰⁶ But if we say, 'It was from man', then all of the people will stone us to death, because they believe John was a prophet." ⁰⁷ So they decided to give this answer: "We don't know where John's immersion came from." ⁰⁸ So Jesus said to them, "Then I won't tell you what sort of authority I have to do these things!"

⁰⁹ Then Jesus began to give this example to the people: "A man planted a vineyard. He rented the land to some farmers. Then he went away on a trip for a long time. ¹⁰ At harvest time the man sent a slave to those farmers. They were supposed to give the owner of the land some of the grapes, but the farmers beat the slave and sent him away with nothing. ¹¹ So the man sent a different slave. They also beat this slave. They showed no respect for him and sent the slave away with nothing. ¹² The man sent a third slave to the farmers. The farmers wounded this slave and kicked him out. ¹³ The owner of the vineyard said, 'What will I do now? I will send my son, to whom I give myself. Perhaps the farmers will show respect for him!' ¹⁴ When the farmers saw the son, they began to think to themselves, 'This is the owner's son. If we kill him, then this field will be ours!' ¹⁵ So the farmers forced the son out of the field and killed him.

"What do you think the owner of this field will do to those farmers? ¹⁶ He will come and destroy them! After that, he will give the field to some other farmers."

The people heard this story. They said, "No! May this never happen!" ¹⁷ But Jesus looked into their eyes and said, "Then what does this verse mean: 'The stone that the builders did not want became the cornerstone.'? ¹⁸ Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken. If that stone falls on you, it will crush you!" ¹⁹ The Jewish leaders heard this. They knew that this story was about them. They wanted to arrest Jesus right then but they were afraid of what the people would do to them if they did.

²⁰ So the teachers and priests waited for the right time. They sent some men to Jesus and told them to act as if they were good men. They wanted to find something wrong with the words that Jesus said. (If they found anything wrong, then they could hand Jesus over to the high priest and the governor to be punished.) ²¹ So the men asked Jesus, "Teacher, we know what you say and teach is right. You don't care how important or unimportant a person is. You always teach the truth about God's way. ²² Now tell us, is it right that we should pay taxes to Caesar or not?" ²³ But Jesus knew that these men were trying to trick him. Jesus said to them, ²⁴ "Show me a coin. Whose name and picture is on it?" They said, "Caesar's."

²⁵ Jesus said to them, "Then give to Caesar the things which are Caesar's. And give to God the things which belong to God." ²⁶ The men were amazed at his wise answer; they could say nothing. The men were not able to trick Jesus in front of the people.

²⁷ Some Sadducees came to Jesus. (Sadducees believe that no one will rise from death.) They asked Jesus, ²⁸ "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a married man dies and he did not have children, his brother must marry the widow. Then they will have children for the dead brother. ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers. The first one got married, but died. He had no children. ³⁰⁻³¹ Then the second brother also married her and he died. They also had no children. The same thing happened with all the other brothers. ³² The woman was the last to die. ³³ All seven men had married her; so when this woman rises from death, whose wife will she be?"

³⁴ Jesus answered the Sadducees, "During this age, people marry each other. ³⁵ Some people will be declared worthy enough to be raised from death and live again after this life. However, in that life they will not marry or be given in marriage. ³⁶ They cannot die anymore because they will be like angels. When they rise from death, they will be the children of God. ³⁷ Moses clearly showed that people are raised from death. When Moses wrote about the burning bush, he said that the Lord is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. ³⁸ This means that the Lord God is not a God of dead people; He is the God of people who are alive! To God, everyone is alive." ³⁹ Some of the teachers of the law said, "Teacher, your answer was very good." ⁴⁰ No one dared to ask him another question.

⁴¹ Then Jesus said to them, "How can they claim that the Messiah is the son of David? ⁴² In the book of Psalms, David himself says: 'The Lord

God said to my Lord: "Sit at my right side ⁴³ until I put your enemies under your feet." ⁴⁴ Therefore, David is calling the Messiah 'Lord'. So how can the Messiah be the son of David?"

⁴⁵ While all of the people were listening to Jesus, he said to his students, ⁴⁶ "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They want to walk around wearing clothes which make them look important. They like the greetings of respect which people give them in the marketplaces. They always want the most important seats in the houses of worship and the best seats at the dinners, ⁴⁷ but they cheat widows and steal their homes. Then they make themselves look good by saying long prayers. Because of all this, God will punish these men so much more."

Chapter 21

⁰¹ As Jesus looked up, he saw some rich people putting their gifts for God into the temple money box. ⁰² Then Jesus saw a widow who was very poor. She put two small coins into the box. ⁰³ Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: this poor widow has given more than all those rich people. ⁰⁴ The rich people have plenty; they only gave what they didn't need, but this woman gave everything she had. She needed that money to live on."

⁰⁵ Some of the students were talking about the temple. They said, "This is a beautiful temple. It has the best stones. Look at the many good gifts which have been offered to God!" But Jesus said, ⁰⁶ "The time will come when everything you see here will be destroyed. Not one stone will stay on top of another. This will be completely destroyed!"

⁰⁷ Some students asked Jesus, "Teacher, when will these things occur? How will we know when it is the time for these things to happen?" ⁰⁸ Jesus said, "Be careful! Don't be fooled. Many people will come to you using my name. They will say, 'I am the one!' and, 'The right time has come near!' But don't believe them. ⁰⁹ When you hear about wars and riots, don't be afraid. These things must happen first. The end will come later."

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "One country will fight against another country. Kingdoms will fight against other kingdoms. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, sicknesses, and other terrible things in many places. In some places there will be no food for the people. Great wonders and amazing proofs will come from heaven. ¹² But before all of these things happen, men will arrest you and persecute you. They will hand you over to their house of worship courts and throw you in jail. Men will lead you to kings and governors because you are associated with my name.

¹³ "But this will give you an opportunity to tell about all of the things you have seen me do. ¹⁴ Don't worry about how you will answer them or what you will say. ¹⁵ I will give you the ability to speak well with much wisdom. None of your enemies will be able to show that you are wrong. ¹⁶ Even your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends will turn against you. They will have some of you put to death. ¹⁷ All people will hate you because of my name, ¹⁸ but not one hair on your head will be harmed. ¹⁹ By enduring all of these things, you will keep your souls.

²⁰ "You will see armies all around Jerusalem. Then you will know that the time for the destruction of Jerusalem is very near. ²¹ At that time the ones in Judea should run away to the mountains. Those inside Jerusalem must leave quickly. If you are near the city, don't go in! ²² The prophets wrote many things about the time when God will punish His people. This is the time when all of these things must occur.

²³ "At that time it will be horrible for pregnant women and nursing mothers because very hard times will come to this land. God will be angry with the Jewish people. ²⁴ Some of the people will be killed by soldiers. Other people will be made prisoners and taken to every nation. The holy city of Jerusalem will be walked on by people of the world until their time is completed. ²⁵ Amazing things will occur with the sun, moon, and stars. On earth, people without God will feel trapped. The oceans will be upset and the people will not know why. ²⁶ Men will become so afraid that they will faint. They will be very worried about the things which will happen to the whole world. The powers in the universe will be moved. ²⁷ Then people will see me coming on a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to happen, don't be afraid. Stand straight and lift up your heads! The time is near when God will save you!"

²⁹ Then Jesus gave them this story: "Look at all of the trees. The fig tree is a good example. ³⁰ When you see it turning green, no one needs to tell you that summer is near. ³¹ In the same way you will see all of these amazing things occur. Then you will know that God's kingdom is coming very soon. ³² I am telling you the truth: all of these things will occur while the people of this time are still alive!

³³ "The world will be destroyed, but my words will never be destroyed! ³⁴ Be careful! Otherwise your hearts will become burdened with drinking, getting drunk, and the worries of this life. That day may come suddenly when you are not ready. ³⁵ It will come as a surprise to all people who live on earth. ³⁶ So be ready all the time. Pray that you will be strong enough to endure all of these things when they occur and to stand before me."

³⁷ During the day Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courtyard. At night he went out of the city and stayed all night on the Hill of Olives. ³⁸ Every morning all of the people got up early to go listen to Jesus in the temple courtyard.

Chapter 22

⁰¹ It was almost time for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover Festival. ⁰² The most important priests and teachers of the law were trying to find a way to kill Jesus but they were afraid of the people. ⁰³ One of Jesus' twelve delegates was named Judas Iscariot. Satan entered Judas. ⁰⁴ He went off and talked with the most important priests and some of the soldiers who guarded the temple. Judas talked to them about a plan he had to hand Jesus over to them. ⁰⁵ They were pleased. They agreed to give Judas some money. ⁰⁶ Judas said, "Yes." He waited for the best time to give Jesus to them — when there was no crowd around to see it.

⁰⁷ The day came for the Passover Feast. This was the day when the priests sacrificed the Passover lambs. ⁰⁸ Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us to eat." ⁰⁹ Peter and John said to Jesus, "Where do you want us to prepare the meal?" Jesus said to them, ¹⁰ "Listen! After you go into Jerusalem, you will see a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him. He will go into a house. Go inside with him.

¹¹ "Say this to the owner of that house: 'The Teacher asks that you please show us the room where the Teacher and his students may eat the Passover Feast.' ¹² Then he will show you a large upstairs room. This room is ready. Prepare the Passover meal there."

¹³ So Peter and John left. Everything happened just as Jesus had told them. Then they prepared the Passover meal. ¹⁴ The time came for them to eat the Passover meal. Jesus and the delegates were around the table. ¹⁵ Jesus said to them, "I wanted very much to eat this Passover meal with you before I die. ¹⁶ I tell you, I will never eat another Passover meal until it is given its true meaning in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ Then Jesus took a cup. He gave thanks to God for it. Then he said, "Take this cup and give it to everyone here.

¹⁸ I tell you, I will never drink from the fruit of the vine again until God's kingdom comes." ¹⁹ Then Jesus took bread and gave thanks. He broke off some of the bread and gave it to them. Then he said, "This bread is my body which I am giving for you. Eat this to remember me." ²⁰ In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is God's new covenant in my blood which is being poured out for you." ²¹ Jesus said, "Listen! One of you will turn against me. He is sitting with me at this table now! ²² I will do what God has planned, but how

horrible it will be for the man who hands me over." ²³ Then the delegates began to ask each other, "Which one of us would do such a thing to Jesus?"

²⁴ Later, the delegates began to argue about which one of them was the most important. ²⁵ But Jesus said to them, "The kings of the nations rule over their people. Men who have authority over other people are called 'benefactors'." ²⁶ But you must not think that way. The greatest person among you should be like the younger person. Leaders should be like servants. ²⁷ Who is more important? A man who is sitting at the table or the one who is serving him? You may think it is the one sitting at the table but I am like a servant among you!

²⁸ "You men have stayed with me through many struggles. ²⁹ My Father has given me a kingdom. I also give you authority to rule with me. ³⁰ In my kingdom you will eat and drink at my table. You will sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel."

³¹ "O Simon, Simon. Listen! Satan has asked to sift you like a farmer sifts his wheat. ³² I have prayed that you will not lose your faith! When you come back to me, help your brothers be stronger." ³³ But Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, I am ready to go to jail with you. I will even die with you!" ³⁴ But Jesus said, "Peter, I tell you, before the rooster crows in the morning, you will say that you don't even know me three different times!"

³⁵ Then Jesus said to the delegates, "I sent you to preach to the people without a bag, money, or extra shoes. Did you need anything?" The delegates said, "Nothing." ³⁶ Jesus said to them, "But now if you have a bag or money, carry that with you. If you don't have a sword, sell your robe and buy one. ³⁷ The Scripture says: 'They classed him with the criminals.' I tell you, this verse must come true; it was written about me, and it is being fulfilled now." ³⁸ They said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords!" He said to them, "That will be enough!"

³⁹⁻⁴⁰ Jesus went out of Jerusalem to the Hill of Olives. His students went with him. (Jesus often went there.) He said to his students, "Pray for strength against temptation." ⁴¹ Then Jesus went about 45 meters away from them; He kneeled down and began to pray, ⁴² "Father, if it is in Your plan, then take this cup of suffering away from me. However, what You want is more important than what I want." ⁴³ Then an angel from heaven appeared. The angel was sent to help Jesus. ⁴⁴ Jesus was

full of deep concern; he struggled hard in prayer. Sweat dripped from his face to the ground as though he were bleeding.

⁴⁵ When Jesus finished praying, he went to his students. They were asleep. (Their sadness had made them very tired.) ⁴⁶ He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray for strength against temptation."

⁴⁷ While Jesus was speaking, a crowd came. One of the twelve delegates was leading them. His name was Judas. He came near Jesus so that he could give him the kiss of friendship. ⁴⁸ But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you using the kiss of friendship to betray me?" ⁴⁹ The delegates of Jesus were standing there too. They saw what was going to happen. They asked him, "Lord, shall we use our swords?" ⁵⁰ And one of the students did use his sword. He cut off the right ear of the high priest's slave. ⁵¹ Jesus answered, "Stop!" Then Jesus touched the slave's ear and healed him.

⁵² A group came to arrest Jesus. They were the important Jewish priests, the Jewish elders, and the soldiers who guarded the temple. Jesus asked them, "Why did you come out here with swords and sticks? Do you think I am a criminal?" ⁵³ I was with you every day in the temple courtyard. Why didn't you try to arrest me there? But this is your time — the time when darkness rules."

⁵⁴ They arrested Jesus and took him away. They brought him into the high priest's house. Peter was following from a distance. ⁵⁵ The soldiers started a fire in the middle of the yard and sat together. Peter sat with them. ⁵⁶ Because of the light from the fire, a servant girl saw Peter sitting there. The girl looked closely at Peter's face. Then she said, "This man was also with Jesus!" ⁵⁷ But Peter said that this was not true. He said, "Lady, I don't know him." ⁵⁸ After a little while, a different person saw Peter and said, "You are one of the men who follow Jesus too." But Peter said, "Sir, I am not!" ⁵⁹ About an hour later, another man kept insisting, "It is true! This man was with Jesus. He is from the Galilee!" ⁶⁰ But Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you are talking about!" Immediately, while Peter was still speaking, a rooster crowed. ⁶¹ Then the Lord Jesus turned and looked into Peter's eyes. And Peter remembered what the Lord had said to him: "Before the rooster crows in the morning, you will say that you don't even know me three times." ⁶² Then Peter went outside and cried bitterly.

⁶³⁻⁶⁴ Some men were guarding Jesus. This is the way they made fun of Jesus: they covered his eyes so that he couldn't see them. Then they hit him on the face and said, "Prophesy for us! Let God tell you which one of us hit you!" ⁶⁵ The men were saying many terrible things to Jesus.

⁶⁶ When morning came, the elders of the people, the most important priests, and the teachers of the law came together. They led Jesus away to the Jewish Council. ⁶⁷ They said, "Since you are the Messiah, tell us that you are!" Jesus said to them, "If I were to tell you I am the Messiah, you would not believe me. ⁶⁸ And if I ask you, you won't answer or let me go. ⁶⁹ But I will sit at the right side of God's throne — from now on." ⁷⁰ They all asked, "Then you are the Son of God?" Jesus said to them, "Yes, I am." ⁷¹ They said, "Why do we need witnesses now? We ourselves heard it from his own lips!"

Chapter 23

⁰¹ Then the whole group stood up and led Jesus to Pilate. ⁰² They began to accuse Jesus. They said, "We caught this man telling things which were confusing our people. He says we should stop paying taxes to Caesar. He calls himself the Messiah, a king." ⁰³ Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Yes."

⁰⁴ Pilate said to the most important priests and to the crowds, "I find nothing wrong with this man." ⁰⁵ They said again and again, "But Jesus is making trouble with the people! He teaches all over Judea. He began in the Galilee and now he is here!" ⁰⁶ Pilate heard this and asked if Jesus were from the Galilee. ⁰⁷ Pilate learned that Jesus was under the authority of Herod Antipas. Herod was in Jerusalem at that time so Pilate sent Jesus to him.

⁰⁸ When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad. Herod had heard all about Jesus. For a long time, he had wanted to meet Jesus. Herod wanted to see a miracle. He was hoping that Jesus would work one. ⁰⁹ Herod asked Jesus many questions but Jesus wouldn't answer him. ¹⁰ The important priests and teachers of the law stood there. They continued to accuse Jesus. They were very excited.

¹¹ Then Herod and his soldiers laughed at Jesus. They made fun of him by dressing him in royal clothes. Then Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate. ¹² In the past, Pilate and Herod had always been enemies, but on that day Herod and Pilate became friends.

¹³ Pilate called everyone together. He called the most important priests, the leaders, and the people. ¹⁴ He said to them, "You brought this man Jesus to me. You said he was making trouble among the people. But listen, I judged him before all of you. I found nothing wrong with him. Jesus is not guilty of the things you are saying against him. ¹⁵ Herod Antipas found nothing wrong with him either; he sent him back to us.

Look, Jesus has done nothing wrong. He shouldn't be killed. ¹⁶ So after I give him some punishment, I will let him go free."

¹⁷ Now he was required to release one to them at the feast. ¹⁸ But all of the people yelled, "Kill him! Set Barabbas free for us!" ¹⁹ (Barabbas was a man who was thrown into prison because of a riot which took place in the city and for murder.) ²⁰ Pilate really wanted to let Jesus go free; so Pilate appealed to them again. ²¹ But they yelled again, "Kill him! Nail him to a cross!" ²² A third time Pilate said to them, "Why? What crime

has Jesus done? He is not guilty. I can find no reason to kill him. So I will set him free, after I give him a little punishment." ²³ But the people continued to yell. They demanded that Jesus be killed on a cross. Their yelling became so loud that ²⁴⁻²⁵ Pilate decided to give them what they wanted. The people wanted Barabbas to go free. (Barabbas was the man who had been thrown into jail because of a riot. He was a murderer.) Pilate let Barabbas go free, but Pilate gave them Jesus to be killed. This is what the people wanted.

26 The soldiers led Jesus away to be killed. At that same time there was a man coming into the city from the fields. His name was Simon. He was from the city of Cyrene. The soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross and to walk behind Jesus.

²⁷ A very large crowd was following Jesus. Some of the women were crying and mourning for Jesus. They felt so sorry for him, ²⁸ but Jesus turned and said to the women, "Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me – cry for yourselves and also for your children! ²⁹ Listen, the time is coming when people will say, 'Happy are the women who cannot have babies! Happy are the women who have never had children to care for.' ³⁰ Then the people will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' The people will say to the hills, 'Cover us!'

³¹ If people do things like this now when life is good, what will happen when bad times come?"

³²⁻³³ There were also two criminals led out with Jesus. Jesus and the two criminals were led to a place where they would be killed. The people called this place "The Skull". There some men nailed Jesus to his cross. They also nailed the criminals to their crosses; Jesus' cross was between the crosses of the two criminals.

³⁴ Jesus said, "Father, forgive these people. They don't know what they are doing." The soldiers gambled to see who would get Jesus' clothes. ³⁵ The people stood there watching. The Jewish leaders were laughing at Jesus. They said, "Since he is God's chosen one, the Messiah, let him save himself! He saved other people, didn't he?" ³⁶ Even the soldiers made fun of him. They came to Jesus and offered him some sour wine. ³⁷ The soldiers said, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸ At the top of the cross these words were written: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁹ One of the criminals who was hanging there began to say awful things to Jesus: "Aren't you the Messiah? Then save yourself! And save us too!" ⁴⁰ But the other criminal stopped him. He said, "You should fear God! All of us are about to die!" ⁴¹ You and I are guilty; we should be killed because we did wrong. But this man Jesus has done nothing wrong!" ⁴² Then he said to Jesus, "Jesus, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom!" ⁴³ Then Jesus said to him, "I am telling you the truth: today you will be with me in Paradise!"

⁴⁴ It was about noon but the whole area became dark until three o'clock in the afternoon. ⁴⁵ There was no sun! The curtain hanging between the holy place and the most holy place in the temple was torn down the middle.

⁴⁶ Jesus shouted, "Father, I put my spirit into Your hands." After Jesus said this, he died. ⁴⁷ The Roman army officer saw what happened. He was giving glory to God, saying, "This man was truly made right!" ⁴⁸ Many people had come out of the city to see this event. When the people saw it, they felt deep sorrow and left. ⁴⁹ The people who were close friends of Jesus were there. There were some women who had followed Jesus from the Galilee also. They all stood far away from the cross to watch.

⁵⁰⁻⁵¹ There was a man from Arimathea, a Judean town. His name was Joseph. He was a good, being made right man. He was looking for the kingdom of God. Joseph was a member of the Jewish Council but he did not vote when the priests decided to kill Jesus. ⁵² Joseph went to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ So Joseph took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in a sheet. Then he put Jesus' body into a cave which was cut out of solid rock. This tomb had never been used before. ⁵⁴ This was late on the Preparation day afternoon. The Passover was about to start.

⁵⁵ The women who had come from the Galilee with Jesus followed Joseph. They saw the tomb. Inside they saw where the body of Jesus was placed. ⁵⁶ Then the women left to prepare some sweet-smelling spices to put on Jesus' body. They rested on the Sabbath day, according to God's command.

Chapter 24

⁰¹ Very early on the first day of the week, the women came to the tomb. They brought the sweet-smelling things they had prepared. ⁰² But the women found that the rock was rolled away from the tomb. ⁰³ They went in but they didn't find the Lord Jesus' body.

⁰⁴ While they were wondering about it, suddenly two angels stood beside them in shining clothes. ⁰⁵ The women were frightened; they bowed their heads down to the ground. The two men said to the women, "Why are you looking here for a living person? This is a place for dead people!" ⁰⁶ Jesus is not here. He has risen from death! Do you remember what he said in the Galilee? ⁰⁷ Jesus said that he must be handed over to evil men, be killed on a cross, and rise from death on the third day." ⁰⁸ Then the women remembered Jesus' words.

⁰⁹ The women left the tomb and went to the eleven delegates and the other students. The women told them everything which had occurred at the tomb. ¹⁰ The women were: Mary of Magdala, Joanna, Mary, the mother of Jacob, and some other women. These women told the delegates everything that had happened ¹¹ but the men didn't believe what the women said. It sounded crazy. ¹² However, Peter got up and ran to the tomb. He bent down and looked in, but he only saw the grave clothes. Peter went off by himself, wondering what had taken place.

¹³ That same day, two of Jesus' students were going to a village named Emmaus. (It was almost 11 kilometers from Jerusalem.) ¹⁴ They were talking about everything which had happened. ¹⁵ While they were discussing these things, Jesus himself came near and walked along with them. ¹⁶ (But the two men were not allowed to recognize Jesus.) ¹⁷ Jesus walked with them for a while. Then he said, "What are these things you are talking about as you walk?" They stood still. Their faces looked very sad. ¹⁸ The one named Cleopas answered, "You must be the only man in Jerusalem who doesn't know what has just happened there!" ¹⁹ Jesus asked them, "What are you talking about?" The men said to him, "It is about Jesus, the one from Nazareth. He was a prophet from God to all the people. He said and did many powerful things. ²⁰ Our leaders and important priests gave him away to be judged and killed. They nailed Jesus to a cross, ²¹ but we were hoping that Jesus was about to bring safety from danger to Israel. Besides all this, it has been three days since this happened. ²² And today some of our women told us some amazing things. Early this morning the women went to the tomb ²³ but they didn't find Jesus' body there. They came and told us that, in a vision,

they had seen two angels. The angels said that Jesus was alive! ²⁴ Some of our group also went to the tomb. They found that it was just as the women had said, but none of us saw him."

²⁵ Then Jesus said to the two men, "You are foolish and slow to realize what is true. You should believe everything the prophets said: ²⁶ the Messiah must suffer these things before he enters his glory." ²⁷ Then Jesus began to explain everything which had been written in the Scriptures about him. Jesus started with the books of Moses and then he talked about what the prophets had written about him. ²⁸ They came near the village of Emmaus, their destination, and Jesus acted as though he didn't plan to stop there. ²⁹ They begged him, "Stay with us. It is late; it is almost night." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ Jesus sat down with them and took some bread. He gave thanks for the food and broke off some of it. Then he gave it to them. ³¹ At that time the men were allowed to recognize Jesus. They saw who he really was, but he disappeared. ³² They said to each other, "While Jesus was talking to us on the road, it felt like a fire burning in us when he explained the true meaning of the Scriptures."

³³⁻³⁴ During that same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the students of Jesus meeting together. The eleven delegates and those people who were with them said, "The Lord Jesus has actually come back to life! He appeared to Simon Peter."

³⁵ Then the two men gave a report about the things which had happened on the road. They talked about how they recognized Jesus when he broke off some of the bread.

³⁶ While they were saying these things, Jesus himself stood among them. He said to them, "Peace to you." ³⁷ They began to be filled with fear. They were terrified. They thought they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ But Jesus asked, "Why are you disturbed? Why do you doubt what you see? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. It is really I! Touch me. You can see that I have a living body; a ghost doesn't have a body like this."

⁴⁰ After Jesus told them this, he showed them the holes in his hands and feet. ⁴¹ They were amazed and very, very happy to see that he was alive. They still couldn't believe it, so Jesus asked them, "Do you have any food here?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of cooked fish. ⁴³ While they watched, Jesus took it and ate it.

⁴⁴ Jesus said to them, "Do you remember when I was with you before? I said that everything written about me must come true — everything written in the law of Moses, the books of the prophets, and the Psalms."
⁴⁵ Then Jesus explained the Scriptures. He opened their minds so they could understand the things which had been written about him. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus said to them, "It is written that the Messiah would be killed and come back to life on the third day. ⁴⁷⁻⁴⁸ You saw these things happen. You must go and tell all nations that their sins can be forgiven. Tell them that they must change their hearts. You must start from Jerusalem and preach these things with my authority. ⁴⁹ Listen, I am sending my Father's promise upon you but you must stay in Jerusalem until you are clothed with that power from heaven."

⁵⁰ Jesus led them out of Jerusalem, almost to the town of Bethany. He raised his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While Jesus was blessing them, he was separated from them and carried up into heaven. ⁵² They worshipped him. Then they went back to Jerusalem. They were very happy. ⁵³ They were always in the temple courtyard, praising God.

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