

Bible Notes

Chapter By Chapter Summary of The Bible

Revised Edition

By Patricia Burke, DCH

www.burkebiblenotes.com

Published by: Gardenia Publishing
P.O. Box 15 Arlington, TX 76004
www.gardeniapublishing.com

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, or other means – without written permission from the author. Address all inquiries to the author or publisher.

Copyright© 2008 by Patricia Burke

ISBN: 9781074857455

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2004113109

All scripture verses from the Original King James Version

Cover Artist: Eddie Beckwith

Printed in the United States of America

www.burkebiblenotes.com

Acknowledgments

First, I would like to express my appreciation to my friends who challenged me to write this book, despite my rebellious objections, doubts, and complaints.

To my esteemed spiritual advisors, Etta Atkinson, Michael Houston, Marshall Voris and Warren Williams, I offer thanks for all their words of advice, knowledge and inspiration over the years, and for their encouragement, which catapulted my spiritual growth into fast forward.

I'd like to thank Don Capps for all his helpfulness and technical support through the years, and for introducing me to my publisher. I thank the staff of my publishing company for all their hard work and effort in the preparation of this book. My hope is the reader will recognize and benefit from this as well.

Foreword

This volume is an excellent reference for anyone studying the Bible and finding it confusing. The summaries present concisely the content in a manner that any reader can understand. The author has taken a giant step in the arena of helping the beginner and the novice to understand the Bible and its place, not only in history, but in the development of the Christian religion. Any Christian would do well to have this book in their library.

Many times, writers of commentaries and of supplemental texts present the material in jargon and leave the reader still wondering what the chapter is really saying. The decision to summarize each chapter is brilliant. The beginning student of the Bible can read the summary and get a clear picture of what the chapter is presenting.

This is a book I would recommend as a must for any new student of the Bible. It is also an excellent book for seasoned readers of the Bible. This book adds a freshness to Bible study that has been lacking for many years.

Happy study and reading.

Etta M. Atkinson Priest
Spiritual Advisor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OLD TESTAMENT

	BOOK	NUMBER OF CHAPTERS WITHIN BOOK	PAGE
Chapter 1	Genesis	50	13
Chapter 2	Exodus	40	23
Chapter 3	Leviticus	27	29
Chapter 4	Numbers	36	33
Chapter 5	Deuteronomy	34	39
Chapter 6	Joshua	24	47
Chapter 7	Judges	21	51
Chapter 8	Ruth	4	57
Chapter 9	I Samuel	31	59
Chapter 10	II Samuel	24	65
Chapter 11	I Kings	22	69
Chapter 12	II Kings	25	75
Chapter 13	I Chronicles	29	83
Chapter 14	II Chronicles	36	87
Chapter 15	Ezra	10	93
Chapter 16	Nehemiah	13	95
Chapter 17	Esther	10	97
Chapter 18	Job	42	99
Chapter 19	Psalms	150	105
Chapter 20	Proverbs	31	121
Chapter 21	Ecclesiastes	12	135
Chapter 22	Song of Solomon	8	139
Chapter 23	Isaiah	66	143
Chapter 24	Jeremiah	52	155
Chapter 25	Lamentations	5	167
Chapter 26	Ezekiel	48	169
Chapter 27	Daniel	12	177
Chapter 28	Hosea	14	181
Chapter 29	Joel	3	183
Chapter 30	Amos	9	185
Chapter 31	Obadiah	1	187
Chapter 32	Jonah	4	189
Chapter 33	Micah	7	191
Chapter 34	Nahum	3	193
Chapter 35	Habakkuk	3	195
Chapter 36	Zephaniah	3	197
Chapter 37	Haggai	2	199
Chapter 38	Zechariah	14	201
Chapter 39	Malachi	4	205

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEW TESTAMENT

	BOOK	NUMBER OF CHAPTERS WITHIN BOOK	PAGE
Chapter 1	Matthew	28	209
Chapter 2	Mark	16	237
Chapter 3	Luke	24	253
Chapter 4	John	21	279
Chapter 5	Acts	28	299
Chapter 6	Romans	16	313
Chapter 7	I Corinthians	16	321
Chapter 8	II Corinthians	13	329
Chapter 9	Galatians	6	333
Chapter 10	Ephesians	6	337
Chapter 11	Philippians	4	341
Chapter 12	Colossians	4	343
Chapter 13	I Thessalonians	5	345
Chapter 14	II Thessalonians	3	347
Chapter 15	I Timothy	6	349
Chapter 16	II Timothy	4	353
Chapter 17	Titus	3	355
Chapter 18	Philemon	1	357
Chapter 19	Hebrews	13	361
Chapter 20	James	5	367
Chapter 21	I Peter	5	371
Chapter 22	II Peter	3	375
Chapter 23	I John	5	377
Chapter 24	II John	1	381
Chapter 25	III John	1	383
Chapter 26	Jude	1	385
Chapter 27	Revelation	22	387

Introduction

Writing a book? What a formidable task! “I don’t want to - not my forte.” That’s what I kept saying to those who were telling me, “You ought to write a book.” I finally came to the conclusion: it was God’s will that I write this book. And when God calls, I try to listen and obey. My life is all about surrender. Unfortunately, sometimes it takes me a while to get the message!

I was prompted to summarize the Bible by comments from several people that they had tried to read the Bible on several occasions; but they became discouraged because it was so hard to understand. So, despite the desire to know what was in the Bible, these individuals “gave up.” Years ago, I felt the same way. Reading through the whole Bible seemed immensely difficult. Many parts were even boring! Other parts seemed to contradict previous sections. The history of the wars in the Old Testament boggled my mind. The Psalms and other verses in the form of poetry were confusing to me.

I really feel compassion for those who have given up on reading the Bible for these and other reasons. They are missing out on many realistic instructions on peaceful living, skills for dealing with various situations, verses that offer comfort and encouragement, insightful advice on relationships, and the consequences of inappropriate behaviors and of making unhealthy choices. Aside from missing the practical advice, they also miss the many inspirational thoughts and beautiful concepts of the Bible which are often found in hymns, gospel songs and contemporary Christian music. Still, it is quite an undertaking to read the entire Bible, especially with the intense concentration that is required to comprehend certain sections. Further, extra study is often required (and is mandated in the Bible) in order to get a solid understanding of the true message of the Bible.

I humbly offer my efforts to clarify some of the Bible’s message. I give God honor by capitalizing His name and all pronouns referring to Him, unless they are a part of a quote. Those words must be quoted exactly as they are found. Therefore, at times the spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. may appear strange compared to today’s standards and proper grammar. Although the Bible is written mostly in the past

tense, I have written this summary in the present tense.

In the text of this book, some commonly quoted verses and frequently used phrases are in **bold** print. It is surprising how many common phrases used in everyday speech were coined from the Bible! Since the Bible, as a whole, is written in the masculine gender, this book continues in that vein – only for simplicity’s sake. I hope this is not offensive to anyone. The concepts can be applied to both males and females. In some cases, to clarify quotes, words, or phrases, parentheses () are used to insert helpful information or words from other versions. I have added some of my own comments, insights and possible alternate meanings of verses in brackets [] for further clarification and skill-building. And, finally, since my daily job is counseling people in life skills, positive thinking, effective living and establishment of peace of mind, I have italicized sections that back up the therapeutic concepts I commonly discuss with clients. I hope these are all helpful in directing readers to live a more satisfying and spiritual life.

I must emphasize that I am in no way suggesting that this book can replace the Bible. This book simply gives an outline of such things as the history of the Israelites, messages from God, rules to live by, and the lives and teachings of Jesus and his disciples. I strongly encourage those who use my book to also read and study the Bible, as was intended by those who wrote it. One way to do this is to read the chapter summaries in this book (each paragraph is the brief summary of a chapter); then read the same chapter in the Bible, or vice versa. I would hate for readers to miss the ‘meat’ of the Bible by just reading this book. When readers take full advantage of their studies, they will be able to find peace and live the word of God more fully.

This is my purpose in life: to find the truth, live it, and convey it to others.

Blessings to those who embark on this journey,

Patricia Burke

OLD TESTAMENT

PART I

LAW

Chapter 1

Genesis

(Written by Moses)

In the beginning God” 1:1 creates heaven and earth: God’s Spirit moves to create light on the first day, calling it Day, and calling the darkness Night. On the second day He creates the firmament [sky] and calls it Heaven. On the third day He creates land, calling it Earth and calls the waters Seas; then He creates vegetation. On the fourth day He creates the sun, moon, and stars. On the fifth day He creates birds, fish and sea life. On the sixth day He creates animals, then He creates man in His own image: “male and female created he them.” 1:27 He gives them the plants and fruit trees for food, and gives them dominion over the animals.

2 God rests on the seventh day, blesses it, and declares it holy. He makes man from the dust of the ground and breathes the breath of life into his nostrils. He plants a garden in E’den with “the tree of life... and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” 2:9 He puts man in the garden, saying not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because if he does, he will die. [End his intimate relationship with God.] He forms the animals out of the ground and gives them to Adam to name. God sees that man needs a helper, so He creates woman from Adam’s rib. **“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”** 2:24

3 The serpent tempts Eve: if you eat the fruit, you won’t die. You’ll become like God, knowing good from evil. She eats some of the fruit, gives it to Adam, and he eats. They then notice their nakedness and they feel shame, so they make clothes from leaves. God curses the serpent and puts enmity between snakes and humans. He punishes Eve and future women with pain in childbirth and punishes Adam and future men with having to labor to obtain food. God makes them clothes from animals and banishes them from Eden. He states that man was made from dust and will return to dust. He places cherubim [angels] and a flaming sword flashing back and forth at the tree of life to guard it so man can no longer eat from it.

4 Eve has two children, Cain, who becomes a farmer, and Abel, who becomes a shepherd. They each give God a sacrifice from their labors. God accepts Abel's choice lambs, but not Cain's fruits of the soil, because the appropriate sacrifice is an animal. In jealousy, Cain kills Abel. God asks him where his brother is. He acts like he doesn't know: "**Am I my brother's keeper?**" 4:9 God sends him away, decreeing that the ground will no longer bear crops for him, so he will be a fugitive and a vagabond from now on. Cain fears he will be killed. God assures him that vengeance will fall on anyone who kills him. Cain's wife has a son, Enoch. One of his descendants, Jubal, the 1st musician, is named father of all who play the harp and organ [flute in some versions of the Bible]. Eve has another son, Seth, when she is 130 years old.

5 Adam lives 930 years. Seth lives 912 years. His son, Enos, who lives 905 years, has a son, Cainan, who lives 910 years. His son, Mahalale'el, lives 895 years. His son, Jared, lives 962 years. At 65 years of age, his son, Enoch has a son, Methuselah. He lives 300 more years and has other children; then he walks with God [leaves the earth without dying]. Methuselah lives to be 969 years old, [the oldest man in the Bible]. He fathers Lamech at 187 years of age. Lamech fathers Noah at 182 years of age, who fathers three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth after the age of 500.

6 God limits man's lifespan to 120 years. In those days, when God's sons had children with the daughters of men, the children were giants. God becomes angry with mankind for being corrupt and violent, and decides to destroy them with a flood. He tells Noah, a righteous man, to build an ark and fill it with two of each kind of animal (male and female) and enough food to survive the flood. Noah obeys God's instructions.

7 God tells Noah to take his family and seven pairs of birds and clean animals, and a pair of every unclean animal onto the ark. The flood comes when he is 600 years old. It rains 40 days and nights. Water covers the earth for 150 days.

8 After two more months, the waters recede, and the ark comes to rest on Mount Ararat. By the tenth month in the ark, the tops of the mountains appear. Noah periodically sends birds out to see if the ground is dry, but waits until God gives instructions to leave the ark two months later. Noah is now 601 years old. Upon leaving the ark, he builds an altar and offers God burnt offerings. God promises never to curse the ground

again for man's sake.

9 God tells Noah and his family to multiply. He gives them all the animals to eat, along with the plants they've been eating. He says anyone who kills another person should die because man is made in God's image. God sends a rainbow to seal His promise to never destroy the earth with a flood again. One day Noah gets drunk and passes out. His son, Ham, ancestor of the Canaanites, goes to Noah's tent and sees him naked. He tells his two older brothers. The older brothers walk in backwards, so as not to see his nakedness, and cover him. When he wakes and finds out what Ham had done, he curses Ham and his descendants to be servants of his brothers, Shem and Japheth and their descendants. Noah dies at 950 years of age.

10 Noah's descendants are listed. Ham's grandson, Nimrod, becomes a mighty warrior, who rules over Babylon, and eventually goes to Assyria and builds the city of Nineveh.

11 Everyone on earth speaks the same language when the men of Shinar decide to build a city and a tower that reaches to the heavens (the tower of Babel), to establish their greatness. God is displeased, so He makes them begin to speak different languages and scatters them over the earth. Shem's lineage to Abram is listed. Abram and his wife, Sarai, travel with his nephew, Lot, and Terah, Abram's father, toward Canaan. They settle in Haran.

12 God tells Abram to move away to a land God chooses. He obediently moves, at the age of 75, taking Sarai, who is barren, Lot, and their community. God has them settle in Canaan, saying He will give Abram's descendants this land. Abram goes to Egypt to avoid a famine. While there, he pretends Sarai is his sister. Because of her beauty, he fears the Pharaoh will kill him to take his wife. The Pharaoh takes them in, makes Sarai his wife, and treats them well. Abram acquires many servants and head of livestock. God is displeased that the Pharaoh took Abram's wife, so He inflicts Pharaoh and his household with serious diseases. When he discovers the truth about Sarai, Pharaoh banishes Abram and Sarai, allowing them to take the possessions they had acquired.

13 Abram and Sarai move away, taking Lot with them. Because the land becomes too crowded, Lot moves to Sodom, taking the Jordan plain as his land. Abram settles in Canaan. God gives him all the land he can see, and promises to bless him with many descendants.

14 War breaks out among the kings around Lot's land. Lot is captured. Abram takes 318 men to rescue him. When they return, the priest/king of Salem, Melchizedek, blesses Abram.

15 When Abram complains that he has no son, God reassures him, promising that he will not only have a son, but his descendants will be as numerous as the stars. However, He says these descendants will be oppressed for 400 years in a foreign land; then God will deliver them and return them to the land He had given them.

16 Seeing that she is barren, Sarai fears Abram will have no heirs; so she tells him to sleep with her Egyptian servant, Hagar. Abram agrees. When Hagar becomes pregnant, she begins to hate Sarai, who reacts by mistreating Hagar. Hagar runs away, but an angel finds her in the desert and tells her to go back because her son, to be named Ishmael, will have many descendants. It is also predicted that he will be wild and hostile toward his brothers. Abram is 86 years old when Ishmael is born.

17 God changes Abram's name to Abraham when he is 99 years old, making a covenant with him, and saying he will father many nations and kings. God declares that Abraham must have his male descendants and servants circumcised on the eighth day after birth. God changes Sarai's name to Sarah. She is 90 years old. God promises she will have a son. Abraham questions this promise and asks God to bless Ishmael, who is 13 years old. God agrees, and says the son Sarah will bear within a year is to be named Isaac. Abraham and all the males in his household are circumcised right away.

18 While God is talking to Abraham, three strangers arrive. Abraham invites them to sit down and have a meal, which Sarah prepares. When she overhears one of the strangers say she'll have a son within a year, she laughs because she has stopped having a monthly cycle. God repeats His promise to Abraham. God predicts that He will destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness. Abraham questions God: Will He still destroy them if there are 50 innocent people? When God replies, "No," Abraham keeps bargaining until God agrees not to destroy the cities if at least ten innocent people can be found (which they are unable to find).

19 Two angels who look like men come to Sodom. Lot invites them to his house to spend the night. Neighboring men surround his house, demanding that Lot send the two men out

so they can use them for sex. Lot protests, offering his two virgin daughters instead. The angels blind the men so they cannot find the door to force their way in. The angels reveal to Lot that they are there to destroy the city, so he needs to get his relatives out, and no one is to look back as they leave. God rains down sulfur on Sodom, Gomorrah and the surrounding land. Lot's wife is turned into a pillar of salt when she looks back as they are leaving. Lot and his two daughters flee to the mountains and live in a cave. The older daughter devises a plan to get Lot drunk so they can sleep with him, get pregnant, and preserve the family line because he is old and unlikely to find a wife. Both daughters get pregnant when he is so drunk he is unaware that they had slept with him. They name their sons Moab, who fathers the Moabites and Benammi, father of the Ammonites.

20 When Abraham moves to the region of the Negev, he introduces Sarah as his sister, fearing someone will kill him to take her. His fears are validated when King Abimelech takes her for himself. Before he touches her, God appears to him in a dream to tell him she is married and her husband is a prophet. When he gives her back and questions Abraham's motives, Abraham reveals that she is his half-sister and his wife. King Abimelech gives them slaves, silver, sheep and cattle, telling them they can live wherever they like.

21 Isaac is born to Abraham and Sarah. When he is weaned, Sarah sees Ishmael mocking him; so she tells Abraham to get rid of Hagar and her son. He sends them away after God assures him that Ishmael will father a nation, just as Isaac will. King Abimelech forms an alliance with Abraham.

22 God tests Abraham, telling him to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice on the altar. In obedience, he sets out to make the sacrifice. Just before he kills Isaac, God stops him and provides a ram for a sacrifice instead. The offspring of Nahor, Abraham's brother, are listed.

23 Sarah dies at 127 years of age in the land of Canaan. Abraham buys land from the Hittites to bury her.

24 Abraham sends a servant to find a wife for Isaac from his relatives, saying not to get a woman from the Canaanites. The servant travels to the town of Nahor, where he asks God to show him Isaac's wife-to-be. He decides that he will know that whoever offers to water his camels is to be the one. Rebekah, Nahor's granddaughter, offers to water his camels. When he

asks her to return to be Isaac's wife, she agrees. Isaac marries her when he is 40 years old.

25 Abraham marries Ke-turah. Their descendants are listed. Before Abraham dies at the age of 175, he sends his concubines and their children away with gifts, and leaves everything else to Isaac. Ishmael's descendants are listed. He dies at 137 years of age. Isaac prays to have children with Rebekah when he thinks she is barren. God answers his prayer; and they have twins, Esau and Jacob, when Isaac is 60 years old. Esau becomes a hunter, but Jacob, who Rebekah loves more, stays at home. One day while he is cooking stew, Esau comes home very hungry and begs for some of the stew. Jacob trades the stew for Esau's birthright.

26 When there is a famine, Isaac goes to Abimelech, king of the Philistines in Gerar. God tells him to stay there, and He will fulfill His promise, making Isaac's descendants as numerous as the stars. Because of Rebekah's beauty, Isaac claims she is his sister, fearing he will be killed by someone who wants her. One day Abimelech finds out the truth when he sees Isaac fondle her. He questions Isaac; then forgives him for lying. He allows Isaac to plant crops and become rich and powerful. When the people become jealous of him, Abimelech sends him away. He settles in Abraham's land in the Valley of Gerar. Isaac agrees to a peace treaty with Abimelech. At the age of 40, Esau marries two Hittite women, who cause Isaac and Rebekah grief.

27 When Isaac knows he will die soon, he calls out to Esau, saying to fix him a meal before he dies so he can give Esau his birthright. When Rebekah overhears the conversation, she tells Jacob to slaughter two goats so she can cook the meal and fool Isaac into giving the birthright to Jacob. She dresses Jacob in Esau's clothes and puts the goatskins on his hands and neck so he will be hairy like Esau. Isaac gives him the birthright and his blessing, thinking it is Esau. Esau is furious when he finds out. He threatens to kill Jacob, so Rebekah tells Jacob to go live with her brother, Laban, until Esau cools down.

28 Isaac tells Jacob to marry one of Laban's daughters, and never marry a Canaanite. When Esau hears Isaac's instructions to Jacob, he takes another wife, one of Ishmael's daughters. During Jacob's journey to Laban's house, he dreams of a stairway to heaven. God is at the top, telling him his descendants will be numerous, like the dust of the earth, and that He will protect him and give him this land (where he

dreamed). Jacob sets up a memorial and names the place Bethel. He decides to give God one tenth of his earnings if he makes it home safely.

29 Jacob meets his cousin, Rachel, who is a shepherdess in the fields. He asks Laban for her hand in marriage in exchange for seven years of his work. Laban agrees, but when the seven years is up, he tricks Jacob by sending Rachel's older sister, Leah, to sleep with him in Rachel's place. The next morning, he realizes he was tricked into marrying Leah, and again asks for Rachel. Laban gives her to him as a second wife after Jacob promises to work for him another seven years. Since Jacob doesn't love Leah, God gives her four sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah.

30 Rachel is jealous because she has no children, so she gives Jacob her servant Bilhah to have children for her. Bilhah has Dan and Naphtali. Still in competition, Leah gives Jacob her servant, Zilpah, to marry. They have two sons, Gad and Asher. One day Rachel bargains with Leah for some Mandrake roots collected by Reuben, saying Leah can sleep with Jacob for the roots. As a result of sleeping with him, Leah becomes pregnant with Issachar. Later, she has another son, Zebulun, and a daughter, Dinah, Jacob's only daughter. Rachel finally has a son, Joseph. He becomes Jacob's favorite. When Jacob decides it's time to return home, Laban convinces him to stay, agreeing to give him all the speckled and dark sheep and goats. Jacob intends to leave eventually, so he increases his portion of the flocks by trickery, while letting Laban's portion dwindle.

31 When Jacob again decides to return home, he sneaks away with his family and animals. As she is leaving, Rachel steals her father's household gods. Laban pursues them, and chastises Jacob for leaving secretly and stealing his gods. Not knowing Rachel has them, he tells Laban that if they are found, the person who has them will be killed. Rachel hides them by sitting on them and telling her father she cannot get up to greet him because she is on her monthly cycle. When the gods are not found, Jacob and Laban make peace and offer a sacrifice, agreeing not to harm each other.

32 Jacob sends a message to Esau that he is coming home. Messengers return saying Esau is coming with 400 men; so Jacob divides his family and possessions, praying God will protect them. He sends Esau gifts to appease him. Overnight he wrestles with a man, not knowing who it is. His hip is knocked

out of joint, which is why the Israelites stopped eating meat near the hip of animals. At daybreak the man blesses Jacob and gives him the name 'Israel' because he prevailed in his struggles with God and men.

33 Jacob and Esau meet in a tearful reunion. Esau accepts Jacob's gifts. Jacob sends Esau ahead and camps outside the city of Shechem.

34 When Dinah goes to meet the women of the land, she gets raped by Shechem, son of Hamor. Shechem wants her for his wife, so Hamor asks Jacob for her hand in marriage and invites Jacob to settle there so their families can intermarry. Jacob agrees, but only if all the men in Hamor's city will be circumcised. They agree, and are circumcised right away. While they are still sore from the circumcisions, Simeon and Levi sneak in and kill all the men of the city. Dinah's brothers plunder the city and take the women and children, along with their possessions. Jacob is angry at Simeon and Levi, fearing his family will now be attacked by the Canaanites and Perizzites.

35 God instructs Jacob to go settle in Bethel. Jacob complies, and builds an altar there, naming it El Bethel. God renames Jacob 'Israel,' saying He will give him Abraham's land and many descendants. Rachel dies in childbirth with Benjamin. Reuben sleeps with Bilhah, his father's concubine. Jacob's 12 sons (the tribes of Israel) are listed: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun from Leah; Joseph and Benjamin from Rachel; Dan and Naphtali from her servant, Bilhah; and Gad and Asher from Leah's servant, Zilpah. Isaac dies at 180 years of age. Jacob and Esau bury him.

36 Esau's wives and descendants are listed. They move away from Jacob, to Seir because there is not enough land for both families. Esau is father of the Edomites.

37 Jacob settles in Canaan. He gives Joseph, his favorite child, a beautiful robe. Joseph tells his father and brothers about his symbolic dreams that show he will rule over them. His brothers are jealous, so they ridicule him. They make a plan to kill him, but instead, they decide to sell him to Ishmaelite merchants who are passing by, who later sell him to an officer of the pharaoh.

38 Judah finds a wife (Tamar) for his son, Er. God kills Er because he is evil, so Judah tells his next son, Onan, to sleep with Tamar to have sons for his brother. He does not want to

have children that won't be his own, so he spills his seed on the ground. God kills him for doing this. Judah then sends Tamar home to her parents, telling her to wait for his next son to grow up and be her husband, although he does not intend to give him to her, for fear he will die too. Judah's wife dies, and he goes to Timnath to do business. Tamar, knowing he is there, devises a scheme to trick him. She disguises herself and goes and sits at the gate. He thinks she is a prostitute, so he offers her a goat if she will sleep with him. She agrees, and asks to keep his seal, cord, and walking stick until he brings her the goat. When he later hears Tamar is pregnant as a result of prostitution, he orders her to be brought out and burned to death. She shows him his things to prove he is the father, so he lets her live. She has twins, Perez and Zarah.

39 Joseph is taken to Egypt. He becomes successful in everything he does, and is put in charge of the captain of the palace guard's household. The captain's wife tries to seduce him, but when he refuses to sleep with her, she accuses him of trying to rape her. He is thrown into prison. The warden eventually puts him in charge of the prison, which he runs well.

40 Joseph interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's baker and cupbearer, who are in prison. His predictions come true.

41 Two years later, Pharaoh sends for Joseph to interpret his dreams. Joseph does so, predicting a seven year famine and telling Pharaoh how to prepare for it. Seeing Joseph's wisdom, Pharaoh places him over all of Egypt, when he is 30 years old. Pharaoh renames him Zaphnath-paaneah and gives him a wife. They have two sons, Manasseh, and Ephraim.

42 Jacob sends his ten oldest sons, Joseph's brothers, to Egypt to buy grain during the famine predicted by Joseph. When they arrive in Egypt, they do not recognize Joseph, but he recognizes them. He tricks them into bringing Benjamin by keeping Simeon.

43 Jacob refuses to send Benjamin until after all their food is gone. When they can last no longer, they return to Joseph. He has a feast for his brothers, still not letting them know who he is.

44 Joseph tricks his brothers when they leave, making it look like they stole from him. When he sends his steward after them, they are shocked to find some of his treasures and money in their bags. They return and apologize to Joseph.

45 Joseph finally reveals who he is in a tearful reunion.

Pharaoh has him send for the entire family, despite the fact that Egyptians hate Hebrews.

46 Jacob fearfully comes to Egypt with his whole family. His descendants are listed.

47 Pharaoh gives Joseph's family choice land in Goshen and asks them to tend his flocks. During the famine Joseph trades food for livestock and land until all of Egypt belongs to the Pharaoh. After 17 years in Egypt, Jacob makes Joseph swear to bury him in his own land when he dies.

48 Knowing he is going to die, Jacob blesses Joseph's two sons, putting the younger, Ephraim, before Manasseh, saying they will both become great, but Ephraim will be greater, and his descendants will be numerous.

49 Jacob dies at 147 years of age after giving his sons his blessings.

50 Jacob's body is buried in Canaan, as he had requested. Before Joseph dies at 110 years of age, he makes his brothers swear to take his remains and return to Abraham's land to bury him there.

Chapter 2

Exodus

(Written by Moses)

The Israelites multiply in Egypt so much that the new pharaoh fears they will turn on the Egyptians during war-time. He makes them slaves and tells their midwives to kill the baby boys when they are born. Fearing God, the midwives don't follow his orders, so he tells his people to throw all Israelite baby boys into the Nile.

2 Ignoring the pharaoh's order, Moses' mother, a Levite, hides Moses for three months. She then puts him in a basket in the river near the pharaoh's home. His daughter finds him and adopts him, ironically allowing her servant (his mother) to be his caretaker. When Moses grows up, he kills an Egyptian for beating a Hebrew slave. The next day, he tells a Hebrew to stop abusing a fellow Hebrew. The man rebukes Moses, asking if Moses wants to kill him like he killed the Egyptian. When the Pharaoh hears about the incident, he plans to have Moses executed. Moses hears of the plan and flees to Midian. He helps a priest's daughters water their flock, and ends up marrying one of them (Zipporah).

3 God talks to Moses from a burning bush, telling him to lead His people out of Egypt to end their suffering and fulfill the covenant with Abraham. Moses asks God what he should tell those who ask what God's name is. God says, "**I AM THAT I AM**: and said... say... I AM hath sent me unto you." 3:14 He instructs Moses to gather the elders and tell them the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob acknowledges their suffering and promises to bring the Israelites out of their misery to "**a land flowing with milk and honey**," 3:17 the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. God instructs Moses to take the elders to Pharaoh and ask to go on a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to their God. The women are to ask neighbors for clothing, gold and silver, in an effort to plunder Egypt as they leave.

4 Moses wonders how he can make the people believe him, so he questions God about how to do this. God shows him that when he throws his staff down it will turn into a snake that he

can make himself have leprosy and cure himself, and that he can turn water into blood by pouring the water on the ground. He protests that he is unable to speak eloquently, so God tells him to take his brother, Aaron, to be his spokesperson when he asks Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave.

5 When Moses and Aaron plead with Pharaoh, he becomes more brutal to the Israelites.

6 The people become angry at Moses for worsening their situation. He complains to God, asking how Pharaoh will listen to him if the people won't even listen to him.

7 God tells Moses and Aaron what to say to Pharaoh, but predicts that he will refuse to let the people go at first. But when he does allow them to leave, the Egyptians will acknowledge that He is God. When Moses is 80 years old and Aaron is 83, they go to Pharaoh. Even though Moses turns his staff into a snake and turns the water in the Nile into blood, Pharaoh does not agree to his requests.

8 Because of Pharaoh's stubbornness, God sends plagues of frogs, gnats, and flies. Pharaoh agrees to allow the Hebrews to go make sacrifices if Moses will stop the plagues. When he stops them, Pharaoh again refuses to let the people go.

9 God sends more plagues: killing all the Egyptians, then plagues of boils, and hail that destroys everything; but again Pharaoh goes against his word after agreeing to allow them to go.

10 When Pharaoh continues to refuse to let the people go worship God, He sends plagues of locusts that eat everything green in Egypt, then envelopes the Egyptians (not the Hebrews) in darkness for three days. Pharaoh then says they can go worship God, but when Moses asks for sacrifices, he again refuses to allow the Israelites to leave. He tells Moses not to come before him again or he will die.

11 Moses predicts that all firstborn sons in Egypt will die, but the Israelites will be "passed over" [the beginning of Passover]. Pharaoh still refuses to let them go.

12 God tells Moses this month is to be the first month of their year. He instructs them on how to eat lambs, smearing some of the blood on their door frames so they will be "passed over" when God has all first born sons in the land killed. God says to observe the Feast of the Unleavened Bread during the third week every year to commemorate their exodus. After the first born children of each family are killed, Pharaoh tells Moses

they can go worship God. The Israelites ask the Egyptians for clothing, silver and gold, plundering Egypt as they leave, as God had instructed. Six hundred thousand men leave with their families and livestock. They had been in Egypt 430 years.

13 God starts a new tradition: that every firstborn be consecrated to Him to commemorate the Passover. He guides the people out of Egypt by cloud during the day and by fire at night.

14 God has the Israelites act as if they are wandering the desert in confusion. When he hears that his slaves are trying to escape, Pharaoh chases after them with his soldiers. Moses parts the Red Sea so the Israelites can cross. The soldiers follow them; but the sea closes in on them after the Israelites pass through. The whole army is drowned.

15 The Israelites sing and dance in celebration at first; but after they travel three days in the desert, unable to find water, they begin to grumble against Moses, so God shows him how to turn rancid water into clean water.

16 The people grumble about having no food; so God rains down manna from heaven, instructing them to gather it the first six days of the week, and to gather twice as much on the sixth day. They are to always rest on the seventh day to celebrate the sabbath. For 40 years, He sends the bread for them to eat in the mornings and meat for food in the evenings.

17 When they complain of having no water, God provides it by having Moses strike a rock with his staff. The Amalekites attack the Israelites. Joshua leads the Israelites into battle. They are victorious as long as Moses holds up his hands, so Aaron and Hur help hold his hands up when he gets tired.

18 Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brings Moses' wife, Zipporah, and two sons, Gershom and Eliezer to him in the desert. When Moses realizes he spends all day judging disputes, Jethro advises him to appoint judges, rather than do it all himself. He takes the advice, then sends Jethro home to his own country.

19 In the 3rd month after leaving Egypt, the Israelites camp in the Sinai desert, near Mount Sinai. God tells Moses to inform the people that God will make them His priests and a holy nation. When they agree to do as God commands, He announces that He will show Himself in a cloud at the mountain on the third day, after Moses consecrates them. He warns that while He is there, anyone who touches the mountain will be killed. God descends on the mountain in

smoke, with thunder, lightning and a loud trumpet blast. He calls Moses up to the top, reminding him to keep the people off the mountain, but to bring Aaron with him.

20 God gives Moses the Ten Commandments: **Have no other gods/images; Don't misuse God's name; Remember the Sabbath (seventh) day and keep it holy; Honor your parents; Don't murder; Don't commit adultery; Don't steal; Don't give false testimony; Don't covet others' wives or property.** He gives instructions for making altars for sacrifices.

21 God gives rules for dealing with servants and lists consequences of violence and other inappropriate behaviors, such as harming others' property or family. He stipulates an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, etc.

22 God gives the people rules for dealing with theft and problems regarding others' property, for seducing virgins, for sorcery, sex with animals, worshiping other gods, treatment of aliens, widows and orphans, rules for lending money, blaspheming, cursing a ruler, for making offerings, for giving firstborn sons and livestock to God, and for eating the meat of animals killed by wild beasts.

23 God gives rules on justice, dealing with others appropriately, managing crops, resting on the sabbath, invoking other gods, and observing holidays. God says He will send an angel ahead of His people to guard them and lead them to the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who will be destroyed by God. He outlines their borders and tells them to worship Him.

24 God calls Moses up the mountain, where he stays for 40 days.

25 God names offerings He wants from the people. He says to build Him a sanctuary and to make the Arc of the covenant, a table and a golden candlestick, giving the specifications for building these things.

26 God gives specifics of how the tabernacle is to be made.

27 God gives specifics of how the altar and the courtyard for the tabernacle are to be constructed.

28 God gives instructions on making clothes for Aaron and his sons to wear while serving as His priests. They are to use gold, blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, fine linen, and gems to represent the 12 tribes: sardius, topaz, carbuncle, sapphire, emerald, diamond, ligure, agate, amethyst, beryl, onyx, and jasper. The names of the 12 tribes of Israel are to be written on onyx

stones, which will be worn on the shoulders.

29 God gives instructions on consecrating and ordaining Aaron and his sons as priests.

30 God gives instructions for making an altar for burning incense, for atonement offerings, for the priests' wash basin, anointing oil, and incense.

31 God promises to give craftsmen the skills to do all that He asks. He outlines instructions for keeping the sabbath – anyone who works on the seventh day is to be put to death. He gives Moses the tablets with the Ten Commandments on them.

32 God informs Moses that He is going to destroy the Israelites because they are worshiping a golden calf they have made (as directed by Aaron) because they didn't know what happened to Moses since he had been gone 40 days. Moses pleads with God to give the people another chance; and God relents. Moses and Joshua return to the people. Moses, furious at what he sees, breaks the Ten Commandments on the golden calf. He burns the calf then grinds it into powder and puts it in water, which he makes the people drink. He gives the people a chance to turn back to God, and has Aaron and the Levites kill those who remain stubborn and sinful. God strikes the people with a plague for their sin.

33 God sends them on to the “land flowing with milk and honey,” 33:3 saying He will not go with this stiff-necked people, and He may even destroy them along the way. He has Moses tell the people to take off their ornaments, which they do in fear. Moses goes into the tent of meeting, where he typically goes to talk to God. He asks to see God, who refuses to let Moses see His face because no one can see it and live. However, God says He will allow Moses to see Him from behind after He passes by.

34 God calls Moses back up the mountain, and announces that He is a jealous God, so the people are to destroy the gods and altars of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and they are to make no treaties with them. He discusses the terms of His covenant with the Israelites. Moses talks with God 40 days without food or drink. God gives him the Ten Commandments again. His face is glowing when he returns.

35 Moses reminds the people about observing the sabbath, and tells them what God said about building the tabernacle and about Aaron and his sons serving as priests.

36 When the people bring offerings to build the sanctuary and tabernacle, the craftsmen begin work.

37 Bezalel makes the ark from acacia wood, overlaid with gold. The table, candlestick with seven lamps, and the altar of incense are also made with acacia wood and gold.

38 The altar of burnt offerings, the basin for washing, the courtyard, the tent of meeting, and the tabernacle are made as God had instructed.

39 Blue, purple, and scarlet priestly garments are made for Aaron and his sons.

40 The tent of meetings is set up with the things made for it, as God had instructed. Moses anoints everything. God's glory fills the tabernacle with a cloud. During their travels, when the cloud lifts from over the tabernacle, the Israelites move on. A fire in the cloud at night guides their travels.

NEW TESTAMENT

The Gospel

PART V

The Life and Teachings of

JESUS

Chapter 1

Matthew

The genealogy of Jesus is listed: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judas, Phares, Esrom, Aram, Aminadab, Naasson, Salmon,

Booz, Obed, Jesse, David, Solomon, Roboam, Abia, Asa, Josaphat, Joram, Ozias, Joatham, Achaz, Ezekias, Mnasses, Amon, Josias, Jechonias, Salathiel, Zorobabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor, Sadoc, Achim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, and Joseph. From Abraham to King David is 14 generations; then from David to Josias and the Babylonian exile is 14 generations; then from Josias to Jesus is 14 generations.

When Mary is betrothed to Joseph, she becomes pregnant with Jesus. An angel appears to Joseph, who was considering leaving her. The angel says she is pregnant by the Holy Spirit, and the baby is to be named Jesus. This was predicted by a prophet, who said he would be called Emmanuel, which means God with us. Joseph marries Mary, but does not consummate the marriage until after Jesus is born.

2 When Jesus is born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the east see His star and follow it to Jerusalem to worship him. King Herod is troubled. He asks the chief priests and scribes where Christ is to be born. They reply that he is to be born in Bethlehem, for the prophet wrote: “for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.” 2:6 Herod asks the wise men when the star appeared; then sends them to Bethlehem to find the child, and return to tell him where the baby is. They follow the star to Jesus, give him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh; then return home without telling Herod because of a warning in a dream. An angel tells Joseph to take Jesus to Egypt because Herod plans to kill Jesus. He leaves obediently, and stays in Egypt until Herod dies. Herod, angry that the wise men mocked him by not returning to give him the information he requested, has all baby boys in Bethlehem under two years of age killed, as predicted by Jeremiah the prophet: there was weeping and great mourning in Rama “and [she] would not be comforted, because they” 2:18 (the children) are dead. After Herod dies, an angel tells Joseph to return to Israel. This was predicted by the prophet who said, “Out of Egypt, have I called my son.” 2:15 When Joseph hears that Herod’s son reigns in Judea, in fear, he takes Jesus to Nazareth in Galilee and raises Him there, fulfilling the prophecy: “He shall be called a Nazarene.” 2:23

3 John the Baptist preaches in the wilderness, warning, “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” 3:2, as prophesied by Isaiah. “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” 3:3 John’s clothes are made of camel’s hair and leather. He eats locusts and wild honey, and baptizes people all around Jerusalem and Judea. He calls the Pharisees and Sadducees a generation of vipers, asking who warned them to flee from the wrath that is coming. He says the axe is ready to cut down every tree that doesn’t bring forth good fruit. They will be cast into the fire. “I indeed baptize you with water... but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” 3:11 Jesus has been baptized, he leaves the water, and “the heavens were opened unto him, and he [John] saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him [Jesus]: And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” 3:16, 17

4 The Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness so he can be tempted by the devil. He is

hungry after fasting forty days and nights. The devil comes and tells him if he is the Son of God, he can turn the rocks into bread. Jesus answers by quoting the scriptures: **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”** 4:4 Then the devil takes him to the highest point of the temple in the holy city and tells him to throw himself down if he is the Son of God, because the scriptures say the angels will lift him up so he won't dash his foot on a stone. Jesus rebuts that it is also written in the scriptures: **“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”** 4:7 The devil takes him up a high mountain to show him all the world's kingdoms. He tempts Jesus: if Jesus will bow down and worship him, Jesus can have it all. Jesus tells Satan to get away from Him, again quoting scripture: “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” 4:10 So, Satan leaves and angels come minister to him.

When Jesus hears John is in prison, he returns to Galilee and goes to Capernaum, which is on the coast bordering Zabulon and Nephthalim to fulfill Isaiah's prophecy that in the lands of Zabulon and Nephthalim, the people who were in darkness saw a great light: light has sprung up to those in the shadow of death. Jesus begins to preach, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” 4:17

Jesus calls to Simon (called Peter) and his brother, Andrew, who are fishing: **“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”** 4:19 He then calls two other brothers, James and John, who are fishing with their father. They follow Him. He goes throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, “preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and... disease among the people.” 4:23 Large crowds bring sick, mentally ill and possessed people and follow Him.

5 Jesus teaches His disciples on a mountainside, saying, [the Beatitudes]:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.” 5:3- 11

Rejoice: your reward is great in heaven, for in the past they persecuted the prophets in the same way.

Jesus declares, “Ye are the salt of the earth.” 5:13 But once salt has lost its saltiness, how can salt become salty again? Without its saltiness, it is good for nothing, except to be thrown away. “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel” 5:14, 15 [basket]. They put it on a candlestick so it can light the house. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” 5:16 Jesus asserts that he came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it: not one jot or tittle, not even the tiniest part of the law shall change until all is fulfilled. Those who break any commandment and teach others to do so also shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but those who obey and teach the commandments shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. He says to be righteous to get to heaven. He teaches: although it was said, “Thou shalt not kill,” 5:21 anyone who is angry with others without cause

shall be in danger of judgment; and whosoever calls someone “fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.” 5:22 So, reconcile with others before offering gifts at the altar, and settle matters with others to avoid being taken to court. Although it was said, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” 5:27 *anybody who looks at “a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee” 5:28, 29, for it is more profitable for one part of the body to perish than for the whole body to be cast into hell. Get rid of any part that causes you to sin. Anybody who gets a divorce from his wife, except because of fornication, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries her commits adultery. Make oaths only to God. Don’t swear: not by heaven, which is God’s throne; by the earth, which is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, the great King’s city; or by your head, because you can’t make any of your hairs white or black. Just say ‘yes’ or ‘no.’ Anything more comes from evil. Despite the Old Testament saying, ‘an eye for an eye,’ Jesus remarks: rather than fighting, **turn the other cheek**: don’t resist evil: if anyone hits you on one cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone tries to sue you and take your coat, give him your cloak also. If anyone compels you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give to those who ask, and don’t turn anyone who tries to borrow from you away. The scriptures say to love your neighbor, but Jesus says to “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you” 5:44 so you can be God’s children. God sends the rain and the sun to the just as well as to the unjust. What reward is there in loving someone who loves you? Therefore, “Be... perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” 5:48

6 Jesus gives instructions for righteous living: Do not give or pray so you will be noticed by others; give and pray in private so you will be rewarded by God. When praying, don’t use vain repetitions like heathens, for they think they shall be heard because of their many words. Your Father knows your needs before you ask Him. Pray like this: “**Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.** For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” 6:9-15 When fasting, don’t look sad and unkempt to show you are fasting. Do it secretly, and God will reward you. **Don’t save up treasures upon earth, where thieves steal and moth and rust corrupts, but lay up your treasures in heaven, where there are no thieves, moths, or rust. “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye:”** 6:21, 22 If your eye is on the straight and narrow, you will be full of light. But if your eye is on evil, you will be full of darkness. “**Ye cannot serve God and mammon**” 6:24 [money]. *Don’t think twice [or worry] about your life, what you shall eat, drink, or wear.* Animals and plants don’t worry, and God provides for them. *Worrying doesn’t change anything:* You can’t add one inch to your height by worrying. The lilies don’t worry or labor, yet even Solomon with all his riches wasn’t dressed in such beauty as they are. God can clothe you better than you can clothe yourself. Have faith. God knows what you need. “But **seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;**” 6:33 and you will receive all these things. **Take therefore no thought of tomorrow, for tomorrow will take care of itself.** Every day already has enough evil without us adding to it by worrying.

7 Jesus says, **judge not**, so you won’t be judged. For **by the method you use to**

judge others, you shall be judged: as you measure, you will be measured. How can you help others when you are still flawed and sinful? How can you see what's in your neighbor's eye if you have something in your own eye? **"First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then you shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."** 7:5 Don't offer what is holy to dogs or pigs, or you could be trampled. [Don't offer information or important things to those who don't want what you have to offer. If you do, you may get hurt.] **"Ask, and it shall be given [to] you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it [the door] shall be opened unto you,"** 7:7 for those who ask receive, those who seek find, and the door shall be opened to those who knock. If you are able to care for your children, "how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him." 7:11 Jesus gives the Golden Rule: ***treat others the way you want to be treated***, for this is the basis of the law. **"Enter ye in at the strait [narrow] gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction... narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it... Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits."** 7:13 – 16 Good trees [and people] bear good fruit, and the bad bear bad fruit. Those that don't bear good fruit are "hewn down, and cast into the fire." 7:19 Jesus warns that only those who do God's will enter heaven. The wise person practices what Jesus preached, and they have a firm foundation. If not, they are like a house built on sand, which crashes when hit with adversity. The crowds are astonished at Jesus' teachings and air of authority.

8 Crowds follow Jesus as he comes down from the mountains. He cures a man with leprosy and says not to tell anyone, but to go to the priest and offer the gift prescribed by Moses.

When Jesus enters Capernaum, a centurion asks him to cure his sick servant (without coming to his house). Jesus is amazed by his faith when he tells Jesus to just **"speak the word, and my servant shall be healed."** 8:8 Jesus heals the servant [long distance]. He says, "many shall come from the east and west" 8:11 to be with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but many "children of the kingdom shall be cast out into the darkness: there shall be **weeping and gnashing of teeth.**" 8:12

Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law and casts out spirits from those possessed by devils. When a teacher of the Law asks if he can follow Jesus, he replies that he is homeless: animals have homes; but he has nowhere to lay his head.

When a disciple asks for permission to go bury his father before following Jesus, Jesus tells him "Follow me; and let the dead [those who do not live in the light] bury their dead." 8:22

While Jesus is asleep in a ship with the disciples, a storm comes up on the lake. Affected by the chaos outside, they frantically wake Jesus. He remarks at their lack of faith, wondering why they are so afraid. When he projects his calm out onto the environment the storm stops. The disciples wonder what type of man he is, "that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" 8:27

When Jesus comes to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, two fierce men possessed with devils who keep people from passing by ask Jesus if he came to torment them. The devils ask Jesus to allow them to enter a herd of pigs nearby if he is going to cast them out of the men. When he agrees and the devils move into the pigs, they run off the cliff and drown in the sea below. The townspeople come and beg Jesus to leave.

9 Jesus forgives the sins of a man with palsy. The teachers of the law criticize him for

blaspheming. Knowing their thoughts, he shows he has the authority to forgive sins by healing the man, telling him to arise, take up his bed [mat] and go home. The crowd glorifies God in awe.

Jesus calls Matthew, a tax collector, to follow him. When he goes to Matthew's house, Jesus is criticized by the Pharisees for hanging out with sinners and publicans. He says that the whole (healthy) don't need a physician, the sick do. But pay attention to this: **I want mercy, and not sacrifice**: "for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." 9:13

When John's disciples ask Jesus why his disciples don't fast, he replies that his disciples will fast after he is gone. He compares them to the guests of a bridegroom: they don't mourn while he is with them. By the same token, one doesn't mend an old garment with new cloth or "put new wine into old bottles" 9:17 because the old bottles would break, and the old garment would tear worse. A ruler asks Jesus to come raise his dead daughter back to life. On the way to her, a woman with an issue of blood (for 12 years) comes up and touches "the hem of his garment," 9:20 thinking it will heal her. He turns and says, "be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole" 9:22, and she is healed. When He arrives at the dead girl's house, he tells the mourners, to leave because the girl is just sleeping. They scoff at him, but when he takes her hand, she gets up. After leaving, two blind men follow him, asking him to have mercy on them (and heal them). Jesus asks if they believe he can do it. Since they believe, he restores their sight, saying, "According to your faith be it [done] unto you" 9:29, and says to tell no one. They spread the news anyway.

Jesus casts a devil out of a man. The crowd marvels. The Pharisees say he casts "out devils through the prince of devils." 9:34 Jesus goes through the cities and villages healing, teaching in the synagogues and "preaching the gospel of the kingdom." 9:35 He sees that the people are like sheep with no shepherd, so he tells his disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few" 9:37; therefore, they should pray that the Lord of the harvest will send laborers out to his field.

10 Jesus calls his disciples to heal disease and sickness and cast out unclean spirits.

The 12 apostles are listed: Simon (Peter); his brother, Andrew; James; his brother, John; Philip; Bartholomew; Thomas; Matthew; James; Lebbeus Thaddaeus; Simon; and Judas Iscariot. Jesus sends them to go to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" 10:6 to preach: "**The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**" 10:7 He tells them to give healing and raise the dead freely: "Freely you have received, freely give." 10:8 They are instructed not to take any money or provisions or extra clothing, Mark 6:8 for they are to stay with people who will put them up while they stay wherever they decide to teach, blessing the homes with peace if they prove worthy; otherwise, "let your peace return to you." 10:13 Jesus says, if you are not welcomed, or if they won't listen to you, **shake the dust of that town off your feet** and leave. That town will be punished worse than Sodom and Gomorrah. "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: **be... wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.**" 10:16 Be aware that there are men who may bring accusations against you and scourge you in the synagogues. You will be taken before governors and kings because of me to testify against them and the Gentiles. But don't concern yourself about what you should say, because you will know what to say when it is time, for the Spirit of your Father will speak from within you. People will betray each other, will even betray their own relatives; and you "shall be hated... for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." 10:22 When people persecute you, flee. People tend to be like the master of their house: evil or good. Nothing remains hidden: all will be exposed. What I tell you, **preach from the housetops**. Don't be afraid of them which kill the

body but are not able to kill the soul. Rather, fear Him [God] “which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” 10:27, 28 You are worth more than sparrows: God takes care of them. “But the very **hairs of your head are all numbered.**” 10:30 **I will tell my Father in heaven about those who announce to men that they know me. I will deny those who deny me.** I did not come to bring peace, but a sword: to set man against man: a man’s own household will become his enemies [because people will disagree about Jesus’ teachings and religion.] Anyone who loves others “more than me is not worthy of me” 10:37 and those who don’t pick up their crosses and follow me are not worthy of me. “**He that findeth [finds] his life shall lose it: and he that loseth [loses] his life for my sake shall find it.**” 10:39 [One who always puts himself first, loses/neglects his (spiritual) life; but if he loses the ego, which is always self-seeking, he shall find true life.] Jesus notes that anyone who accepts his disciples accepts him; and he who receives Jesus, receives Him who sent Jesus (God). Those who accept prophets and righteous men receive the same reward as a prophet or a righteous man. Anyone who gives a cup of cold water to a little one in the name of a disciple will be rewarded.

11 While John is imprisoned, he sends two of his disciples to ask if Jesus is the messiah. Jesus says to tell John what Jesus has been doing: curing people’s illnesses and infirmities, restoring sight to the blind, raising the dead, and preaching the good news to the poor: his works should speak for him. He asks the multitude what they expected to see: a prophet, or someone in nice clothes? He says (about John the Baptist) “this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger... which shall prepare thy way before thee.” 11:10 No one greater than John the Baptist has come along. “And if ye will receive it, this is Elias (Elijah), which was... to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” 11:14, 15 Jesus compares the people to children calling out that they played a song, but no one danced; they sang a sad song, but no one mourned –meaning that John and Jesus were not appreciated because of how they presented themselves (John’s poverty and Jesus’ eating with sinners). Jesus denounces the cities where He performed miracles “because they repented not.” 11:20 He declares that they will be punished worse than Sodom was. He comments that only the Father knows him, and only he knows the Father and those to whom he decides to reveal the Father. “**Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.** Take my yoke upon you, and learn of [from] me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For **my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.**” 11:28-30

12 Jesus is criticized by the Pharisees for allowing his disciples to pick some corn to eat as they go through the cornfields on the sabbath day. He defends himself by recalling how David and his hungry companions ate the showbread which was only for the priests. He continues to say that one greater than the temple is in this place, but if they had known what was meant by the words, “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,” 12:7 they wouldn’t have condemned the guiltless [him]. “For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.” 12:8 The Pharisees plot to kill Jesus for healing a man with a shriveled hand on the sabbath. He lets it be known that it is okay to do good works on the sabbath, noting that the men would help their sheep if it fell into a pit on the sabbath. Yet, a man is more valuable than a sheep.

As Jesus heals, he requests that those who are healed not reveal who he is. Isaiah’s prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus: God said He would put His Spirit in His servant, and he would show judgment to the Gentiles. He is a bruised reed, but won’t break till he sends out judgment and becomes victorious. The Gentiles will trust in his name.

When Jesus heals a demon-possessed man who is deaf and mute, the people are

amazed. They ask if this could be the Son of David. This angers the Pharisees, who say he does these things “by Beelzebub the prince of demons.” 12:24 Jesus, knowing their thoughts, says, “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself.” 12:25, 26 So, how can his kingdom stand? Yet, “if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.” 12:25 One cannot rob a strong man without tying him up first. “He that is not with me is against me.” 12:30 Those who aren’t gathering with me are scattering. Jesus declares that **“blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven.”** 12:31 Any other sin can be forgiven, even blasphemy against Jesus. People are like trees: good trees produce good fruit; corrupt trees produce corrupt fruit, “for the tree is known by his fruit.” 12:33 Jesus calls the corrupt people a generation of vipers, asking how can an evil person say good things, “for *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*” 12:34 Good things come out of good people. It comes from the good stored in their hearts; likewise, evil comes forth from evil people. People will have to give account for every idle word they speak on the day of judgment. For ***by your words you shall be justified or condemned.*** Jesus refuses to give a miraculous sign to the Pharisees and teachers of the law who ask for one. He says that the only sign that will be given is that of the prophet Jonas (Jonah), who was swallowed by a fish. He stayed in its belly three days: “so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth... and, behold, a greater [man] than Jonas is here... and, behold, a greater [man] than Solomon is here.” 12:40-42 Teachings of the ways of evil spirits: When the unclean spirit leaves a person, it goes “through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.” 12:43 So, it returns to the house it left, which has been swept clean. He brings seven other, more wicked spirits with him. “And the last state of that man is worse than the first.” 12:45 When his mother and brothers come looking for him, Jesus says that his brother, sister, and mother are those who do the will of his Father in heaven.

13 Jesus gets into a ship to talk to the multitude on shore. He tells parables, saying, those who have ears, “let him hear.” 13:9 A sower sows seed (the word of God). Some falls by the wayside and the birds eat it, (representing the devil snatching the teachings away from those who don’t understand them). Some falls on stony places and spring up quickly, but die soon in the shallow soil because they have no roots (representing the teachings being received with joy, but being short-lived when tribulation and persecution comes). Some seed falls among the thorns and grows up to be choked out by the thorns (representing a person hearing the word, but the concerns of the world “and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word.” 13:22 Some falls on good soil and produces a good crop, which represents people who understand the word and are fruitful with good works. The disciples ask why he speaks in parables, to which he replies that the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are to be given to the disciples, but not to the people. More will be given to those who have, so they will have abundance, but from those who don’t have, what they have will be taken away. This is why Jesus speaks in parables: even though they see, they don’t really see [perceive the meaning], and even though they hear, they don’t understand. This fulfills the prophecies of Isaiah, which describe the hearts of the people as hardened. Isaiah 6:9, 19 If they weren’t, they could see, hear and understand, and turn, and be healed. He says the disciples are blessed because they see and hear what “many prophets and righteous men have desired to see.” 13:17

Jesus tells another parable about a man (representing Jesus) who sows wheat (the Word of God); then the enemy (the devil) sows tares (weeds) in his field (the world). He notices the tares (the children of the wicked one), and knowing who planted them,

allows them to grow together with the wheat (children of God) so the roots of the good crop won't be disturbed by pulling the weeds. At harvest time (the end of time) he tells his servants (the angels) to burn the weeds, and to bring the wheat into his barn (the righteous into heaven).

Jesus tells a parable likening the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed. Though it is the smallest of seeds, it grows to be a tree, where the birds come to perch. He then likens the kingdom of heaven to yeast, which permeates the dough.

He speaks in parables to fulfill the prophet's prediction: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." 13:35 The kingdom of heaven is likened to a treasure hidden in a field, and to a very valuable pearl: when found, the person sells all he has to acquire it [indicating that we should seek the kingdom of heaven above all else.] The kingdom of heaven is likened to a net that collects many fish. The good ones are kept, and the bad are thrown away. "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." 13:49, 50 Jesus explains that the scribes (teachers of the law) who know about the kingdom of heaven are like householders who bring out new and old treasures. The people are amazed at Jesus' teachings, wondering where he learned such things. They ask, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary?" 13:55 Aren't his brothers James, Joses (Joseph), Simon, and Judas? And don't his sisters live here too? Jesus replies that a prophet is not honored in his own country and in his own home. He does few miracles "there because of their unbelief." 13:58

14 Herod remarks to his servants that Jesus is John the Baptist, "risen from the dead." 14:2 Herod had put John in prison because John had reprimanded him for taking his brother's wife, Herodias. When Herodias' daughter dances for Herod at his birthday celebration, he promises her anything she wants. Herodias had instructed her to ask for John's head on a platter. Regretfully, Herod grants her wish. Jesus goes to a desert place when he hears of this. People follow him, so he heals the sick and feeds over 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish. There are 12 baskets of food left over when the people finish eating.

When Jesus learns of the death of John the Baptist, he goes to the desert to be alone. In the evening, he walks across the water to where the ship is being tossed about by the waves. The disciples become afraid, thinking he is a spirit. Peter asks Jesus to call him out onto the water. When he does so, Peter walks on the water until he turns his attention to the wind, and begins to doubt himself. When he begins to sink, he calls on Jesus to save him. Jesus takes him by the hand, asking why he doubted, "O thou of little faith." 14:31 The wind stops when they get into the ship; and the men say that he must really be the Son of God." 14:33 They land at Gennesaret, and the sick come to Jesus to be healed. Those who "touch the hem of his garment" 14:36 are healed.

15 Some scribes and Pharisees criticize Jesus' disciples for breaking tradition and not washing their hands before eating. Jesus replies by asking why they break God's command for their tradition. "For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth his father or mother, let him die the death." 15:4 But you hypocrites say you are giving to God what you would have given to your parents, nullifying God's decree to keep your tradition. Isaiah prophesied rightly about you: This people draws near to Me with their lips, honoring Me, "but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." 15: 8, 9 Jesus announces to the crowd that *it is not that which goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but that which comes out of the mouth: this is what defiles*

a person. [This is why we should not take anything anyone says to us personally.] The disciples point out that the Pharisees are offended by his words. He calls the Pharisees blind leaders of the blind: “if **the blind lead the blind**, both shall fall into the ditch.” 15:14 When Peter asks for an explanation of the parable, Jesus asks, Are you still not understanding? Anything that goes into the mouth goes into the belly; then leaves the body. “But *those things that proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:* These are the things which defile a man.” 15:18-20

Jesus goes to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A persistent Canaanite woman begs him to save her daughter from demon-possession. After ignoring her for a while, he says he was only sent “unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” 15:24 When she keeps pleading, he says it is inappropriate to give the children’s bread to dogs. She replies, “yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.” 15:27 He heals her daughter at that moment because of her great faith.

Jesus goes along the Sea of Galilee and up a mountain, healing and teaching. After the crowd had been following him for three days, he feeds them – over 4,000 people – with seven loaves of bread and a few fish. There are seven baskets of food left over after they finish eating. Then Jesus goes to the vicinity of Magdala.

16 The Pharisees and Sadducees ask Jesus for a sign from heaven to test him. He replies that they know how to predict the weather based on the sky, but are unable to “discern the signs of the times. A wicked and adulterous generation” 16:3, 4 seeks a sign, but will be given none but the sign of the prophet Jonas (Jonah.) Jesus tells the disciples to “beware of the leaven (teachings) of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.” 16:6 At first, they think he said this because they had brought no bread. He reminds them of how he fed the multitudes, and had leftovers.

Jesus asks who the people think he is. They reply, “Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others, Jeremias or one of the prophets.” 16:14 He asks who the apostles say he is, to which Simon Peter answers, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 16:16 Jesus says Peter is blessed, for this was revealed to him by “my Father which is in heaven... thou art Peter, and upon this rock [God’s revelation] I will build my church... And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: **and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose [forgive] on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**” 16:17-19 Then he warns the disciples to avoid telling people he is the Christ. Jesus begins to inform the disciples that he has to go to Jerusalem, suffer through abuse from the elders, chief priests and scribes; then be killed, and be raised on the third day. When Peter rebukes this prediction, Jesus says, “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for” 16:23 you savor the things [will] of men rather than the will of God. To follow me, one must “deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life [be led by his ego/desires] shall lose it [shall live in darkness/ignorance]: and whosoever will lose his life [ego or will] for my sake shall find it [his divinity/enlightenment].” 16:24, 25 What good is it to gain the whole world [riches], but lose one’s soul? I will come with the angels in my Father’s glory and reward people for their works. “Some standing here... shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” 16:28

17 Jesus takes Peter, James, and his brother, John, up a mountain and is “transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment [clothes] was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias (Elijah) talking with him.” 17:2, 3 Peter offers to put up three tabernacles for them. A

voice comes from a bright cloud that envelops them, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." 17:7 The disciples fall down in fear, but Jesus tells them to get up and not be afraid. Moses and Elijah have disappeared. As they leave, Jesus tells them not to reveal what they had seen until after he is raised from the dead. They ask him why the scribes say "that Elias must come first?" 17:10 He replies that Elijah will come to restore all things. "But I say unto you, That Elias (John the Baptist) is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever" 17:11, 12 they wished. Likewise, the Son of man will suffer by them. Then the disciples realize he was speaking of John the Baptist.

A man asks Jesus to heal his son who "is lunatic" 17:15 and often falls into the fire and the water. He notes that the disciples were unable to heal him. Jesus chastises, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer (put up with) you?" 17:17 He casts a devil out of the boy, who is then healed. The disciples ask him why they couldn't cast it out. He answers that it is because of their unbelief, noting that **if you "have faith as [small as] a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain" 17:20, move over there, and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible.** When they come together again, Jesus tells them he is going to be betrayed to men who will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day. The disciples are exceedingly sorrowful.

The collectors of the temple tax ask Peter, "Doth not your master pay tribute?" 17:24 (temple tax) Peter replies that Jesus does. Knowing what transpired, Jesus tells Peter to go catch a fish: he will find money in its mouth. He is to take it to them for his and Peter's tax.

18 Jesus tells the disciples ***you can't enter the kingdom of heaven unless you become like a child.*** Whoever shall humble himself, becoming like a child "is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." 18:4 One who receives a child in Jesus' name receives Jesus. But anyone who offends a child who believes in Jesus will be punished: it would be better to be drowned with a millstone around one's neck. Jesus warns: woe to those through whom offenses come: If your hand or foot offends you, cut it off and cast it away. It is better to be maimed or crippled than to be whole and be cast into everlasting fire. Don't despise the little ones. Jesus asserts that he came to save the lost. Just as a man leaves 99 sheep to look for one lost sheep, God does not want any of His little ones to perish. He says to tell anyone who trespasses against you what they did, one on one. You may gain a friend if he will listen. If he will not hear you out, take with you one or two others so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses all matters can be established. Deuteronomy 19:15 If the one at fault still won't listen, tell the church. If he chooses not to hear the church, treat him like a heathen and a publican. What you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

If two of you shall agree on anything, and you ask for it, it shall be done by my Father which is in heaven. "For **where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.**" 18:20

Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive others who sin against him. He answers 70 times seven (490), and tells a parable about a king who forgives the debt of a servant who begs for time to pay it back; but later, that servant has no mercy on his servant who owes him money. When the king finds out, he has the servant to whom he showed mercy thrown in prison: he delivers him to the tormentors to be tortured until he paid back his debt. My heavenly Father shall do likewise unless you *forgive others.*

19 Jesus heals many people as multitudes follow him around in Judea. When the

Pharisees ask him if it is lawful to put away (divorce) one's wife, he replies that God made males and females, and **man shall leave his parents and cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh. So, what "God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."** 19:6 When questioned about Moses allowing divorce, he explains that Moses allowed it "because of the hardness of your hearts... but from the beginning it was not so." 19:8 Whoever puts away his wife, except because of fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. The disciples say that in that case, it is not good to marry. He replies that not all men can accept it, but there are some who are born eunuchs; others were made eunuchs by men; and some have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven.

When the disciples try to prevent people from bringing their children to Jesus, he says to **allow "little children... to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."** 19:14 He lays his hands on them, then leaves.

A rich man calls Jesus Good Master, and asks what good he should do to gain eternal life. Jesus replies, Why do you call "me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but... keep the commandments" 19:17 to enter into life: **Don't murder, or commit adultery, or steal, or bear false witness, honor your parents, and "love thy neighbor as thyself."** 19:19 When the man answers that he does all these things, Jesus tells him that to be perfect, he should go and sell all he has, give the money to the poor, and follow Jesus; then he shall have treasure in heaven. The saddened man leaves because he doesn't want to give away his wealth. Jesus says it is harder for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. [I've heard that the eye of a needle is a gate that is so low that camels can only pass through on their knees. It is so narrow that they can carry no baggage. Maybe the message is that we need to kneel (submit) and leave our baggage (ego, worries, worldly desires) behind to gain eternal life.] The amazed disciples ask who then can be saved, to which he replies, "With men this is impossible; but **with God all things are possible.**" 19:26 Peter reminds him they have left all they had to follow him, and asks what they will gain for doing so. He promises that when he sits on his throne of glory, they "shall sit upon 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel." 19:28 He adds that everyone who leaves their possessions and relatives behind for his "name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first." 19:30

20 Jesus likens the kingdom of heaven to a landowner who hires people in the morning, afternoon, and evening to work in his vineyard. The people who work all day expect to be paid the most, so they complain when everyone is paid the same amount. The land owner asks, Did I not pay you what we agreed upon? Isn't it lawful for me to do what I will with my money? [God will give all people the same reward, no matter when they turn to Him.] Jesus notes that "the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." 20:16

Jesus tells the disciples he "shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." 20:18, 19

James and John come to Jesus with their mother. She asks him to give them the seats to his right and left in his kingdom. He says she doesn't know what she's asking: those places are not his to give; they are for those designated by God. The other disciples are indignant when they hear of the exchange. Jesus tells them that *to be great, serve and minister to each other*; just as Jesus "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life [as] a ransom for many." 20:28

Jesus grants two blind men their sight when they ask for it.

21 Jesus sends two disciples to find an ass and her colt for him to ride to fulfill the prophecy: “Tell ye the Daughter of Sion (Zion), Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass.” 21:5, Zech. 9:9 The people spread their garments and tree branches out before him as he rides. They cry out, **“Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Psalm 118:26 Hosanna in the highest!”** 21:9

Jesus casts out people who are buying and selling in the temple. He turns over “the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold doves.” 21:12 He tells them, “It is written, **My house shall be called the house of prayer; Isaiah 56:7 but ye have made it a den of thieves.**” 21:13, Jeremiah 7:11

Jesus heals the blind and lame. The chief priests and scribes are quite displeased at the honor given to Jesus by the people. They ask Jesus if he hears the people praising him, to which he replies, “Yea; have ye never read, **Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?**” 21: 18, Psalm 8:2

Jesus goes to Bethany. He is hungry, so when he finds no figs on a fig tree, he says, “Let no fruit grow on thee... for ever.” 21:19 The tree withers away. The disciples marvel, and Jesus says, “If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this... but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done... **whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.**” 21:21, 22 The chief priests and elders ask Jesus by whose authority he does these things. He retorts that he will answer if they answer his question: John’s baptism – from where did it come – “from heaven, or of men?” 21:25 They say they cannot answer, fearing he would ask why they didn’t believe John if they say from heaven, but fearing the people if they say from men. Therefore, he refuses to answer their question. He then tells them a parable about a man who asks one of his sons to go to work in his vineyard. The son says no, but later repents, and goes to work. When the man asks his other son to go work, he agrees to go, but doesn’t go. Jesus asks which of the two did his father’s will. They answer: the first son, who did the work. He concludes that the harlots and tax collectors will get to God’s kingdom before they will, for John came in righteousness and they didn’t believe him or repent, while the sinners believed him. Jesus tells another parable about a man who plants a vineyard, rents it out, and goes to another country. At harvest time, he sends servants to collect his fruit. Some of the servants are beaten, some are killed, and others are stoned. When he finally sends his son to collect his share, they kill him too. Jesus asks what the owner will do to the wicked men. They answer that the owner will destroy them and rent the vineyard out to others who will give him the fruit due him. Jesus says, “Did ye never read in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner (cornerstone): this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?” 21:42, Psalm 118:22, 23 The parable illustrates that Jesus will be crucified, and the kingdom of God will be available to those who produce fruit. The chief priests and Pharisees, realizing he is talking about their rejection of him, try to think of a way to get rid of Jesus, but they fear the people, who see him as a prophet.

22 Jesus tells a parable, likening the kingdom of heaven to a king who plans a wedding for his son. The guests refuse to come: they even kill some of the servants who are inviting them to dinner. The king destroys those who killed his servants and invites people off the street to the wedding. He throws out a man who is not wearing a wedding garment “into the outer darkness; [where] there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.” 22:13, 14 [God invites all; but one

must clothe himself in righteousness to receive the reward of heaven.] The Pharisees send disciples to trick Jesus by asking whether or not it is lawful to give tribute [pay taxes] to Caesar. Knowing it is a test, Jesus asks whose image is on a coin. When they answer, “Caesar’s,” he declares, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.” 22:21

The Sadducees, who don’t believe in resurrection, ask Jesus about a situation in which a man dies without an heir. His brother marries the widow to give his brother heirs, as Moses had instructed. But the brother dies before having children, as do the next five brothers who marry the widow. At the resurrection, the Sadducees want to know, whose wife will she be? Jesus explains that in the resurrection people aren’t married, but are like angels. He notes, “God is not the God of the dead but of the living.” 22:32

A Pharisee tests Jesus, asking, “**which is the great commandment** in the law?” 22:36 He replies, “**Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.** Deuteronomy 6:5 This is the first and great commandment. **And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.** Leviticus 19:18 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” 22:37-40

Jesus asks the Pharisees whose son is the Christ. When they answer, David’s, he asks, Why then does David call him Lord? No one can give an answer, so they stop asking him questions.

23 Jesus tells the multitude to obey the Pharisees and scribes, but don’t follow their example, for they say one thing and do another. They burden the people with heavy loads and difficult tasks, but they don’t help them at all. All they do is done to impress others and uplift themselves, from wearing elaborate garments to sitting in places of honor. They like to be called ‘Rabbi.’ But man should not be called Rabbi, for there is only one Master, Christ, and you are all brethren. Neither should you call anyone ‘father,’ for one is your Father – in heaven. Neither should you to be called ‘master,’ for your Master is Christ. “But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. **And whoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.**” 23:11, 12

Jesus says woe unto the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, who are blind guides who keep people out of the kingdom of heaven, mistreat widows, spout long prayers to impress others, travel all over to win a convert, then make him twice the “child of hell” 23:15 that they are. He criticizes them for tithing, while neglecting the more significant “matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.” 23:23 They filter out the “gnat, and swallow a camel.” 23:24 They clean the outside of the dish [their appearance], “but within they are full of extortion and excess.” 23:25 You are so blind! *Cleanse the inside first [your mind], then the outside [behavior] will be clean.* Jesus calls the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites and compares them to whitened tombs that are outwardly beautiful [righteous] but within are full of dead men’s bones (hypocrisy and iniquity). He points out that they are just like their forefathers who killed the prophets. He calls them snakes and vipers, and wonders how they can escape the damnation of hell. The righteous blood of the prophets will be on their heads. Instead of helping God gather His children together, like a hen would “gather her chickens under her wings,” 23:37 they do not do their jobs. Therefore, their house will be desolate. He declares that they will see him no more till they say, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” 23:39

24 The disciples point out the temple buildings, and Jesus remarks that they will all be thrown down. Later, on the Mount of Olives, he answers the disciples’ questions

about the **signs of his coming and the end of the world**: people will come, claiming to be the Christ. Don't be troubled when you "**hear of wars and rumors of wars... for nation shall rise against nation... and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.**" 24:6, 7, 8 There will be religious persecution. Then "many shall betray one another, and shall hate one another... many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But **he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.** And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." 24:10-14 When you see Daniel's prophecy, the abomination of desolation in the holy place, **flee to mountains.** Don't return home to get things when this happens. It will be awful for women with child and mothers who are nursing. Pray that you won't have to flee in winter or on the sabbath day. There will be great tribulation, such as has never been before, and will never be again. No one would survive if this time wasn't shortened, but it will be – for the sake of the elect. Don't believe false prophets. They will work miracles, performing great signs and wonders to fool the elect. Just as lightning shines from the east to the west, so shall the Son of man come. Immediately after the tribulation, the sun shall "be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." 24:29, Isaiah 13:10, 34:4 Then "shall appear the sign of Son of Man in heaven." 24:30 All the tribes on earth will mourn, "and **they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.** And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. **Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.**" 24:30, 31, 35 Only God knows when this will happen. People will be **eating, drinking, and marrying**, as they did in Noah's day: up to the time he entered the ark. "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord" 24:42 will come. So, be ready at all times. Just as the good the servant who is doing the right thing when his master comes is blessed, so will those doing the right thing when the end comes.

25 Jesus gives instructions through a parable to keep watch and be ready for the end: ten virgins fall asleep with their oil lamps burning while they are waiting for a bridegroom. Half of them do not think to bring extra oil, so they run out. When they go to get more oil, the bridegroom comes, and they miss his banquet.

In another parable, Jesus likens the kingdom of heaven to a man who entrusts five talents of money with one servant, two with another, and one with a third servant. The ones with five talents and two talents invest the money and make more, pleasing the owner, who rewards them, saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant." 25:23 The servant with one talent buries it, so no profit is made. The owner calls him wicked and slothful, takes his talent away, and has him cast out into the darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Jesus explains that everyone who has [is productive] will be rewarded with abundance. From those who have accumulated nothing, everything will be taken away. Jesus states, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." 25:31 He will separate the righteous people from the wicked, putting the sheep [righteous] on his right hand and the [wicked] goats on the left. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was ahungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in: Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came

unto me.” 25:34-36 When the righteous ask when they did these things, he replies that what they did for “one of the least of my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” 25:40 Those on his left are cursed to everlasting fire, which has been “prepared for the devil and his angels” 25:41 for not helping others. “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.” 25:46

26 Jesus reminds the disciples that the feast of passover is in two days, “and the Son of man is [to be] betrayed to be crucified.” 26:2 The chief priests, scribes and elders assemble at the high priest’s (Caiaphas) palace to plot Jesus’ arrest and murder. When Jesus is in Simon the Leper’s home, a woman with an alabaster box of valuable ointment anoints his head with the perfume. The disciples are indignant at the ‘waste,’ thinking the ointment should have been sold to help the poor. Jesus, aware of their thoughts, asks why they are worrying about the woman. She has done a good work, preparing him for burial. They will always have poor people to help. Whenever this gospel is presented – any where in the world – her actions will be shared, as a memorial of her.

Judas Iscariot agrees to hand Jesus over to the chief priests for 30 silver coins. Jesus tells the disciples where to prepare for the passover. As they eat the last supper, he says one of them will betray him: he who dips his hand into the dish with me. The Son of man shall go “as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed!” 26:24 It would have “been good for that man if he had not been born.” 26:24 Judas asks, “Master, is it I?” 26:25 Jesus confirms that it is. **Jesus breaks the bread, blesses it and gives it to the disciples, saying, “Take, eat; this is my body.”** 26:26 **Then he gives thanks and gives them the cup of wine, saying, “Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”** 26:27, 28 He tells them he won’t drink wine until the day he drinks it anew with them in his Father’s kingdom. They sing a hymn and go to the Mount of Olives. Jesus tells them they will be offended this night because of him, “for it is written: I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered. Zechariah 13:7 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.” 26:31, 32 Peter denies that Jesus’ prediction applies to him, so Jesus reiterates, “Verily, I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt disown me thrice.” 26:34 Peter still denies it, as do the other disciples.

Jesus and the disciples go to Gethsemane. Jesus takes Peter, James and John to the side and tells them his soul is exceedingly sorrowful, and to wait and keep watch while he prays. Jesus moves away and falls face down, and prays, “saying, O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, **not as I will, but as thou wilt.**” 26:39 He returns to the disciples and chastises them for sleeping, saying, “Watch and pray, that ye not enter into temptation: **the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**” 26:41 He goes again to pray the same prayer, and finds them asleep when he returns. He goes to pray a third time. When he returns again, he tells them it is the time for him to be “betrayed into the hands of sinners.” 26:45 Jesus is arrested after Judas betrays him with a greeting and a kiss. When they seize Jesus, one of his companions (Peter) draws his sword and cuts off the ear of a servant of the high priest. Jesus tells him to put his sword up, for **all those who “take [draw] the sword shall perish with the sword.”** 26:52 He notes that he can call on his Father at any time and the Father would give him legions of angels to help him. But if he did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled? They predicted this would happen. He tells the crowd he has been teaching in the temple every day without being arrested, but this has happened in this way so the writings of the prophets can be fulfilled. Jesus is taken to Caiaphas. Peter falls back and follows to see what will happen. The chief priests,

elders and the council are unable to find false evidence against Jesus despite the fact that many false witnesses testify against him. Jesus remains silent when questioned about his side of the story. When asked if he is the Christ, the Son of God, he replies, you have said it: “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” 26:64 The high priest tears his clothes, charging Jesus with blasphemy. The group finds him guilty of death. They begin spitting on him, hitting him, and mocking him. Peter denies that he knows Jesus three times when questioned in the courtyard, where he is watching: he curses and swears that he doesn’t know Jesus, then a rooster crows. Peter remembers how Jesus had predicted this denial. “And he went out, and wept bitterly.” 26:75

27 When morning arrives the chief priests and elders decide to put Jesus to death, so they bind him and lead him to the governor, Pontius Pilate. Judas tries in vain to return the 30 coins he had received for betraying Jesus. He admits that he has sinned and turned in an innocent man. The chief priests say too bad; that’s his problem. He throws the coins into the temple, so they use them to buy a potter’s field for a cemetery for strangers because it is unlawful to put blood money in the treasury. This fulfills Jeremiah’s prophecy: “they took the 30 pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued... And gave them for the potter’s field.” 27:9, 10, Zechariah 11:12, 13 Steeped in remorse, Judas hangs himself.

When Jesus is brought before Pilate, he asks Jesus if he is the King of the Jews. He replies that it is true; but when he doesn’t answer the accusations of the chief priests and elders, Pilate asks him if he hears the things they are saying against him. Pilate marvels when Jesus says nothing. As is customary, Pilate asks the crowd who he should release at the feast, “Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ... For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.” 27:17, 18 The people choose Barabbas. Pilate’s wife sends him a message: “Have nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.” 27:19 Pilate asks what he should do with Jesus. The crowd answers to crucify him. Pilate washes his hands in front of them, saying he is innocent of this man’s blood. They accept the responsibility, saying, “His blood be on us, and on our children.” 27:25 Pilate has Jesus scourged, and delivers him to be crucified. The soldiers strip Jesus, put a scarlet robe on him, and a crown of thorns on his head, spit on him, hit him, and mock him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” 27:29 Then they lead him off to be crucified. They compel Simon of Cyrene to carry his cross. When they arrive at Golgotha, they offer Jesus vinegar mixed with gall, but he doesn’t drink it. They divide his clothes by casting lots, which fulfills the prophecy in Psalm 22:19. They crucify him, placing a sign over his head which says, “THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.” 27:37

Two thieves are also crucified, one on each side of him. People taunt Jesus, saying to come down off the cross and save himself if he is the Son of God. The chief priests, scribes and elders mock him, saying he was always saving others, but can’t even save himself. They say let God deliver him since he claimed to be God’s Son. “From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying... My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” 27:45, 46 Some people think he is calling Elijah. He is offered vinegar on a sponge to drink. And when Jesus cried out “with a loud voice, **[he] yielded [gave] up the ghost.**” 27:50 Then the veil of the temple tears in half, from top to bottom. The earth shakes, rocks split. Graves open, the bodies of saints are raised to life. They go into the holy city and appear to many people after the resurrection. Those guarding Jesus cry, “Truly this was the Son of God.” 27:54 Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of James and John are present.

Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for Jesus' body. When Pilate agrees that he can take it, he wraps it in a linen cloth and lays "it in his own new tomb." 27:60 He rolls a large stone to block the door, and leaves. "The next day... the chief priests and Pharisees" 27:62 ask Pilate to place a guard at the tomb to prevent Jesus' disciples from stealing the body and saying he had risen. He tells them to go secure the tomb themselves, so they post a guard outside it.

28 At dawn the day after sabbath, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary go to see Jesus' tomb. There is a great earthquake as an angel comes from heaven and rolls away the stone and sits on it. The fearful guards become frozen, as if they are dead. The angel tells the women not to be afraid; Jesus "is risen, as he said... go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him." 28:6, 7 The women leave to do as instructed, when Jesus appears to them, saying to go tell the brethren to go to Galilee where they shall see him. The guards report what happened to the chief priests, who bribe them to say his disciples stole Jesus' body during the night. The 11 disciples go to Galilee, to a mountain where Jesus had previously instructed them to go. When they see him, they worship him, but some doubt that it is him. Jesus comes to them, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, **and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:** teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, **I am with you alway(s)**, even unto the end of the world. Amen." 28:18-20

Chapter 5

Acts

(A letter to Theophilus)

Jesus appears to the apostles for 40 days between his death and ascension into heaven, proving many times that he is alive. He speaks of the kingdom of God, at one point commanding the apostles not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father: being baptized with the Holy Ghost to receive power. Then they will witness about Jesus "unto the uttermost part of the earth." 1:8 After he gives this revelation, he is taken up into the sky while they watch. Two men in white appear and ask why they are looking up; "Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come [back] in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." 1:11 The 11 apostles return to Jerusalem from Mount Olivet. They pray continually, with women followers, Mary, Jesus' mother, and his brothers.

Peter speaks to a group (about 120) of disciples, telling them the Scripture about Judas, the apostle who betrayed Jesus for money, had to be fulfilled. Judas purchased a field with the money of his iniquity, and died in it: "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." 1:18 The field is called the Field of blood. As it says in Psalm 69:25: "Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein." 1:20 Peter declares that they must ordain a man who has been among them with Jesus the whole time to take Judas' place. Matthias is chosen by casting lots.

2 On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit comes with a mighty sound of rushing wind and settles on each of the apostles, looking like tongues of fire. Filled with the Holy Ghost, they begin preaching in other tongues. A multitude of Jews from every nation assembles, astounded because they all can understand the preaching in their own languages: Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete, and Arabia. When the apostles are accused of being drunk, Peter pronounces that what the people are seeing was predicted by Joel: “I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: **And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.**” 2:17, Joel 2:28, 31, 32 And my servants shall prophesy, and “I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, **before that great and notable day of the Lord come:** And... **whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.**” 2:19-21 Peter quotes Scripture, saying Jesus’ life was predicted, and that God worked miracles through Jesus; yet the Jews crucified him. Psalm 22:16-18 However, God raised him up again. King David even called him Lord. Peter declares that God made Jesus “both Lord and Christ.” 2:36 When the people ask what they should do, he tells them to repent and be baptized, and they shall receive the Holy Ghost. As a result, about 3,000 people are baptized. The apostles go on to perform many miracles. The believers sell their possessions to provide for everyone’s needs. They meet daily on one accord in the temple, sharing meals in their homes, and praising God.

3 Peter heals a man who has been lame from birth at the temple gate, where he begs daily. The people are amazed. Peter begins to preach, recalling how the Jews killed Jesus, the Holy One, and how God raised him from the dead, fulfilling the words of the prophets. And now, he says, this man has been healed in Jesus’ name. He concludes that those listening should repent and turn to God. He quotes Deuteronomy: God will raise up a prophet from your brethren. Pay attention to what he says. Deuteronomy 18:15, 18, 19 Peter reminds the Jews of God’s covenant with Abraham: Through “thy seed shall all the kindreds [peoples] of the earth be blessed.” 3:25, Genesis 22:18 and 26:4

4 While teaching in the temple, Peter and John are taken away by the officials and held overnight. The next day before the rulers, when they are asked by whose authority they are healing, “Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost” 4:8 answers that their authority comes from Jesus Christ, who the people killed: “he is become the head of the corner” 4:11, Psalm 118:22, [the cornerstone rejected by the builders]. Furthermore, salvation is from Jesus. The group is astonished that uneducated men can heal and speak like they do. Peter and John are ordered to cease talking about Jesus to stop them from spreading the word any further. They refuse to keep quiet, telling the authorities to judge for themselves whether it would be right in the sight of God to obey man instead of God. Peter and John are released after more threats are made. When they report to the disciples what happened, the group prays, asking for the ability to speak God’s word boldly. They ask God to heal and perform signs and wonders by Jesus’ name. They all become filled with the Holy Ghost and begin speaking God’s word boldly. The believers become one in heart and soul, so they share all their wealth and possessions with each other. No one lacks anything. The group is granted an abundance of grace.

5 Ananias and his wife, Sapphira sell a possession, and keeping a portion, donate the rest of the money to the community of believers. When questioned separately by Peter, they act as if they’ve donated all the money they received: Ananias lies first. Peter tells

him he will die for lying to God. Ananias dies on the spot. Unaware of what had transpired, Sapphira arrives and lies also, so she dies in the same way.

The apostles heal, cast out evil spirits and perform many miracles. Indignant about this, the high priests and Sadducees cast them into prison. An angel escorts them out at night, instructing them to go “speak in the temple to the people all the words of this [new] life.” 5:20 The next day, the high priest and officials are surprised when they find out the apostles are not in prison, though the gates are still locked. After the apostles are found teaching in the temple, they are brought before the council and chastised for preaching when they were ordered not to do so. Peter insists they will obey God rather than men. The council talks about killing them until a Pharisee and doctor of the law, Gamaliel, asserts that they should be left alone because if their teachings are from man, their work will come to naught, but if they are of God, they can’t be stopped, and the Jews will be fighting against God. The apostles are beaten, commanded not to speak in Jesus’ name, and released. They rejoice as they depart because they have been found worthy to suffer shame for Jesus. They continue to teach and preach about Jesus Christ daily.

6 Seven holy men, including Stephen, are selected to settle disagreements and other issues so the other disciples can be freed up to focus on their ministry and prayer. Stephen works many miracles and wonders. He is challenged in arguments; then framed and brought before the council for blasphemy when they are unable to measure up to his wisdom and spiritedness. He is slandered with lies, but his face is like that of an angel.

7 When asked if the charges against him are true, Stephen addresses the council, telling the history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob’s 12 sons who fathered the 12 tribes of Israel. He recalls Joseph’s success under the Pharaoh after being sold into slavery by his 11 brothers, and how Joseph later brought his family to Egypt, saving them from famine. He then outlines the oppression of the Hebrews in Egypt and Moses’ survival after the evil king ordered parents to abandon newborns. Stephen recounts Moses’ education and rise to power, and how, after God called him to free His people, he parted the Red Sea. Then, with his brother, Aaron, Moses led the people out of Egypt through the wilderness for 40 years. Stephen summarizes the consequences of the people’s disobedience and idol worship, as spoken of in the Scriptures. Amos 5:25-27 Later, David’s son, Solomon, built a temple for God. Finally, Stephen calls his audience “**stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears**” 7:51, saying they always resist the Holy Ghost, and they have now murdered Jesus, the Just One, just as their fathers killed the prophets. Stephen then sees the glory of God, and Jesus at His right hand. When he announces this, the elders are so enraged, they leave their clothes with Saul, cast Stephen out of the city and stone him. As he dies, Stephen asks God not to hold them responsible for this sin.

8 Saul approves of Stephen’s murder. A great persecution breaks out against the church and the believers are scattered, but not the apostles. Saul continually persecutes believers, sending them to prison. Phillip preaches in Samaria, works miracles, and casts out evil spirits. Simon, a sorcerer, is converted and baptized by Philip, and later asks to buy the power of laying on of hands to instill the Holy Ghost into people like the apostles do. Peter curses him for trying to buy a gift of God. Phillip teaches a powerful Ethiopian eunuch about Jesus and baptizes him along the road, according to the Holy Spirit’s instructions.

9 Saul is struck blind on the road to Damascus after a light from heaven shines around him and Jesus speaks to him: “**Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?**” 9:4 Saul asks who is talking to him. Jesus says Saul is persecuting him when he

persecutes the church. He tells Saul to go into Damascus, where he will be informed of what he must do. Ananias, who has been instructed by the Lord to heal him, meets him and lays hands on him, curing his blindness. Saul accepts the teachings about Jesus, and is filled with the Holy Ghost. He immediately begins preaching about Jesus being the Son of God. All are amazed at his sudden turn around. The Jews decide to kill him, but he escapes, lowered outside the city wall in a basket. The disciples distrust and fear him at first, but later accept his help. Peter heals Eneas (Aeneas), a paralytic, and raises Tabitha (Dorcas) from the dead.

10 An angel tells Cornelius, a prayerful, generous, godly and devout centurion, to send for Peter, who can teach him what he should do.

In a vision of a sheet coming down from heaven with various animals in it Peter is told, "Rise, Peter, kill, and eat." 10:13 When he objects to eating anything common [unclean], the voice says, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" 10:15 [referring to Gentiles]. After this happens three times, the Spirit tells him to go with the men who are looking for him downstairs, he obediently goes to Caesarea to teach Cornelius, a Gentile. He teaches that "God is no respecter of persons." 10:34 He shows no favoritism, and He accepts anyone who fears Him and works righteousness. Furthermore, there is peace with Jesus, who was anointed with the Holy Ghost, who healed many people, and who was crucified, then raised from the dead. Anyone who believes "in him shall receive remission of sins." 10:43 As Peter speaks, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." 10:44 They begin speaking in tongues and magnifying God; and Peter has them baptized.

11 Peter explains the reason he teaches and eats with the Gentiles to the apostles and other Jews who criticize him: he describes his vision of the animals and its meaning to him. After he relates the story of how the Holy Ghost came upon the Gentiles, their objections stop and they glorify God, realizing that God has even given the Gentiles "repentance unto life." 11:18

They preach the word throughout Phenice (Phoenicia), Cyprus, and Antioch. Many are converted. It is in Antioch, where Barnabas and Saul preach, that the disciples are first called Christians. Agabus, a prophet signified by the Spirit, predicts a severe famine throughout the world.

12 King Herod Agrippa, who actively persecutes the church, has James [John's brother] killed with a sword and imprisons Peter, planning to give him a public trial after Easter. An angel comes and helps Peter escape, even though he is chained between two soldiers. The city gate opens on its own to let them through. Peter runs to tell the disciples at John's mother's house about what just happened. Rhoda is so excited when she hears Peter's voice at the door she forgets to open it before going to tell those inside that Peter is at the door. They are astonished when they open the door and see him. He leaves soon after telling them of his experience. Herod orders that the guards be put to death when Peter can't be found the next day. One day, as Herod gives an oration, he arrogantly says nothing when the people say it is God's voice speaking. Because he doesn't give God the glory, he is struck down by an angel and is consumed by worms.

13 Saul and Barnabas are sent off to preach in response to the Holy Ghost's instructions. They go to Seleucia, then Cyprus. John joins them as they preach the word of God at Salamis in the Jewish synagogues. At Paphos, Bar-Jesus, a false prophet who is a Jewish sorcerer tries to prevent them from going to the deputy of the country, who had sent for them to hear the word of God. Saul (Paul) strikes him with blindness, which convinces the deputy, who is then converted. Paul tells the story of Jewish history in the synagogue at Antioch, exclaiming that the Saviour, Jesus, King

David's descendant, was sent to Israel by God, but, as is written in the Scriptures; he was killed by the Jews. "But God raised him from the dead" 13:30, and his disciples saw him for many days after that. God fulfilled what He had promised by raising Jesus from the dead. The forgiveness of sins is preached through him. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." 13:39 Paul quotes Scriptures to back up his words, and warns that despisers will perish. The Gentiles seek to hear the word the next sabbath, and practically the whole city comes to hear Paul at that time. The Jewish leaders become envious, so they contradict what Paul says. Paul and Barnabas declare that since the Jews cast the word of God away and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, they will go preach to the Gentiles: as it says in Isaiah 49:6, "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." 13:47 When the word is pronounced throughout the region, the Jews incite the people to persecute Paul and Barnabas, and expel them from the area.

14 Paul and Barnabas travel around, preaching and healing. At Iconium many believe, but the disbelievers plan to kill them so they flee to Lystra and Derbe, where they continue to spread the gospel. In Lystra, when Paul heals a man who was crippled from birth, the people think he and Barnabas are gods. Although they say they are only humans, they still have trouble preventing the people from making sacrifices to them. Some antagonistic Jews from Antioch and Iconium come and turn the crowd into a mob. They stone Paul and leave him for dead, but he recovers enough to go to Derbe with Barnabas the next day. They win many souls and return to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch to exhort and reassure the disciples there. They proclaim that believers will suffer many tribulations to "enter into the kingdom of God." 14:22 They ordain elders; then fast and pray, and commend [commit] them to God. They move on to preach at Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, Attalia, then back to Antioch to report their success.

15 In response to some men from Judea who teach that uncircumcised people cannot be saved, Paul goes to Jerusalem with Barnabas to meet with the apostles and elders about this matter. Peter challenges the group, saying God, who knows the hearts of men, has been accepting the Gentiles and giving them the Holy Ghost, "making no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." 15:9 So, why would we burden them and tempt God? He points out the belief that we are saved through the grace of Jesus; so the Gentiles are too. James then quotes Amos 9:11, 12, as he tells the group they should not make it difficult for the Gentile converts, but rather they should encourage them to "abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." 15:20 The group agrees to this. Silas and Judas, two prophets, are sent back to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas to inform the people of the decision. After encouraging the people, Silas and Judas are released to go back, but Silas decides to stay awhile. Paul and Barnabas preach and teach there until Paul suggests they return to visit the cities where they have preached. They disagree sharply about Barnabas wanting to take John (Mark) with them because John had left them previously, rather than work with them in Pamphylia. They part company: Paul takes Silas to Syria and Cilicia to preach with him. Mark goes with Barnabas to Cyprus.

16 Paul has Timotheus (Timothy) circumcised so he can come with them to preach. They deliver to the cities they visit the decrees and rules ordained by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. The church grows daily. The Holy Ghost leads Paul and his companions, forbidding them to preach in Asia and Bithynia. Paul has a vision of a man calling them to Macedonia, so the group prepares to go there. They go from Troas

to Neapolis, then to Philippi, a Roman colony in Macedonia. They stay there with Lydia, a seller of purple cloth. Paul casts a spirit of divination out of a slave girl who makes her masters rich by telling the future. She had been following the disciples around saying, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." 16:17 Her masters become angry when she can no longer make them money by soothsaying, so they take the disciples to the magistrates and lie, saying they are causing trouble, teaching unlawful customs. The disciples are whipped and cast into prison. As they sing and pray, an earthquake knocks the walls down and loosens everyone's chains. This convinces the prison keeper that they are holy men. He takes them home and feeds them and tends to their wounds. The next morning, the magistrates order for them to be released. Paul refuses to leave privately after being so mistreated. He demands that the magistrates come let them out. The magistrates are fearful after finding out they are Roman citizens, so they come and ask them to leave their city.

17 Paul preaches in the synagogue in Thessalonica after passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia. He teaches about Jesus being the Christ, noting Scriptures that predicted his suffering, death, and resurrection. Envious Jews gather some shady characters together to start a riot. They take Jason and some other brethren to the rulers, blaming them for the chaos because Jason welcomed Paul and Silas into his home. They further claim that Paul and Silas are urging people to rebel against Caesar's decrees because there is a King Jesus. Jason is charged for the infraction, and the rulers let them go. Paul and Silas are sent to Berea where they preach the word in the synagogue. The people receive it eagerly, searching the Scriptures to validate the teachings. Disbelieving Jews from Thessalonica learn of the situation, so they go to stir up the people to sabotage their ministry. Paul is sent to Athens. He calls for Silas and Timotheus to come join him. He is greatly disturbed about the idolatry there. He argues against it with philosophers, and in the synagogue and market place. He tells them how absurd it is to worship idols. He stresses how ignorant they are to have an altar with an inscription: "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." 17:23 He asserts that because of God "we live, and move, and have our being... For we are also his offspring." 17:28 He teaches that God commands everyone to repent. When Paul speaks of judgment day when Jesus, who was raised from the dead will judge, some scoff, and others want to know more. Dionysius and Damaris are among those converted.

18 Paul goes to Corinth. He meets and works with a Jew, Aquila, and his wife, Priscilla, who are tentmakers, like Paul. He tries to convert the Jews and Greeks in the synagogue every sabbath, but the Jews reject him when he testifies that Jesus is Christ. He responds to their rejection by stating that their blood [spiritual death] is on their own heads: since he gave them the life-saving information, it is no longer his responsibility to help them; therefore, he will now go preach to the Gentiles. In a vision, the Lord tells him to keep on teaching. In obedience, he stays there one and a half years preaching the word of God. Many believe and are baptized. The Jews in Achaia become agitated at Paul's teaching, so they take him before Gallio, the deputy, claiming that Paul is persuading people to worship contrary to the law. Gallio refuses to judge on such matters. The Greeks then turn on the synagogue ruler, Sosthenes. They beat him in front of Gallio, who does not care for these things. After a while, Paul goes to Syria with Priscilla and Aquila. He leaves them at Ephesus, where he is well received. Although they want him to stay, he goes on to Caesarea, then Antioch, Galatia and Phrygia, encouraging the disciples. Apollos, a Jew who is well-versed in the Scriptures, begins teaching about Jesus in Ephesus, using Scriptures to show that

Jesus was the Christ.

19 Paul asks believers in Ephesus if they received the Holy Ghost. They know nothing of a Holy Ghost, so he tells them of Jesus and baptizes them in the name of Jesus; then he lays hands on them and they receive the Holy Ghost. They start speaking in tongues and prophesying. Paul continues teaching until everyone living in Asia has heard about Jesus. He performs many miracles, such that people are healed and evil spirits leave them – even when they just touch cloth Paul had touched. Seven sons of a Jewish chief priest begin using Jesus’ name trying to cast out evil spirits. The spirits acknowledge that they know Paul and Jesus, but not these men, then the spirits attack the men until they run outside, naked and wounded. Learning of this, many people become fearful and confess their sins. Many burn their books of curious arts [magic] as the word of God spreads. Paul sends Timotheus and Erastus to Macedonia, and he goes to Rome and Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia on the way. A group of Ephesian craftsmen who make shrines to the goddess, Diana, become furious at Paul for preaching against idols because he is ruining their business. They accuse him of destroying Diana’s magnificence. They stir up chaos, so that the city clerk has to step in and calm things down.

20 Paul goes to Macedonia, Greece and Troas preaching and teaching. As he preaches, a young man sitting in the third story window listening to him sinks into a deep sleep and falls out of the window onto the street below. He dies, so Paul throws himself on him and brings him back to life. Paul continues preaching as he travels. At Miletus, Paul calls the elders from Ephesus, and encourages them to be shepherds of the church of God, which Jesus bought with his blood. He warns them to beware of wolves who will come destroy the flock, and reminds them of Jesus’ words: **“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”** 20:35 They pray and cry when he reveals that they will not see him again.

21 Paul and his companions sail to Coos, Rhodes, Patara, Phenicia, Cyprus, Syria, Tyre, Ptolemais, and Caesarea. In Caesarea Agabus, a prophet, binds Paul’s hands and feet and reveals that the Holy Ghost says that likewise, Paul will be bound by the Jews in Jerusalem and delivered to the Gentiles. Paul announces that he is ready to die for Jesus, and leaves for Jerusalem. When he goes to the elders, he is accused of turning people away from Jewish laws and customs and bringing Greeks in who don’t follow the customs. Some Jews from Asia see Paul in the temple and start a riot, shouting that he has been teaching against the law everywhere and polluting their temples by bringing Greeks in. He is pulled out of the temple and beaten by the crowd. The authorities are informed, so Roman soldiers are sent to get him. The crowd is in such a frenzy, the soldiers have to lift him up and carry him away. He asks the chief captain to allow him to speak to the crowd. When he is given permission to do so, he speaks to them in Hebrew.

22 Paul tells the crowd he was born in Tarsus of Cilicia and educated in the law by Gamaliel. He relates the story of his persecution of the Christian believers until his Damascus experience and conversion. When he says the Lord showed him a vision and sent him to teach the Gentiles, the crowd shouts that he is not fit to live. When the soldiers are ordered to question and scourge him, he asks if it is lawful to scourge a Roman citizen who has not yet been condemned. They pull back and take him before the chief priests and their council the next day.

23 After Paul says he has lived in good conscience before God, the high priest commands that he be struck in the mouth. Paul calls him a whited [white-washed] wall for judging him by the law and having him hit, which is contrary to the law. Paul proclaims that God will smite the high priest for doing so. Paul intentionally divides

the council – Pharisees against Sadducees – by saying he grew up as a Pharisee believing in the resurrection. (Pharisees also believe in angels and spirits.) Since the Sadducees do not believe in these things, an argument ensues. Because of the resulting chaos, Paul has to be removed by soldiers. The Lord appears to him the next night to encourage him and tell him he will testify in Rome. Over 40 men plan to fast until they can ambush Paul and kill him, but he hears of the conspiracy from his nephew. He sends this nephew to tell the chief captain, who orders troops to take Paul to Governor Felix in Caesarea. After his arrival, Paul is kept at Herod's judgment hall.

24 Ananias, the high priest, comes and presses charges against Paul before the governor; then Paul tells his story, claiming that he is in this situation because of his belief in the resurrection of the dead. Felix keeps him in prison two years to favor the Jews. He listens to Paul's teachings periodically.

25 Festus takes Felix's place. The high priest convinces Festus to bring Paul before them again; but their complaints against him can't be proven. Festus asks Paul if he's willing to go to Jerusalem to be tried. He says no, and appeals to Caesar. Festus agrees to send him to Caesar. While on a visit to Festus, King Agrippa asks to hear Paul speak. Festus replies that he can hear him the next day.

26 King Agrippa hears Paul speak. He explains how he had lived as a good Pharisee; then he began persecuting saints who believed in Jesus. He did this until he was converted after his Damascus experience: it was then that he was told he would be sent to the Gentiles "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in" 26:18 Jesus. After preaching and encouraging Jews and Gentiles to repent and turn to God, the Jews decided he should die. King Agrippa concludes that Paul has done nothing to deserve death, so he tells Festus that Paul might have been freed if he hadn't appealed to Caesar.

27 Paul is sent to Rome by ship. On the way, he warns the men that if they continue on with their trip, it will be very dangerous, but they still proceed against the wind. The ship is wrecked in a storm that lasts two weeks. Paul reassures the crew that no one will die, but they must run aground at an island. He urges them to eat since they had not eaten during the storm. They take his advice, and run aground, but all get to shore safely.

28 The group finds themselves on the island of Melita (Malta). The people welcome them and light a fire. When Paul puts wood on the fire, a poisonous viper comes out and bites him on the hand. Those who live on the island expect him to die, but when nothing happens to him, they think he is a god. He heals the people, who readily furnish the group with supplies when they decide to leave. When Paul arrives in Rome, he preaches to the Jews about Jesus. He stays there two years.