

Free Bible Version

Luke

1 ¹As you know, many others have attempted to put down in writing the things that have been fulfilled^a that involve us. ²They based their accounts on evidence from the earliest eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, ³and so I also decided that since I have followed these things very carefully from the beginning, it would be a good idea to write out an accurate account of all that happened. ⁴I have done this dear Theophilus^b so you can be certain that what you were taught is completely reliable.

⁵During the time when Herod was king of Judea, there was a priest called Zechariah, who came from the Abijah priestly division. He was married to Elizabeth, who was also descended from Aaron the priest. ⁶They both did what was right before God, being careful to follow all the Lord's commandments and regulations.

⁷They had no children because Elizabeth wasn't able to have any, and they were both growing old. ⁸While Zechariah was serving as a priest before God, on behalf of his priestly division, ⁹he was chosen by lot^c according to priestly custom to enter the Temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰During the time of offering incense a large crowd of people were praying outside. ¹¹An angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah, standing to the right of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw the angel, he was startled and became terrified.

¹³But the angel told him, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah. Your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call him John. ¹⁴He will bring you joy and gladness, and many will celebrate his birth. ¹⁵He will be great in the sight of the Lord. He will refuse to drink wine or other alcoholic drink. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he's born. ¹⁶He will turn many Israelites back to the Lord

^a 1:1. Or, "achieved," "accomplished."

^b 1:4. "Theophilus" means one who loves God. Also in Acts 1:1.

^c 1:9. A system of random choice like "choosing straws" was used because more wanted to serve than there were places available.

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their God. ¹⁷He will go ahead of the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children, and to turn those who are rebellious back to a right understanding—to prepare a people ready for the Lord.

¹⁸“How can I be sure about this?” Zechariah asked the angel. “I’m an old man, and my wife is getting old too.”

¹⁹“I am Gabriel,” the angel replied. “I stand in God’s presence, and I was sent to speak to you and give you this good news. ²⁰But since you didn’t believe what I told you, you’ll become dumb, unable to speak, until the appointed time when my words come true.”

²¹Outside the people were waiting for Zechariah, wondering why he was taking so long in the Temple. ²²When eventually he came out, he wasn’t able to speak to them. They realized he’d seen a vision in the Temple, for though he could make gestures, he was completely dumb.

²³After he’d finished his time of service, he went back home. ²⁴Some time later his wife Elizabeth became pregnant. She stayed at home for five months.

²⁵“The Lord has done this for me,” she said, “now that he’s taken away my disgrace in the eyes of others.”

²⁶In the sixth month of her pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a young girl called Mary who lived in the town of Nazareth in Galilee. ²⁷She was engaged to a man named Joseph.

²⁸The angel greeted her^a. “You are very privileged,” he told her. “The Lord is with you.” ²⁹Mary was very puzzled at what he said, and wondered what this greeting meant.

³⁰“Don’t worry, Mary,” the angel went on, “for God has shown his graciousness to you. ³¹You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You shall call him Jesus. ³²He will be very great, and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, ³³and he will

^a1:28. In fact the angel uses the common form of greeting of the time that literally meant “Rejoice” but was actually equivalent to saying “Hello.” Even modern translations have trouble here, with the angel saying “Hail, favored woman” or “Greetings, O favored one,” neither of which seem particularly suitable. On the other hand an angel arriving and saying “Hi” hardly fits either...

reign over the house of Jacob forever. His kingdom will never come to an end.”

³⁴“How is this possible?” Mary asked. “I’m still a virgin.”

³⁵He replied, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you. The baby who is to be born is holy, and will be called the Son of God. ³⁶And Elizabeth, your relative, even she is pregnant in her old age. The woman that people said couldn’t have children is already six months pregnant. ³⁷Nothing is impossible for God.”

³⁸“Here I am, ready to be the Lord’s servant,” said Mary. “May it happen to me just as you said.” Then the angel left her.

³⁹A little while later, Mary got herself ready and hurried up into the hills of Judea, to the town where ⁴⁰Zechariah’s house was. She called out to Elizabeth as she went in. ⁴¹As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary’s voice, the baby jumped for joy inside her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and cried out in a loud voice,

“How blessed you are among women, and how blessed will be the child born to you! ⁴³Why am I so honored that the mother of my Lord should visit me? ⁴⁴As soon as I heard you call out in greeting, my baby jumped for joy inside me. ⁴⁵How fortunate you are, because you are convinced that the Lord will do what he has promised you!”

⁴⁶Mary replied, “How I praise the Lord! ⁴⁷I am so happy with God my Savior, ⁴⁸because he decided that I, his servant, was worthy of his consideration, despite my humble background. From now on every generation will say I was blessed. ⁴⁹God Almighty has done great things for me; his name is holy. ⁵⁰His mercy lasts for generation after generation to those who respect him^a. ⁵¹With his power^b he has broken to pieces those who arrogantly think they’re so clever. ⁵²He tears the powerful down from their thrones, and elevates those who are humble. ⁵³He fills the hungry with good things to eat, and he sends the rich away empty-handed. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, remembering him in mercy, ⁵⁵just as he promised our fathers, to Abraham and

^a 1:50. Literally, “fear,” but in modern use this can have the idea of abject terror.

^b 1:51. Literally, “strong arm.”

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his descendants for ever.”⁵⁶ Mary stayed with her for three months and then returned home.

⁵⁷The time came for Elizabeth to have her baby and she gave birth to a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had showed her great kindness, and they celebrated together with her. ⁵⁹Eight days later they came to circumcise the boy. They planned to call him Zechariah after his father.

⁶⁰“No,” Elizabeth said. “He shall be called John.”

⁶¹“But there’s nobody among your relatives who has this name,” they told her. ⁶²Through gestures they asked Zechariah, the boy’s father, what he wanted to call his son. ⁶³Zechariah motioned for something to write on. To everyone’s surprise he wrote, “His name is John.” ⁶⁴Immediately he could speak again, and he started praising God.

⁶⁵All those living nearby were in awe at what had happened, and the news spread throughout the hill country of Judea.

⁶⁶Everyone who heard the news wondered what it meant. “What will the little boy grow up to be?” they asked, for it was clear he was very special to God^a.

⁶⁷Zechariah, his father, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke this prophecy:

⁶⁸“The Lord, the God of Israel, he is wonderful, for he has come to his people and set them free. ⁶⁹He has given us a great Savior from the line of his servant David, ⁷⁰as he promised through his holy prophets long ago. ⁷¹He promised to save us from our enemies, from those who hate us. ⁷²He was merciful to our fathers, remembering his holy agreement—⁷³the promise that he made to our father Abraham. ⁷⁴He gives us freedom from fear and rescues us from our enemies, ⁷⁵so we can serve him by doing what is good and right for our whole lives. ⁷⁶Even though you are only a small child, you will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go ahead of the Lord to prepare his way, ⁷⁷providing knowledge of salvation to his people through the forgiveness of their sins. ⁷⁸Through God’s caring kindness to us, heaven’s dawn will break upon us ⁷⁹to shine on those who live in darkness and under the shadow of death, and to guide us along the path of peace.”

^a 1:66. Literally, “for the hand of the Lord was with him.”

⁸⁰The boy John grew and became spiritually strong. He lived in the desert until the time came for his public ministry to Israel.

2 ¹It was the time when Caesar Augustus issued a decree that there should be a census of everyone in the Roman Empire. ²This was the first census under governor Quirinius of Syria. ³So everybody went to their own city to be registered. ⁴Joseph was descended from King David, so he left Nazareth in Galilee to go to Bethlehem, the city of David, in Judea. ⁵He went to register there, together with Mary, who was pledged in marriage to him and expecting a baby. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to have her baby. ⁷She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him up in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger because the inn had no rooms left.

⁸Nearby some shepherds were spending the night out in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone all around them. They were scared out of their wits!

¹⁰“Don’t be afraid!” the angel told them. “I’m here to bring you good news that will make all the people really glad.

¹¹The Savior has been born to you today, here in David’s city. He is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²You will recognize him by this sign: you will find the child wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³Suddenly many heavenly beings appeared, praising God, and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to the God of heaven, and on earth peace to those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵After the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see what’s happened concerning these things the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶They hurried there and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷After they’d seen for themselves, they spread the news of what had happened and what they had been told about this baby. ¹⁸All those who heard about it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary was careful to remember all the things that had happened and often thought about them. ²⁰The shepherds went back to watching their flocks,

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glorifying and thanking God for all that they'd heard and seen, for it was just as they'd been told.

²¹After eight days, the time came for the baby to be circumcised, and he was named Jesus. This was the name given to him by the angel before he had even been conceived. ²²When the time of their purification according to the law of Moses was finished, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, ²³as the law of the Lord states, "Every firstborn son must be dedicated to the Lord."^a ²⁴There they made a sacrifice, as as God's law also states, of "a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons."^b

²⁵Living in Jerusalem at that time was a man called Simeon. Simeon did what was right and was very devout. He was waiting expectantly for the hope of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶The Holy Spirit had shown him that he would not die before he saw the Lord's Messiah^c. ²⁷Following the Spirit's leading, he went to the Temple. When Jesus' parents brought in the little boy to be dedicated as required by the Law, ²⁸Simeon took Jesus in his arms, thanked God, and said,

²⁹"Lord and Master, now you can let your servant die in peace as you promised, ³⁰because I have seen for myself your salvation ³¹which you have prepared for everyone. ³²He is a light that will show you to the nations, the glory of your people Israel." ³³Jesus' father and mother were shocked at what Simeon said about him.

³⁴Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Jesus' mother Mary, "This child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall and many to rise. He is a sign from God that many will reject, ³⁵revealing what they really think. For you it will feel like a sword piercing right though your heart."

³⁶Anna the prophetess also lived in Jerusalem. She was the daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. She had been married for seven years, ³⁷and then she had been widowed. She was eighty-four years old. She spent her time at the Temple in worship, fasting and praying. ³⁸She came up to

^a 2:23. Exodus 13:2.

^b 2:24. Leviticus 12:8.

^c 2:26. Or "Christ."

them right at that moment, and began praising God. She spoke about Jesus to all those who were looking forward to the time when God would set Jerusalem free.

³⁹Once they had completed everything God’s law required, they returned to their home town of Nazareth in Galilee. ⁴⁰The child grew strong, and was very wise. God’s blessing was with him.

⁴¹Jesus’ parents traveled to Jerusalem every year for the Passover festival. ⁴²When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to the festival as they always did. ⁴³When the festival had finished and it was time to return home, the boy Jesus remained in Jerusalem, but his parents didn’t realize this. ⁴⁴They assumed he was with all the others traveling home. A day passed before they started looking for him among their friends and relatives. ⁴⁵When they couldn’t find him they returned to Jerusalem to look for him there. ⁴⁶It was three days before they found him in the Temple. He was sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷All who heard him speak were surprised by his understanding and his answers.

⁴⁸His parents were totally confused when they saw what he was doing. His mother asked him, “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I—we’ve been worried sick! We’ve been looking everywhere for you!”

⁴⁹“Why is it that you were looking for me?” Jesus replied. “Didn’t you know I should be here in my Father’s house?” ⁵⁰But they didn’t understand what he meant. ⁵¹Then he went back with them to Nazareth, and did what he was told. His mother kept a careful note of everything that happened. ⁵²Jesus grew steadily wiser and stronger, favored both by God and by the people.

3 ¹By now Tiberias had been Caesar for fifteen years. Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea. Herod was ruler^a of Galilee, his brother Philip was ruler of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was ruler of Abilene. ²Annas and Caiphas were the current high priests. This was the time when the word of God came to John, Zechariah’s son, who was living in the desert. ³He went

^a 3:1. Literally, “tetrarch.” Also the other instances where ruler is used in this verse.

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throughout the whole Jordan region, announcing to everyone that they needed to be baptized to show they had repented and their sins had been forgiven. ⁴As Isaiah the prophet wrote: “A voice was heard crying out in the desert, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord: make his paths straight. ⁵Every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be leveled. Crooked ways will be straightened, and rough roads will be smoothed. ⁶Every human being will see God’s salvation.’”

⁷John addressed the crowds that came to him to be baptized. “You viper’s brood! Who warned you to flee from the coming judgment?” he asked. ⁸“Demonstrate that you have truly repented^a. Don’t try to justify yourselves by saying, ‘We’re Abraham’s descendants.’ Let me tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these stones. ⁹The ax is set to begin chopping at the base of the trees. Any tree that doesn’t produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.”

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

¹¹“If you have two coats, then share with someone who doesn’t have one. If you have food, then share with those who don’t,” he told them.

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

¹³“Don’t collect any more tax than you’re meant to,” he replied.

¹⁴“What about us?” some soldiers asked. “What should we do?”

“Don’t demand money with threats of violence. Don’t make accusations that are untrue. Be satisfied with your wages,” he replied.

¹⁵The people were waiting expectantly, and wondered whether John himself might be the Messiah. ¹⁶John replied and explained to everybody, “Yes, I am baptizing you in water. But the one who is coming is more important than me, and I’m not worthy to undo his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand and he’s ready to separate the wheat from the chaff on his threshing floor.

^a 3:8. Literally, “Produce worthy fruits of repentance.”

He'll gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with fire that can't be extinguished.”

¹⁸John gave many warnings like this as he announced the good news to the people. ¹⁹But when John reprimanded Herod the ruler for marrying Herodias, Herod's brother's wife, and for all the evil things he'd done, ²⁰Herod added to his crimes by having John thrown into jail.

²¹Now it happened that after everyone had been baptized, Jesus was baptized as well. As he was praying, heaven was opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit descended upon him, taking the form of a dove. A voice came from heaven, saying, “You are my son, the one I love. I am truly pleased with you.”

²³Jesus was around thirty when he began his public ministry. People presumed he was the son of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Heli, ²⁴the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, ²⁵the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, ²⁶the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, ²⁷the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, ²⁹the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, ³¹the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, ³²the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, ³³the son of Amminadab, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, ³⁵the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, ³⁶the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, ³⁷the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, ³⁸the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

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4 ¹Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River and was led by the Spirit into the desert, ² where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. He didn't eat anything during that whole time, so at the end he was starving.

³The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

⁴"It is written in Scripture, 'You shall not live on bread alone,'" Jesus answered.

⁵The devil led him up to a high place, and in a rapid view showed him all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶Then the devil said to Jesus, "I will give you authority over all of them, and their glory. This authority has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want. ⁷Bow down and worship me and you can have it all."

⁸"It is written in Scripture, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and you shall serve only him,'" Jesus replied.

⁹The devil took Jesus to Jerusalem, set him on the top of the Temple, and told him, "If you are the Son of God, then jump!

¹⁰For it is written in Scripture, 'He will order his angels to care for you, ¹¹holding you up to protect you from stumbling over a stone,'"

¹²"It is written in Scripture, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God,'" Jesus replied. ¹³When the devil had completed all his temptations, he waited for another opportunity^a.

¹⁴Jesus returned to Galilee, full of the Spirit's power. News about him spread everywhere. ¹⁵Jesus taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. ¹⁶When he arrived in Nazareth, where he had grown up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day as usual. ¹⁷The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Jesus unrolled the scroll and found the place where it's written:

¹⁸"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to announce good news to the destitute. He has sent me to proclaim that prisoners will be released, the blind will see, the oppressed will be freed, ¹⁹and to proclaim the time of the Lord's favor." ²⁰He rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant. Then he sat down. Everybody in the synagogue was staring at him.

^a 4:13. Or, "for an opportune time."

²¹“This Scripture you’ve just heard has been fulfilled today!” he told them. ²²Everybody expressed their approval of him, amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they wondered.

²³Jesus replied, “I’m sure you’ll repeat this proverb to me, ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ and ask, ‘Why don’t you do here in your own hometown what we heard you did in Capernaum?’”

²⁴But I tell you the truth, no prophet is accepted in his hometown. ²⁵I guarantee that there were many widows in Israel during the time of Elijah when there was a drought for three and a half years, causing a great famine throughout the country. ²⁶Yet Elijah wasn’t sent to any of them. He was sent to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon! ²⁷Even though there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha, the only one who was healed was Naaman the Syrian!”

²⁸When they heard this everyone in the synagogue became furious. ²⁹They jumped to their feet and threw him out of the town. Then they dragged him to the top of the hill on which the town was built in order to throw him off the cliff. ³⁰But he walked right through them and went on his way.

³¹Jesus went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee. On Sabbath he started teaching them. ³²They were amazed at what he taught them for he spoke with authority.

³³In the synagogue there was a man who was possessed by a demon. He cried out, ³⁴“So, what do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: God’s Holy One!”

³⁵Jesus interrupted him, saying, “Be quiet!” Then he ordered the demon, “Come out of him!” Throwing him to the ground right before them, the demon left the man without injuring him.

³⁶They were all amazed and asked each other, “What is this teaching? With power and authority he orders evil spirits to leave—and they do!” ³⁷News about Jesus spread throughout the nearby region.

³⁸Leaving the synagogue, Jesus went to Simon’s house. Simon’s mother-in-law was sick with a high fever and those who were there asked Jesus to help. ³⁹Jesus went and stood over her. He told the fever to leave her—which it did. She got up right away and prepared a meal for them. ⁴⁰When the sun set, they

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brought to him all who were sick, suffering from various diseases. Jesus placed his hands on them, one after the other, and he healed them. ⁴¹Demons came out of many people, shouting, “You are the Son of God.” But Jesus stopped them and refused to let them speak because they knew he was the Christ.

⁴²Early the following morning Jesus left to find some peace and quiet. But the crowds went out looking for him, and finally found him. They tried to stop him leaving because they did not want him to go.

⁴³But he told them, “I have to go to other towns to tell them the good news of the kingdom of God too, because that is what I was sent to do.” ⁴⁴So Jesus went on traveling around, teaching the good news in the synagogues of Judea.

5 ¹One day as Jesus was standing beside the Sea of Galilee, people crowded around him to hear the word of God. ²Jesus noticed two boats lying on the shore, left there by fishermen who were washing their nets. ³Jesus got into a boat, the one that belonged to Simon, and asked him to push it out into the water, just offshore. Then Jesus sat down in the boat and taught the people from there.

⁴After he’d finished speaking, he told Simon, “Go out into deeper water, and let down your nets for a catch.”

⁵“Lord, we worked hard all night, and didn’t catch anything. But if you say so, I’ll let down the nets,” Simon replied.

⁶Having done this, a large shoal of fish filled the nets full to breaking point. ⁷They waved to their partners in the other boat, asking them to come over and help. The others came over and together they filled both of the boats with fish. The boats were so full that they began to sink.

⁸When Simon Peter saw what had happened, he dropped to his knees before Jesus. “Lord, please stay away from me, for I am a sinful man!” he exclaimed. ⁹For he and everybody with him were completely amazed by the catch of fish that they had landed. ¹⁰James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon’s partners, felt the same way.

“Don’t be afraid,” Jesus told Simon. “From now on you’ll be fishing for people!” ¹¹So they dragged the boats onto the shore, left everything, and followed Jesus.

¹²Once when Jesus was visiting one of the towns, he met a man there who had a very bad case of leprosy. The man fell with his face to the ground and begged Jesus, “Please Lord, if you’re willing, you can make me clean^a.”

¹³Jesus reached out and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy disappeared.

¹⁴“Say nothing to anyone,” Jesus instructed him. “Go and show yourself to the priest and make the ceremonial offerings as required by the law of Moses as proof that you’ve been healed.”

¹⁵Yet the news about Jesus spread more and more. Large crowds came to hear Jesus and to be healed from their diseases.

¹⁶But Jesus often used to retreat to quiet places and pray.

¹⁷One day when Jesus was teaching, the Pharisees and religious teachers who had come from all over Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem were sitting there. The power of the Lord to heal was with him so he could heal. ¹⁸Some men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat. They tried to take him in and lay him in front of Jesus. ¹⁹But they couldn’t find any way through the crowd, so they went up on the roof and made a hole in the roof tiles. Then they lowered the man down on the mat, right into the crowd in front of Jesus.

²⁰When Jesus saw the trust they had in him, he said to the man, “Your sins are forgiven.”

²¹The religious teachers and the Pharisees began to argue with that. “Who is this who’s speaking blasphemies?” they asked. “Who can forgive sins? Only God can do that!”

²²Jesus knew what they were arguing about, so he asked them, “Why are you thinking to question this? ²³What is easier? To say your sins are forgiven, or to say get up and walk?

²⁴However I will prove to you that the Son of man has the authority here on earth to forgive sins.” Then he said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you: Get up, pick up your mat, and go home.”

²⁵Immediately the man stood up in front of them. He picked up the mat he’d been lying on, and went home, praising God as

^a 5:12. “Clean.” Of course, what the man was looking for was healing from his leprosy, however his leprosy made him ceremonially unclean. So “clean” not only healed his disease but made him socially accepted also.

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he went. ²⁶Everyone was completely astonished at what had happened, and in great awe they praised God, saying, “What we saw today was amazing!”

²⁷Later, as Jesus was leaving the town, he saw a tax collector called Levi sitting at his tax booth.

“Follow me,” Jesus told him. ²⁸Levi stood up, left everything, and followed Jesus.

²⁹Levi organized a large banquet at his home in Jesus’ honor. Many tax collectors and others were in the crowd that sat down to eat with them. But the Pharisees and the religious teachers complained to Jesus’ disciples, asking, ³⁰“Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”

³¹“Healthy people don’t need a doctor—but sick people do,” Jesus replied. ³²“I didn’t come to call those who are living right to repentance—I came to call sinners.”

³³“Well, John’s disciples often fast and pray, and the Pharisees’ disciples do so as well. But your disciples don’t—they go on eating and drinking,” they told him.

³⁴“Should the groomsmen fast while the bridegroom is with them?” Jesus asked. ³⁵“No—but the time is coming when the bridegroom will be taken away from them. Then they can fast.”

³⁶Then he gave them an illustration: “You don’t tear out a patch from new clothes to mend old clothes. Otherwise you’d ruin new clothes, and the patch from the new wouldn’t match the old. ³⁷You don’t put new wine into old wineskins, because if you did the new wine would burst the wineskins. Then both wine and wineskins would be wasted. ³⁸You put new wine in new wineskins. ³⁹And nobody after drinking old wine wants new wine, for they say, ‘the old tastes good.’”

6 ¹One Sabbath while Jesus was walking through grainfields, his disciples began picking some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands^a, and eating them. ²Some of the Pharisees questioned him, asking, “Why are you doing what is not permitted on the Sabbath?”

^a 6:1. To remove the husks, or chaff, from the grain. This was seen by the Pharisees as equivalent to doing the work of threshing.

³Jesus replied, “Have you never read what David did when he and his men were hungry? ⁴How he went into the house of God and took the consecrated bread? He ate it, and gave it to his men too. That’s not permitted either. The consecrated bread is only for the priests.”

⁵Then he told them, “The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath.”

⁶On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue to teach. A man was there with a crippled right hand. ⁷The religious teachers and the Pharisees were observing Jesus closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. They wanted to find something to accuse him of.

⁸But Jesus knew what was in their minds. He told the man with the crippled hand, “Get up, and stand here in front of everyone.” The man got up and stood there.

⁹Then Jesus turned to them and said, “Let me ask you a question. Is it legal to do good on the Sabbath, or to do bad? To save life, or to destroy it?”

¹⁰He looked round at all of them there. Then he said to the man, “Hold out your hand.” The man did so, and his hand became like new. ¹¹But they flew into a rage, and began to discuss what they could do to Jesus.

¹²One day shortly after, Jesus went up a mountain to pray. He remained there all night, praying to God. ¹³When morning came he called together his disciples, and chose twelve of them. These are the names of the apostles: ¹⁴Simon (also called Peter by Jesus), Andrew his brother, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Revolutionary, ¹⁶Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot (who became a traitor).

¹⁷Jesus went back down the mountain with them, and stopped at a place where there was some flat ground. There a crowd made up of his disciples and many other people from all over Judea, Jerusalem, and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, had gathered to listen to him and to be cured from their diseases.

¹⁸Those who were troubled by evil spirits were also healed.

¹⁹Everyone in the crowd tried to touch him, because power was coming out from him and healing them all.

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²⁰Looking at his disciples, Jesus told them, ²¹“How happy are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. How happy are you who are hungry now, for you will eat all you need. How happy are you who are weeping now, for you will laugh.

²²“How happy are you when people hate you, exclude you, insult you, and curse your name as evil because of me, the Son of man. ²³When that day comes, be happy. Jump for joy, for great is your reward in heaven. Don’t forget^a their forefathers mistreated the prophets just like this.

²⁴“But how sad are you who are rich, for you have already received your reward. ²⁵“How sad are you who are full now, for you will become hungry. How sad are you who laugh now, for you will mourn and cry. ²⁶“How sad are you when everyone praises you. Don’t forget that their forefathers praised false prophets just like this.

²⁷“But I say to those of you who are listening: Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. ²⁸Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹If someone hits you on one cheek, turn the other cheek. If someone takes your coat, don’t prevent them taking your shirt. ³⁰Give to anyone who asks you. If someone takes something from you, don’t ask for it back. ³¹Do to others what you want them to do to you.

³²“If you love those who love you, why should you deserve any credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³If you do good to those who do good to you, why should you deserve any credit for that either? Sinners do that as well. ³⁴If you lend money expecting to be repaid, why should you deserve any credit for that? Sinners lend money to other sinners as well, expecting to be repaid what they loaned. ³⁵No: love your enemies, do good to them, and lend without expecting to be repaid anything. Then you will receive a great reward, and you will be children of the Most High God, for he is kind to ungrateful and wicked people. ³⁶Be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.

^a 6:23. Implied. Also v. 26.

³⁷“Don’t judge^a, and you won’t be judged; don’t condemn, and you won’t be condemned; forgive, and you’ll be forgiven; ³⁸give, and you will be given generously in return. When what you’re given is measured out, it’s pressed down so more can be added, spilling out over the top, pouring into your lap! For how much you give will determine how much you receive^b.”

³⁹Then he illustrated the point: “Can a blind person lead another? Wouldn’t they both fall into a ditch? ⁴⁰Do students know more than the teacher? Only when they’ve learned everything: then they will be like their teacher. ⁴¹Why are you so worried about the speck that’s in your brother’s eye when you don’t even notice the plank that’s in your own eye? ⁴²How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that’s in your eye,’ when you don’t even see the plank that’s in your own eye? Hypocrite! Take out the plank from your own eye first, and then you’ll be able to see well enough to take out the speck from your brother’s eye.

⁴³“A good tree doesn’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree doesn’t produce good fruit. ⁴⁴You recognize a tree by the fruit it produces. You don’t pick figs from thorn bushes, or harvest grapes from brambles. ⁴⁵Good people produce what’s good from the good things they value that they have stored inside them. Bad people produce what’s bad from the bad things they have stored inside them. What fills people’s minds spills out in what they say.

⁴⁶“So why do you bother to call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ when you don’t do what I say? ⁴⁷I’ll give you an example of someone who comes to me, hears my instructions, and follows them. ⁴⁸That person is like a man building a house. He digs down deep and lays the foundations on solid rock. When the river bursts its banks and the floodwater breaks against the house it’s not damaged because it’s built so well. ⁴⁹The person who hears me but doesn’t do what I say is like a man who builds a house without foundations. When the floodwater breaks against the house it collapses immediately, completely destroyed.”

^a 6:37. Or, “criticize.”

^b 6:38. Or, “For the way you measure what you give will be used to measure what you receive.”

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7 ¹When he'd finished speaking to the people, Jesus left for Capernaum. ²A centurion lived there who had a servant he greatly valued who was sick and was about to die. ³When he heard about Jesus, the centurion sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his servant.

⁴When the elders came to Jesus, they pleaded with him strongly, saying, "Please come and do what he asks. He deserves your help, ⁵because he loves our people and he built a synagogue for us."

⁶Jesus went with them and as they approached the house, the centurion sent some friends to Jesus to tell him, "Lord, please don't trouble yourself by coming into my house, because I'm not worthy of that. ⁷I didn't even think that I was worthy to come and see you. Just give the command, and my servant will be healed. ⁸For I'm under the authority of my superior officers, and I have soldiers under my authority too. I command one to go and he goes, another to come and he comes. I command my servant to do something and he does it."

⁹When Jesus heard this he was astounded. He turned to the crowd that was following him, and said, "I tell you, I haven't found trust like this even in Israel." ¹⁰Then the centurion's friends returned to the house and found the servant in good health.

¹¹Soon after Jesus went to a town called Nain, accompanied by his disciples and a large crowd.

¹²As he approached the town gate a funeral procession was coming the other way. The man who had died was the only son of a widow, and a sizeable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her he was filled with compassion for her. "Don't cry," he told her. ¹⁴Jesus went over to the coffin and touched it, and the pall-bearers stopped.

Jesus said, "Young man, I tell you, get up." ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

¹⁶A sense of awe filled everyone there and they praised God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us," and "God has visited his people." ¹⁷News about Jesus spread throughout Judea, and all around.

¹⁸The disciples of John told John about all this. ¹⁹John called two of his disciples and told them to go and see Jesus, and ask, “Are you the one we’ve been expecting, or should we wait for someone else?” ²⁰When they came to Jesus, they said, “John the Baptist sent us to you, to ask you, ‘Are you the one we’ve been expecting or should we wait for someone else?’”

²¹Right at that time Jesus healed many people of their diseases, illnesses, evil spirits, and made blind people see.

²²Jesus answered John’s disciples, “Go and tell John what you’ve seen and heard. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers cured, the deaf hear, the dead raised back to life, the poor are told the good news. ²³How good it is for those who are not offended because of me!”

²⁴After the messengers from John had left, Jesus began telling the crowd, “About John: what did you expect to see when you went out to meet him in the desert? Some reed blown about by the wind? ²⁵Did you come looking for a man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who have stylish clothes and live in luxury are found in palaces. ²⁶Were you looking for a prophet? Yes he is, and I’m telling you, he’s much more than a prophet.

²⁷“It was written about him in Scripture: ‘Look, I’m sending my messenger to go before you to prepare your way.’

²⁸“I tell you, no one born of women is greater than John, but even the most unimportant person in God’s kingdom is greater than he is!”

²⁹When they heard this, all of them—even the tax collectors—followed what God said was right, for they had been baptized by John. ³⁰But the Pharisees and the religious teachers rejected what God wanted them to do, for they had refused to be baptized by John.

³¹“What shall I compare these people to?” asked Jesus. “What are they like? ³²“They’re like children sitting in the market who tell one other, ‘We played the flute for you but you didn’t dance; we sang sad songs but you didn’t cry.’ ³³When John the Baptist came he didn’t eat bread or drink wine, but you say he’s demon-possessed. ³⁴Now the Son of man is here, and eats and drinks with people, but you say, ‘Look, he spends his

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time eating too much food and drinking too much wine^a. Plus he's a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' ³⁵However, God's wise ways are proved right by all who follow him!"^b

³⁶One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to come and eat with him. Jesus went to the Pharisee's house and sat down to the meal. ³⁷A woman who was a sinner^c in that town found out that Jesus was eating in the Pharisee's house. She went there, carrying an alabaster jar of perfume. ³⁸She kneeled beside Jesus and with her tears wet his feet, and dried them with her hair. She kissed his feet, and then she poured the perfume over them.

³⁹When the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this he said to himself, "If this man was really a prophet he would know who this woman was who's touching him, and what kind of person she was—that she's a sinner!"

⁴⁰Jesus spoke up and said, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, Teacher," he responded.

⁴¹"Once two people were in debt to a money-lender. One owed five hundred denarii^d, the other only fifty. ⁴²Neither of them could repay him, so he forgave the debts. Which one will love him the most?"

⁴³"The one he forgave the most, I would think," Simon answered.

"You're absolutely right," said Jesus. ⁴⁴Turning to the woman, he said to Simon, "You see this woman? When I came into your house, you didn't give me water to wash my feet. But she has washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵You didn't give me a kiss, but since I came in she hasn't stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶You didn't anoint my head with oil^e, but she poured perfume over my feet. ⁴⁷So I tell you, her many

^a 7:34. "Eating too much food and drinking too much wine." The words used here indicate excess, in comparison to the basic words used earlier in the verse.

^b 7:35. Probably a proverb. Literally, "Wisdom is proved right by all her children," meaning that the proof is in the consequences...

^c 7:37. Usually understood to mean that she was living an immoral life.

^d 7:41. Denarius: equivalent to a day's wage.

^e 7:46. A sign of hospitality and respect.

sins have been forgiven—that’s why she loves so much^a. But whoever is forgiven little, only loves a little.”⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to the woman, “Your sins have been forgiven.”

⁴⁹Those who were sitting eating with him began talking among themselves, saying, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”⁵⁰ But Jesus told the woman, “Your trust has saved you, go in peace.”

8 ¹Soon after this Jesus went around the towns and villages announcing the good news of God’s kingdom. The twelve disciples went with him, ²along with a number of women who had been healed from evil spirits and sickness: Mary called Magdalene from whom he had cast out seven demons; ³Joanna, the wife of Herod’s manager Chuza; Susanna; and many more who provided support from their personal resources.

⁴Once when a large crowd of people gathered, coming from many towns to see him, Jesus spoke to them, using a story as an illustration. ⁵“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he scattered the seed, some fell on the road where people trampled on it and birds ate it up. ⁶Some fell on stony ground, and once the seeds had sprouted they withered for lack of moisture. ⁷Some seeds fell among thorns and as they both grew the thorns choked the plants. ⁸Some seeds fell on good earth and after they grew they produced a harvest one hundred times more than what had been sown.” After he told them this, he called out, “If you have ears, then listen!”

⁹But his disciples asked him, “What does this illustration mean?”

¹⁰Jesus replied, “You’ve been given insights into the mysteries of God’s kingdom, but the rest are given illustrations, so that, ‘Even though they see, they don’t really see; and even though they hear, they don’t really understand.’

¹¹“This is the meaning of the illustration: The seed is God’s word. ¹²The seeds that fall on the road are those who hear the message, but then the devil comes and steals away the truth from

^a 7:47. This verse is sometimes understood as if it’s woman’s love that brings the great forgiveness. However the context (especially verse 43) makes it clear that it’s the extent of forgiveness that engenders the great love.

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their minds so they won't trust in God and be saved. ¹³The seeds that fall on the stony ground are those who hear and welcome the message with joy but don't have any roots. They trust for a while but when difficult times come they give up. ¹⁴The seeds that fall among thorns are those who hear the message but it's choked out by life's distractions—worries, wealth, pleasure—so they don't produce anything. ¹⁵The seeds sown on good earth are those who are honest and do what is right. They hear the message of truth, hold on to it, and through their perseverance produce a good harvest.

¹⁶“You don't light a lamp and then cover it with a bucket, or hide it under a bed. No, you put it on a stand, so that anyone who comes in can see the light. ¹⁷For there's nothing hidden that won't be revealed; there's nothing secret that won't become known and obvious.

¹⁸“So pay attention how you 'hear.’^a To those who have received, more will be given; from those who don't receive, even what they think they have will be taken away!”

¹⁹Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived, but they couldn't get through the crowd to see him. ²⁰Jesus was told, “Your mother and your brothers are outside. They want to see you.”

²¹“My mother and my brothers are those who hear God's word, and do what it says,” Jesus replied.

²²One day Jesus said to his disciples, “Let's cross over to the other side of the lake.” So they got into a boat and set off. ²³As they were sailing, Jesus fell asleep, and a storm came down on the lake. The boat began filling with water and they were in danger of sinking. ²⁴They went over to Jesus and woke him up. “Master, master, we're going to drown!” they said. Jesus woke up and commanded the wind and the rough waves to stop. They stopped, and all was calm.

²⁵“Where is your trust?” he asked them. Terrified and amazed, they said to each other, “So who is this? He gives commands to the winds and the water, and they obey him!”

²⁶They sailed across to the Gerasene region that lies opposite Galilee. ²⁷When Jesus stepped out of the boat onto the shore, a demon-possessed man from the town came to meet him.

^a 8:18. “Hear”: Listen to God's message.

For a long time he hadn't worn any clothes or lived in a house. He lived in the tombs.²⁸ When he saw Jesus he screamed, fell down at Jesus' feet, and asked in a loud voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Please don't torture me, I beg you!"²⁹ For Jesus had already commanded the evil spirit to leave the man. It had often seized him, and despite being tied down with chains and shackles, and placed under guard, he would break the chains apart and would be driven by the demon into the desert areas.

³⁰"What is your name?" Jesus asked him. "Legion,"^a he replied, for many demons had entered him.³¹ They begged Jesus not to order them to go into the Abyss^b.³² There was a large herd of pigs feeding on the nearby hillside, and the demons begged him to be allowed to go into the pigs. Jesus gave them permission,³³ so the demons left the man and entered the pigs. The herd rushed down the steep slope into the lake and drowned.

³⁴When the pig-keepers saw what had happened they ran off and spread the news through the town and the countryside.³⁵ The people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus they found the man freed from the demons. He was sitting there at Jesus' feet, wearing clothes and in his right mind; and they became scared.³⁶ Those who had seen what happened explained how the demon-possessed man had been healed.

³⁷Then all the people from the Gerasene region asked Jesus to leave because they were overwhelmed by fear. So he got into the boat and went back.³⁸ The man who had been freed from the demons begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away.³⁹ "Go back home, and tell people all that God has done for you," Jesus told him. So he went away, telling the whole town all that Jesus had done for him.

⁴⁰A crowd of people was there to welcome Jesus when he returned, all eagerly expecting him.⁴¹ One was a man called Jairus, a synagogue leader, who came and fell at Jesus' feet. He pleaded with Jesus to come to his home⁴² because his only daughter was dying. She was about twelve years old.

^a 8:30. Or "many."

^b 8:31. "The depths," or "bottomless pit."

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While Jesus was on his way there people were crowding around him. ⁴³In the crowd was a woman who had suffered with bleeding for twelve years. She had spent all she had on doctors, but none of them had been able to help her. ⁴⁴She approached Jesus from behind and touched the hem of his cloak.

Immediately the bleeding stopped.

⁴⁵“Who touched me?” Jesus asked. Everybody around denied doing so.

“But Master,” said Peter, “there are people crowding around you, and they keep pushing up against you.”

⁴⁶“Someone touched me,” Jesus replied. “I know because power went out from me.”

⁴⁷When the woman realized she couldn’t go unnoticed, she came forward, trembling, and fell down before him. Right in front of everybody she explained the reason why she had touched Jesus, and that she’d been cured immediately.

⁴⁸Jesus said to her, “Daughter, your trust has healed you, go in peace.”

⁴⁹While he was still speaking, someone came from the home of the synagogue leader to tell him, “Your daughter’s dead. You don’t need to bother the Teacher any longer.”

⁵⁰But when he heard this, Jesus told Jairus, “Don’t be afraid. If you trust she will be healed.”

⁵¹When Jesus arrived at the house he didn’t allow anyone else to go in except Peter, John, and James, and the girl’s father and mother. ⁵²All the people there were crying and mourning for her.

“Don’t cry,” Jesus told them. “She’s not dead, she’s just sleeping.” ⁵³They laughed at him, because they knew that she was dead. ⁵⁴But Jesus took her by the hand, and said in a loud voice, “My child, get up!”

⁵⁵She came back to life^a, and she got up at once. Jesus told them to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶Her parents were astonished at what had happened, but Jesus instructed them not to tell anyone about it.

^a 8:55. Literally, “her ‘breath/spirit returned.” The word for breath or spirit is the same.

9 ¹Jesus called the twelve disciples together. He gave them power and authority over all demons, and the ability to heal diseases. ²Then he sent them out to proclaim God’s kingdom and to heal the sick.

³“Take nothing with you for the journey,” he told them. “No staff, no bag, no bread, no money, not even any extra clothes.

⁴Whatever house you enter, stay there, and when you leave, leave from there. ⁵If people refuse to accept you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave town as a warning against them.”

⁶They left and went around the villages, announcing the good news and healing everywhere they went.

⁷Herod the tetrarch had heard about all that was happening^a, and he was very puzzled. Some were saying that John had been raised from the dead; ⁸others that Elijah had appeared; still others that one of the ancient prophets had come back to life.

⁹Herod said, “There’s no question^b I beheaded John. So who is this man? I’m hearing all these things about him.” And he tried to find a way to meet Jesus.

¹⁰When the apostles returned they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he left with them and went to a town called Bethsaida. ¹¹However the crowds found out where he was going and followed him there. He welcomed them and explained the kingdom of God to them, and healed those who needed healing.

¹²Late in the day, the twelve disciples came to him and said, “You should send the crowd away now so they can go to the villages and farms nearby and find a place to stay and food to eat—there’s nothing here where we are.”

¹³“You give them something to eat!” said Jesus.

“All we have here are five loaves and two fish—unless you want us to go and buy food for everyone,” they said. ¹⁴There were about five thousand men present.

“Sit them down in groups of about fifty,” he told his disciples. ¹⁵The disciples did so, and everybody sat down. ¹⁶Jesus picked up the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed the food and broke it into pieces. He kept on

^a 9:7. Particularly in reference to Jesus.

^b 9:9. Implied; reflecting the fact that the “I” is emphatic.

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giving the food to the disciples to share with the people.

¹⁷Everybody ate until they were full, and then twelve baskets of leftovers were collected.

¹⁸At another time, when Jesus was praying in private with just his disciples with him, he asked them, “All these crowds of people—who do they say I am?”

¹⁹“Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and still others say one of the ancient prophets risen from the dead,” they replied.

²⁰“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”
“God’s Messiah,” Peter replied.

²¹Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anybody about this. ²²“The Son of man must experience terrible sufferings,” he said. “He will be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the religious teachers. He will be killed, but on the third day he will rise again.”

²³“If any one of you wants to follow me, you must deny yourself, pick up your cross daily, and follow me,” Jesus told all of them. ²⁴“For if you want to save your life, you will lose it; and if you lose your life for my sake, you will save it. ²⁵What do you benefit by gaining the whole world if you end up lost or destroyed? ²⁶If you are ashamed of me and my message, the Son of man will be ashamed of you when he comes in his glory, and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels. ²⁷I tell you the truth, some standing here won’t taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”

²⁸About eight days later, after he had told them this, Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him and went up a mountain to pray. ²⁹While he was praying, his face changed in appearance, and his clothing became a dazzling white. ³⁰Two men appeared in brilliant glory. They were Moses and Elijah, and they began to talk with Jesus. ³¹They spoke about his death^a, which would soon happen in Jerusalem.

³²Peter and the others were asleep. When they woke up they saw Jesus in his glory, and the two men standing next to him.

³³As the two men were about to leave, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it’s great to be here. Let’s make some shelters: one for

^a 9:31. Literally, “departure.”

you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He really didn’t know what he was saying.

³⁴While he was speaking a cloud came and spread over them. They were terrified as they entered the cloud.

³⁵A voice spoke from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him!” ³⁶When the voice finished speaking, Jesus was there alone. They kept this to themselves, and didn’t tell anyone at that time what they’d seen.

³⁷The next day, when they had come down the mountain, a huge crowd was waiting to meet Jesus. ³⁸A man in the crowd called out, “Teacher, please look at my son. He’s my only child. ³⁹A spirit possesses him and he screams immediately. It sends him into convulsions and makes him foam at the mouth. It hardly ever leaves him alone and it causes him a lot of pain. ⁴⁰I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they couldn’t.”

⁴¹“What an unbelieving and corrupt people you are! How long do I have to remain here with you, and put up with you?” said Jesus. “Bring your son here.” ⁴²Even as the boy came over, the demon sent him into convulsions, throwing him to the ground. But Jesus intervened, rebuking the evil spirit and healing the boy, and then gave him back to his father. ⁴³Everyone was amazed at this demonstration of God’s power. However even though everyone was amazed by all he did, Jesus warned his disciples, ⁴⁴“Listen carefully to what I’m telling you: the Son of man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.”

⁴⁵But they didn’t understand what this meant. Its meaning was hidden from them so they didn’t realize its implications, and they were afraid to ask him about it.

⁴⁶Then an argument started among the disciples about which of them was the greatest. ⁴⁷But Jesus, knowing what they were arguing about, picked up and placed a small child next to him.

⁴⁸Then he said to them, “Anyone who accepts this little child in my name accepts me, and anyone who accepts me accepts the One who sent me. Whoever is least among you all is the greatest.”

⁴⁹John spoke up, saying, “Master, we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him because he wasn’t one of us.”

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⁵⁰“Don’t stop him,” Jesus replied. “Anyone who isn’t against you is for you.”

⁵¹As the time approached for him to ascend to heaven, Jesus was determined to go to Jerusalem. ⁵²He sent messengers on ahead to a Samaritan village to get things ready for him. ⁵³But the people would not welcome him because he was determined to press on to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When James and John saw this, they asked Jesus, “Master, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to burn them up?” ⁵⁵But Jesus turned, and reprimanded them. ⁵⁶Then they proceeded to another village.

⁵⁷While they were walking, one man told Jesus, “I will follow you wherever you go!”

⁵⁸Jesus told the man, “Foxes have their dens, and wild birds have their nests, but the Son of man doesn’t even have a place to rest his head.”

⁵⁹He told another man, “Follow me.” But the man replied, “Master, first let me go home and bury my father.”

⁶⁰“Let the dead bury their own dead,” Jesus replied. “You go and proclaim God’s kingdom.”

⁶¹Another man said, “Lord, I will follow you! But first let me go home and say goodbye to my family.”

⁶²But Jesus told him, “Nobody once they’ve started plowing and then looks back is fit for God’s kingdom.”

10 ¹After this, the Lord appointed seventy^a other disciples, and sent them in pairs to every town and place that he planned to visit.

²“The harvest is large, but the number of workers is small,” he told them. “Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send workers to his harvest fields. ³So get on your way: I’m sending you like sheep among wolves. ⁴Don’t take any money or a bag or extra sandals, and don’t spend time chatting with people you meet. ⁵Whatever house you enter, first of all say, ‘May this house have peace.’ ⁶If there’s a peaceful person living there, then your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for a worker deserves to be paid. Don’t go from house to house. ⁸If you enter

^a 10:1. Some early texts read “seventy-two.”

a town and the people there welcome you, then eat what's set before you⁹ and heal those who are sick. Tell them, 'God's kingdom has come to you.'¹⁰ But if you enter a town and the people there don't welcome you, go through their streets telling them,¹¹ 'We are wiping off even the dust from your town that clings to our feet to show you our disapproval^a. But you should recognize this: God's kingdom has come.'

¹²'I tell you, in the Day of Judgment it will be better for Sodom than for such a town.¹³ Shame on you Korazin! Shame on you Bethsaida! For if the miracles you saw happen had happened in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented a long time ago, and they would be sitting in sackcloth and ashes.¹⁴ That's why in the judgment it will be better for Tyre and Sidon than for you.¹⁵ And you, Capernaum, you won't be exalted to heaven; you will go down to Hades.

¹⁶'Anyone who hears you hears me, and anyone who rejects you rejects me. But anyone who rejects me rejects the one who sent me.'

¹⁷The seventy disciples returned in great excitement, saying, 'Lord, even the demons do what we tell them in your name!'

¹⁸Jesus replied, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.¹⁹ Yes, I have given you power to tread on snakes and scorpions, and to overcome all the enemy's strength, and nothing will harm you.²⁰ But don't take delight that the spirits do what you tell them—just be glad that your names are written in heaven.'

²¹At that moment Jesus was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, and said, 'I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for you hid these things from the wise and clever people and revealed them to children! Yes, Father, you were pleased to do it in this way.

²²'My Father has handed over everything to me. No one understands the Son except the Father, and no one understands the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.'

²³When they were by themselves Jesus turned to the disciples and told them, 'Those who see what you're seeing should be really happy!²⁴ I tell you, many prophets and kings

^a 10:11. "Disapproval"—implied.

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have wanted to see what you're seeing, but they didn't see, and wanted to hear the things you're hearing, but didn't hear."

²⁵Once an expert in religious law stood up and tried to trap Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "What do I have to do to gain eternal life?"

²⁶"What is written in the law? How do you read it?" asked Jesus.

²⁷"You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and your whole spirit, and your whole strength, and your whole mind; and love your neighbor as yourself," the man replied.

²⁸"You're right," Jesus told him. "Do this, and you will live."

²⁹But the man wanted to vindicate himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

³⁰Jesus replied, saying, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was attacked by robbers who stripped him and beat him, and left him for dead. ³¹It so happened that a priest was going the same way. He saw the man, but he passed by on the other side of the road. ³²Then a Levite came along. But when he got to the place and saw the man, he also passed by on the other side.

³³Finally a Samaritan man came along. As he passed by, he saw the man and felt sorry for him. ³⁴He went over and treated the man's wounds with oil and wine, and bandaged them. Then he placed the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn where he took care of him. ³⁵The next day he gave two denarii to the innkeeper and told him, 'Take care of him, and if you spend more than this, I'll pay you back when I return.' ³⁶Which one of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers?"

³⁷"The one who showed him kindness," the man replied.

"Go and do the same," Jesus told him.

³⁸While they were on their way^a, Jesus arrived at a village, and a woman called Martha invited him to her home. ³⁹She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. ⁴⁰Martha was concerned about all that needed to be done to prepare the meal, so she came to Jesus and said, "Master,

^a 10:38. To Jerusalem.

don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to come and help me!"

⁴¹"Martha, Martha," the Lord replied, "you're worried and upset about all this. ⁴²But only one thing is really necessary. Mary has chosen the right thing, and it shall not be taken away from her."

11 ¹Once Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples asked him, "Lord, please teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

²Jesus told them, "When you pray, say, 'Father, let your name be honored as holy. May your kingdom come. ³Give us every day the food we need. ⁴Forgive us our sins, just as we forgive everyone who sins against us. Keep us from temptation.'"

⁵Jesus went on to tell them, "Say you have a friend and you go to him in the middle of the night and ask, 'My friend, lend me three loaves of bread ⁶because a friend of mine has come to visit me, and I don't have any food to give him.' ⁷Your friend in the house might reply, 'Don't bother me—I've already locked the door, and I and my children have gone to bed. I can't get up to give you anything now.' ⁸I tell you, even though he refuses to get up and give you anything, despite you being his friend, if you are persistent, your friend will get up and give you everything you need.

⁹"I tell you: ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks, receives; and everyone who seeks, finds; and to everyone who knocks the door will be opened. ¹¹Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, would give him a snake instead? ¹²Or if he asks for an egg, would you give him a scorpion? ¹³So if you, even though you are evil, still know to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?"

¹⁴Jesus was driving out a demon that had made a man dumb. When the demon had left, the man who was dumb spoke, and the crowds were amazed. ¹⁵But some of them said, "He is driving out demons using the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of demons."

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¹⁶Others were trying to test Jesus by demanding a miraculous sign from heaven.

¹⁷Jesus knew what they were thinking and said, “Any kingdom divided against itself will be destroyed. A family^a divided against itself will fall. ¹⁸If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? You say that I cast out demons using the power of Beelzebul. ¹⁹But if I drive out demons by the power of Beelzebul, by whose power do your own people^b drive them out? They themselves will condemn you as wrong!

²⁰“However, if I am driving out demons by the power of God, then this proves God’s kingdom has arrived. It’s right here among you! ²¹When a strong man who is fully armed guards his house, all he owns is safe. ²²But if a stronger man comes and defeats him, taking from him all his weapons that he depended on, then he can carry off all his possessions. ²³“Anyone who is not with me is against me, and anyone who doesn’t build together with me is breaking it all apart.

²⁴“When an evil spirit leaves someone, it goes through the desert looking for a place to stay. When it doesn’t find anywhere, it says, ‘I’ll return to the house I left.’ ²⁵When it returns, it finds its old home is swept and tidy. ²⁶So it goes and finds seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there. In the end that man is worse off than before.”

²⁷As he was speaking, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the womb from where you came and the breasts that nursed you.” ²⁸But Jesus said, “Even more blessed are those who hear God’s word, and follow what it says.”

²⁹As people crowded around him, Jesus began telling them, “This is an evil generation for it’s looking for some miraculous sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰In the same way that Jonah was a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of man be a sign to this generation. ³¹The queen of the south will rise in the judgment together with the people of this generation and will condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon’s wisdom, and now there is

^a 11:17. Literally, “house.”

^b 11:19. Literally, “sons.”

someone greater than Solomon here! ³²The people of Nineveh rise in the judgment together with this generation, and will condemn it, for they repented when they heard Jonah's message, and now there's someone greater than Jonah here! ³³No one lights a lamp and then hides it or places it under a bowl. No, you put it on a lamp stand so that those who come into the house can see the light. ³⁴Your eye is the light for your body. When your eye is good, your whole body is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body is in the dark. ³⁵So make sure the light you have in you is not actually darkness. ³⁶If your whole body is full of light, with no areas of darkness, then it will be completely illuminated, just as a bright lamp gives you light."

³⁷After Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to come and eat with him. So Jesus went and sat down to a meal. ³⁸The Pharisee was surprised that Jesus didn't wash his hands before eating as ceremonially required. ³⁹So the Lord told him, "You Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you're full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰You're so foolish! Don't you think the One who made the outside made the inside as well? ⁴¹If, acting from within, you do acts of kindness to others, then everything will be clean to you. ⁴²Shame on you Pharisees! You pay tithes on herbs^a and plants, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You need to pay attention to the latter, while not leaving the former things undone. ⁴³Shame on you Pharisees! You love to have the best seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted with respect when you go to the markets. ⁴⁴Shame on you! You are like unmarked graves that people walk over without knowing."

⁴⁵One of the experts in religious law reacted, saying, "Teacher, when you talk like this, you're insulting us too!"

⁴⁶Jesus replied, "Shame on you lawyers too! You place burdens on people that are too hard to carry, but you don't lift a finger to help them. ⁴⁷Shame on you! You build memorial tombs to honor the prophets, but it was your own fathers who killed them in the first place! ⁴⁸By doing this you are witnesses showing that you agree with what your fathers did. They killed the prophets, and you build their tombs!"

^a 11:42. Literally, "mint and rue."

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⁴⁹“This is why God in his wisdom said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles; some they will kill, and others they will persecute.’ ⁵⁰Consequently, this generation will be held accountable for the blood of all the prophets shed from the beginning of the world, ⁵¹from the blood of Abel right up to the blood of Zachariah who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held accountable for all of it. ⁵²Shame on you lawyers! You have removed the key of knowledge. You didn’t go in yourselves, and you prevented others from going in too.”

⁵³As Jesus was leaving, the religious teachers and the Pharisees began to attack him aggressively, asking questions to provoke him. ⁵⁴They were hoping to catch him out, trying to get him to say something they could use against him.

12 ¹In the meantime so many thousands of people had gathered that they were treading on each another. Jesus began speaking first to his disciples. “Beware the yeast of the Pharisees—hypocrisy. ²For there’s nothing hidden that won’t be revealed, nothing secret that won’t be made known. ³Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and whatever you whispered in private will be announced from the rooftops. ⁴I tell you, my friends, don’t be afraid of those who kill the body, for once they’ve done that there’s no more they can do. ⁵Let me make it clear whom you should be afraid of. You should be afraid of the one who after he has killed has the power to dispose of them in Gehenna^a. That’s the one you should be afraid of. ⁶Aren’t five sparrows sold for two pennies? But God doesn’t forget a single one of them. ⁷Even the hairs on your head have been counted. Don’t be afraid—you’re worth more than many sparrows!

⁸“I tell you the truth, those who declare they belong to me, the Son of man will also declare they belong to him before God’s angels, ⁹but those who deny me will be denied before God’s

^a 12:5. The word here is literally “Gehenna,” sometimes translated “hell” or “hellfire.” Gehenna was the place outside of Jerusalem where fires were lit to dispose of rubbish by burning. “Hell” is a concept that is derived from Nordic and Anglo-Saxon mythology and does not parallel the idea here.

angels. ¹⁰Everyone who speaks against the Son of man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

¹¹“When you’re brought to trial before synagogues, rulers, and authorities, don’t worry about how to defend yourself, or what you should say. ¹²The Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what’s important to say.”

¹³Someone in the crowd asked Jesus, “Teacher, please tell my brother to share the inheritance with me.”

¹⁴“My friend,” Jesus replied, “Who appointed me as your judge to decide how your inheritance should be divided?” He told the people, ¹⁵“Watch out, and beware of all greedy thoughts and actions, for a person’s life isn’t summed up by all the things they own.”

¹⁶Then he told them a story as an illustration. “Once there was a rich man who owned land that was very productive. ¹⁷The man said to himself, ‘What shall I do? I’ve nowhere to store my crops.’ ¹⁸‘I know what I’ll do,’ he decided. ‘I’ll pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and then I’ll be able to store all my crops and everything I own. ¹⁹Then I’ll tell myself, ‘You have enough to live on for many years, so take life easy: eat, drink, and enjoy yourself!’ ²⁰But God said to him, ‘You foolish man! Your life will be demanded back this very night, and then who will get everything you’ve stored up?’ ²¹This is what happens to people who hoard up wealth for themselves but are not rich as far as God is concerned.”

²²Jesus told his disciples, “That’s why I tell you don’t worry about life, about what to eat, or about what clothes you should wear. ²³Life is about more than food, and the body is about more than wearing clothes. ²⁴Look at the ravens. They don’t sow or reap, they don’t have any storerooms or barns, but God feeds them. And you’re far more valuable than birds! ²⁵Can you add an hour to your life by worrying about it? ²⁶If you can’t do anything about such small things, why worry about the rest? ²⁷Think of the lilies and how they grow. They don’t work, and they don’t spin thread for clothes, but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory was as beautifully dressed as one of them.

²⁸“So if God clothes the fields with such beautiful flowers, which are here today but gone tomorrow when they are burned

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in a fire to heat an oven, how much more will God clothe you, you who have so little trust! ²⁹Don't be concerned about what you're going to eat or drink—don't worry about it. ³⁰These are all things that people in the world worry about, but your Father knows you need them. ³¹Search for God's kingdom, and you'll be given these things as well. ³²Don't be afraid, little flock, for your Father is happy to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell what you have, and give the money to the poor. Get yourselves purses that don't wear out: treasure in heaven that will never run out, where no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it. ³⁴For your heart will be wherever your treasure is.

³⁵“Be dressed and ready, and keep your lamps lit, ³⁶like servants waiting for their master when he returns from his wedding feast, prepared to open the door quickly for him when he comes and knocks. ³⁷How good it will be for those servants that the master finds watching when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will get dressed, have them sit down for a meal, and will come and serve them himself!

³⁸“Even if he comes at midnight, or just before dawn—how good for them if he finds them watching and ready! ³⁹But remember this: if the master knew when a thief was coming, he would keep watch, and not allow his house be broken into. ⁴⁰You must also be ready, for the Son of man is coming when you don't expect him.”

⁴¹“Is this story you're telling just for us, or for everyone?” Peter asked.

⁴²The Lord replied, “Who then is the trustworthy and wise manager, the one person in the household that the master puts in charge to share out their food at the right time? ⁴³It will be good for that servant when his master returns and finds him doing what he should. ⁴⁴I tell you the truth, the master will put that servant in charge of everything. ⁴⁵But what if the servant were to say to himself, ‘My master is taking a long time in coming,’ and then starts beating the other servants, both men and women, feasting and getting drunk? ⁴⁶That servant's master will return unexpectedly one day at a time he wasn't aware of, and will punish him severely, treating him as totally untrustworthy.

⁴⁷“That servant who knew what his master wanted and yet didn't get ready or follow his instructions, will be beaten

severely; ⁴⁸but the servant who didn't know and did things deserving punishment will be beaten only lightly. From those who are given much, much will be required, and from those who are entrusted with more, more will be demanded. ⁴⁹I have come to set the earth on fire, and I really wish it was already burning! ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to go through, and I'm in agony, wishing it was over! ⁵¹Do you think that I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, I bring division. ⁵²From now on, if there are five in a family, they will be divided against each other: three against two, and two against three. ⁵³They will be divided against each other—father against son, son against father, mother against daughter, daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

⁵⁴Then Jesus spoke to the crowds. “When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, ‘a rain-shower’s coming,’ and it happens. ⁵⁵When a south wind blows, you say ‘it’s going to be hot,’ and it is. ⁵⁶You hypocrites, how is it that you know how to rightly interpret the weather but you don’t know how to interpret the present time? ⁵⁷Why don’t you think for yourselves and judge what’s right? ⁵⁸As you go with your accuser to the magistrate, on the way you should be working on a settlement. Otherwise you may be dragged before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. ⁵⁹I tell you, you won’t get out until you’ve paid the last penny.”

13 ¹It was around this time that some people told Jesus about Pilate’s killing of some Galileans while they were offering sacrifices in the Temple. ²“Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than any other Galileans because they suffered like this?” Jesus asked. ³“No, I tell you. But unless you repent, you will all perish as well. ⁴What about those eighteen people that were killed when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Do you think they were the worst people in the whole of Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you. But unless you repent, you will all perish as well.”

⁶Then he told them this story as an illustration. “Once there was man who had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came to look for fruit on the tree, but he didn’t find any. ⁷So he told the

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gardener, ‘Look, for three years I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and I haven’t found any. Chop it down! Why should it be taking up space?’

⁸“‘Master,’ the man replied, ‘please leave it alone for just one more year. I’ll dig the soil around it and put down some fertilizer. ⁹If it produces fruit, then that’s fine. If not, then chop it down.’”

¹⁰One Sabbath Jesus was teaching in a synagogue, ¹¹and a woman was there who had been crippled by an evil spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not stand straight. ¹²When Jesus saw her, he called her over and told her, “You’re freed of your sickness.” ¹³Then he placed his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up, and she praised God.

¹⁴However the synagogue leader was upset that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. He said to the crowd, “There are six days for work. Come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.”

¹⁵But the Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Doesn’t every one of you untie your ox or donkey from the stall and take it to drink? ¹⁶Why shouldn’t this woman, this daughter of Abraham whom Satan has kept tied up for eighteen years, be untied and set free this Sabbath day?”

¹⁷What he said shamed all his opponents, but everyone in the crowd was delighted by all the wonderful things he was doing.

¹⁸Then Jesus asked, “So what is the kingdom of God like? What should I compare it to? ¹⁹It’s like a mustard seed that a man planted in his garden. It grew into a tree, and the birds came and nested in its branches.”

²⁰He asked again, “What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? ²¹It’s like yeast that a woman took and mixed into three measures^a of flour which made the whole batch rise.”

²²Jesus went around the towns and villages, teaching on his way to Jerusalem.

²³Someone asked him, “Lord, will only a few be saved?”

Jesus replied, ²⁴“Try very hard to enter the narrow doorway, because I tell you that many will try to go in, and won’t succeed.

^a 13:21. About 3 gallons or 13 liters.

²⁵Once the house owner gets up and closes the door, you'll be standing outside knocking on the door, saying, 'Master, please open the door for us.' But he'll reply, 'I don't know you or where you're from.'²⁶Then you'll say, 'But we ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets!'²⁷He'll reply, 'I tell you, I don't know you or where you're from. Get away from me, all of you who don't do what's right!'²⁸There will be crying and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you are thrown out.²⁹People will come from the east and the west, the north and the south, and they will sit down to eat in the kingdom of God.³⁰For the last shall be first, and the first shall be last."

³¹At that moment some Pharisees came to Jesus and told him, "You should leave here. Herod wants to kill you!"

³²Jesus replied, "Go tell that fox that I will go on driving out demons and healing people for today and tomorrow, and on the third day I'll achieve what I came to do^a.³³Well anyway I must continue on my way for today and tomorrow, and the day after. For it wouldn't be right for a prophet to die outside of Jerusalem!"

³⁴"Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you kill prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often I have wanted to gather all your children together just like a hen does with her chicks under her wings, but you refused!³⁵Look, your house is left desolate, and I tell you that you won't see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

14 ¹One Sabbath Jesus went to have a meal at the home of one of the leaders of the Pharisees where they watched him closely. ²A man was there whose arms and legs were swollen. ³So Jesus asked the experts in religious law and the Pharisees, "Does the law allow healing on the Sabbath or not?" ⁴But they kept quiet. Jesus touched the man, healed him, and sent him on his way. ⁵Then Jesus said to them, "If your son or your ox happened to fall into a well on the Sabbath, wouldn't you go and pull him out immediately?" ⁶They weren't able to give an answer.

⁷So he told a story to the guests, noticing how they'd chosen to sit in places of honor. ⁸"When you're invited to a wedding

^a 13:32. Or "achieve my goal."

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reception, don't take the place of honor, because someone more important than you may have been invited," he began. ⁹"Your host who invited you both will come and tell you, 'Give this man your place.' Then in embarrassment you'll have to move to whatever place is left. ¹⁰Instead, when you're invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes in, he'll tell you, 'My friend, please move to a better seat.' Then you'll be honored before all the guests sitting with you. ¹¹For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

¹²Then he said to the man who had invited him, "When you give a lunch or a dinner, don't invite your friends, or your brothers, or your relatives, or your rich neighbors, for they may invite you back, and then you'd be repaid. ¹³Instead, when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴and you will be blessed, for they have nothing to repay you with, and you'll be rewarded at the resurrection of the good."

¹⁵When one of them eating at the table with Jesus heard this, he said to Jesus, "How wonderful it will be for those who feast in the kingdom of God!"

¹⁶"Once there was a man who prepared a great banquet, and invited many guests," Jesus replied. ¹⁷"When it was time to eat he sent his servant out to tell everyone who had been invited, 'Come, because the banquet's ready.' ¹⁸But they all started to make excuses. The first said, 'I've just bought a field and I have to go and see it. Please excuse me.' ¹⁹Another said, 'I've just bought five pairs of oxen and have to go and try them out. Please excuse me.' Still another said, ²⁰'I've just got married, so I can't come.' ²¹The servant returned and told his master what they'd said. The home-owner became angry and told his servant, 'Quickly, go out into the streets and alleys of the town, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.'

²²"Then the servant said, 'Master, I did what you told me, but there are still empty places.'

²³"So the master told the servant, 'Go out on the country roads and lanes, and make people come—I want my house to be full. ²⁴I tell you, not a single one of those people I invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

²⁵A large crowd was accompanying Jesus. He turned to them and said, ²⁶“If you want to follow me but you don’t hate your father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters—even your own life—you can’t be my disciple. ²⁷If you don’t carry your cross and follow me, you can’t be my disciple. ²⁸If you planned to build a tower, wouldn’t you first work out how much it would cost, and see if you had enough money to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, if after laying the foundation you weren’t able to finish it, everyone who saw it would laugh at you, saying, ³⁰‘Look at him: he started building but he couldn’t finish it.’

³¹“What king goes to war with another king without first sitting down with his advisors to work out whether he and his ten thousand can defeat the one marching against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he can’t, he’ll send representatives to ask for peace while the other king is still a long way off. ³³In the same way every one of you who doesn’t give up everything can’t be my disciple. ³⁴Salt is good, but if it loses its taste, how can you make it salty again? ³⁵It’s no good for the soil or for fertilizer—you just toss it out. Whoever has ears, then listen!”

15 ¹Tax collectors and other “sinners” often used to come and listen to Jesus. ²As a result the Pharisees and the religious teachers complained, “This man welcomes sinners, and eats with them.”

³So Jesus told them this story as an illustration. ⁴“Imagine a man who had a hundred sheep lost one of them. Wouldn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture, and search for the one that’s lost until he finds it? ⁵When he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders. ⁶Once he gets home, he calls his friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Come and celebrate with me! I’ve found my lost sheep!’ ⁷I tell you that there’s more joy in heaven over a sinner that repents than over ninety-nine good people who don’t need to repent.

⁸“Imagine a woman who has ten silver^a coins, and loses one of them. Wouldn’t she light a lamp and sweep the house, carefully searching until she finds it? ⁹When she finds it, she

^a 15:8. Literally, “*drachma*.”

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calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Come and celebrate with me! I’ve found the silver coin that I lost.’ ¹⁰I tell you there is joy in the presence of God’s angels over one sinner that repents.

¹¹“Once there was a man who had two sons,” Jesus explained. ¹²“The younger one told his father, ‘Father, give me my inheritance now.’ So the man divided his property between them. ¹³A few days later the younger son packed up what he had and left for a distant country. Here he wasted all his money living a reckless life.

¹⁴“After he’d spent everything, the country was hit by a severe famine and he was starving. ¹⁵So he went and took a job with one of the farmers there who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶He was so hungry that he would have eaten even the pig food^a, but no one gave him anything. ¹⁷When he came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘All of my father’s workers have more than enough to eat—why am I dying from hunger here? ¹⁸I’m going home to my father! I’ll tell him, “Father, I’ve sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹I’m no longer worthy to be called your son. Please treat me as one of your hired workers.”’ ²⁰So he left and went home to his father.

“Even though he was still far away in the distance, his father saw him coming, and his heart went out to his son. The father ran to his son, hugging and kissing him. ²¹The son said to him, ‘Father, I’ve sinned against heaven and against you. I’m no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²²“But the father told his servants, ‘Quick—bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³Bring the calf we’ve been fattening and kill it. Let’s have a feast to celebrate ²⁴because this is my son who was dead, but who has returned alive; he was lost but now he’s found.’ So they started celebrating.

²⁵“Now the older son was working out in the fields. As he walked towards the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶So he called one of the servants and asked what was going on.

^a 15:16. Literally, “seed pods the pigs were eating.”

²⁷“Your brother is back,” he replied, “and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he’s come home safe and sound.”

²⁸“The brother became angry. He refused to go in. So his father came out to plead with him.

²⁹“He told his father, ‘Look, all these years I’ve served you, and never disobeyed you, but you never once gave me even a young goat so I could have a party with my friends. ³⁰Now this son of yours comes back, having spent your money on prostitutes, and you kill the fattened calf for him!’

³¹“‘Son,’ the father replied, ‘you are always here with me. Everything I have is yours. ³²But we should be happy and celebrate! This is your brother who was dead, but who has returned alive; he was lost but now he’s found!’”

16 ¹Jesus told his disciples this story. “There was once a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting what belonged to his master. ²So the rich man called in his manager, and asked him, ‘What’s this I hear about you? Bring in your accounts, because you won’t be continuing as manager.’

³The manager said to himself, ‘Now what will I do since my master is going to fire me from my job? I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg. ⁴Oh, I know what I’m going to do so that when I’m sacked as manager people will make me welcome in their homes.’

⁵“So he invited all those who were in debt to his master to come and see him. He asked the first one, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶The man replied, ‘A hundred units^a of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Sit down quickly. Take your bill, and change it to fifty.’ ⁷Then he said to another, ‘How much do you owe?’ The man replied, ‘A hundred units^b of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and change it to eighty.’

⁸“The rich man commended his dishonest manager for his cunning idea. The children of this world are more cunning towards one another than are the children of light.

^a 16:6. One *batos* “bath” was equivalent to around 6 gallons or 22 liters.

^b 16:7. One *koros* “kor” was equivalent to 11 bushels or 390 liters.

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⁹“I tell you, use the wealth of this world to make friends for yourselves so that when it’s gone, you’ll be welcomed into an eternal home. ¹⁰If you can be trusted with very little you can also be trusted with much; if you are dishonest with very little you will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹So if you can’t be trusted when it comes to worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹²And if you can’t be trusted with what belongs to someone else, who will trust you with what is yours? ¹³No servant can obey two masters. Either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You can’t serve both God and Money.”

¹⁴The Pharisees, who loved money, heard what Jesus said and laughed at him. ¹⁵But Jesus told them, “You appear pious to people, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detested by God. ¹⁶What was written in the law and the prophets lasted until John. From then on the good news of the kingdom of God is being spread, and everyone is forcing their way in.

¹⁷However, it’s easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for the smallest point of the Law to disappear. ¹⁸Any man who divorces his wife and marries someone else commits adultery, and a man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

¹⁹“Once there was a man who was rich. He wore purple clothes^a and fine linen, and enjoyed a luxurious life. ²⁰A beggar named Lazarus used to sit at his gate, covered in sores, ²¹longing to eat the leftovers from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

²²“Then the beggar died, and angels carried him away to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham in the far distance, with Lazarus beside him.

²⁴“‘Father Abraham,’ he called out, ‘Have mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I’m burning in agony.’

²⁵“But Abraham replied, ‘My son, remember that you enjoyed the good things of life, while Lazarus had a very poor life. Now he is here being comforted, while you suffer in torment. ²⁶Apart from that, there’s a great gulf that stretches

^a 16:19. Purple clothes were very expensive.

between us and you. Nobody who wants to cross from here to you can do so, and nobody can cross from there over to us.’

²⁷“The rich man said, ‘Then Father, I beg you, please send him to my father’s house. ²⁸For I have five brothers and he can warn them so that they don’t end up here in this place of torment.’

²⁹“But Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets. They should listen to them.’

³⁰“No, father Abraham,’ said the man. ‘But they would repent if someone went to them from the dead!’

³¹“Abraham said to him, ‘If they won’t listen to Moses and the prophets, they won’t be convinced even if someone returns from the dead.’”

17 ¹Jesus said to his disciples, “Temptations are unavoidable, but it will be a disaster for those through whom they come! ²For such people it would be better to have a millstone hung around the neck and be thrown into the sea than to cause these little ones to sin. ³So take care what you do. If your brother sins, warn him; and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴Even if he sins against you seven times a day, and seven times comes back and tells you, ‘I’m really sorry,’ forgive him.”

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, “Help us to have more trust!”

⁶The Lord replied, “Even if your trust was as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Uproot yourself, and plant yourself in the sea,’ and it would obey you.

⁷“Say you have a servant who does plowing or shepherding. When he comes in from work, do you say to him, ‘Come in and sit down now for a meal’? ⁸No. You say to him, ‘Prepare a meal for me, get yourself dressed, and serve me until I’ve finished my meal. After that you can have your meal.’ ⁹And do you thank the servant for doing what you told him? No. ¹⁰Likewise once you’ve done everything you were told, you should simply say, ‘We are undeserving servants. We just did our duty.’”

¹¹As Jesus continued on his way to Jerusalem, he passed along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²As he entered a particular village, ten lepers met him, standing at a distance.

¹³They called out, “Jesus, Master, please have mercy on us.”

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¹⁴When Jesus saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” On their way there, they were healed. ¹⁵One of them when he saw that he was healed, returned to Jesus, shouting praises to God. ¹⁶He fell down at Jesus’ feet, thanking him. He was a Samaritan.

¹⁷“Weren’t ten lepers healed?” Jesus asked. “Where are the other nine? ¹⁸Didn’t anyone else come back to praise God—only this foreigner?”

¹⁹Jesus told the man, “Get up and go on your way. Your trust has healed you.”

²⁰Once, when the Pharisees came and asked him when God’s kingdom would come, Jesus replied, “God’s kingdom doesn’t come with visible signs that you can observe. ²¹People won’t be saying, ‘Look, it’s here’ or ‘Look, it’s there,’ for God’s kingdom is among you^a.”

²²Then Jesus told the disciples, “The time is coming when you’ll long to see the day^b when the Son of man comes, but you won’t see it. ²³They’ll be telling you, ‘Look, there he is,’ or ‘look, here he is,’ but don’t go running off after them. ²⁴The day when the Son of man comes will be just like lightning that flashes, lighting up the sky from one side to the other. ²⁵But first he will have to suffer many things, and be rejected by this generation. ²⁶The time when the Son of man comes will be like it was in Noah’s day. ²⁷People went on eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day Noah went into the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸It will be like it was in Lot’s day. People went on eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹But on the day Lot left Sodom, fire and brimstone rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

³⁰“The day when the Son of man appears will be just like that. ³¹If you’re up on the roof that day don’t go down and get your things; and if you’re out in the fields don’t go back home either. ³²Remember Lot’s wife! ³³If you try to hold on to your life you’ll lose it; but if you lose your life you’ll save it. ³⁴I tell you, at that time two will be in bed at night; one will be taken

^a 17:21. Or, “within you.”

^b 17:22. Literally, “one of the days.”

and the other left. ³⁵Two women will be grinding grain, one will be taken; and the other left.”^a

³⁷“Where, Lord?” they asked. “Where the carcass is, that’s where the vultures gather,” Jesus replied.

18 ¹Jesus told them this story to encourage them to pray at all times, and not to become discouraged. ²“Once there was a judge in this particular town who didn’t respect God or care about anyone,” Jesus explained. ³“In the same town lived a widow who time and again went to the judge, saying, ‘Give me justice in the case against my enemy!’” ⁴For a while he didn’t want to do anything about it, but eventually he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t respect God or care about anyone, ⁵this widow is so annoying I’ll make sure she receives justice. Then she won’t wear me out by her coming to see me so often.’

⁶“Listen to what even an unjust judge decided,” said the Lord. ⁷“Don’t you think that God will make sure his chosen people receive justice, those who cry out to him day and night? Do you think he will make them wait? ⁸No, I tell you, he will give them justice quickly. However, when the Son of man comes, will he find people on earth who trust in him?”

⁹He also told this story about those who are so sure that they are living right, and who put everybody else down. ¹⁰“Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood up and prayed to himself, ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—cheats, criminals^b, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week, and I pay tithe on my income.’

¹³“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He wouldn’t even look up to heaven. Instead he beat his chest and prayed, ‘God, please be merciful to me. I am a sinner.’

¹⁴“I tell you, it was this man who went home right in God’s sight and not the other. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, while those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

¹⁵Parents were bringing their infants to Jesus to have him bless them by his touch. When the disciples saw what was

^a 17:35. Verse 36 is not found in early manuscripts.

^b 18:11. Literally, “unright.”

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happening, they tried to stop them. ¹⁶But Jesus called the children to him. “Let the little children come to me,” he said. “Don’t prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like them. ¹⁷I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn’t welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

¹⁸One of the rulers came to Jesus and asked him, “Good Teacher, what do I have to do to inherit eternal life?”

¹⁹“Why do you call me good?” Jesus replied. “No one is good, only God. ²⁰You know the commandments: do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.”

²¹“I’ve kept all these commandments since I was young,” the man replied.

²²When Jesus heard this he told the man, “You still lack one thing. Go and sell all you have, give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me!

²³But when the man heard this he became very sad, for he was very wealthy.

²⁴When he saw his reaction, Jesus said, “How difficult it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵It’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁶Those who heard this wondered, “Who can be saved then?”

²⁷Jesus replied, “What is impossible in human terms is possible for God.”

²⁸“Peter said, “We left everything to follow you!”

²⁹“I tell you the truth,” Jesus told them, “anybody who leaves behind their home, wife, brothers, parents, or children for the sake of God’s kingdom ³⁰will receive so much more in this life, and eternal life in the world to come.”

³¹Jesus took the twelve disciples aside, and told them, “We’re going to Jerusalem, and all that the prophets wrote about the Son of man will be fulfilled. ³²He will be handed over to the foreigners^a; he will be mocked, insulted, and spat upon. ³³They

^a 18:32. Literally, “Gentiles.”

will flog him and kill him, but on the third day he will rise again.”

³⁴But they didn't understand anything Jesus told them. The meaning was hidden from them and they didn't grasp what he was talking about.

³⁵As Jesus approached Jericho a blind man was sitting beside the road begging. ³⁶He heard the crowd going past, so he asked what was happening. ³⁷They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.” ³⁸He called out, “Jesus, son of David, please have mercy on me!” ³⁹Those at the front of the crowd told him to stop shouting and be quiet, but he only shouted louder, “Son of David, please have mercy on me!”

⁴⁰Jesus stopped and told them to bring the blind man to him. As he came over, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹“What do you want me to do for you?”

“Lord, please, I want to see,” he pleaded.

⁴²“Then see!” Jesus told him. “Your trust in me has healed you.” ⁴³Immediately the man could see. He followed Jesus, praising God. Everyone there who saw what happened also praised God.

19 ¹Jesus entered Jericho and walked through the town. ²A man was there named Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector. He was very rich. ³He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he couldn't see over the crowd. ⁴So he ran ahead, and climbed up a sycamore tree to see Jesus as he passed by.

⁵When Jesus got there, he looked up and said, “Zacchaeus, come down quickly! I need to stay at your house today.”

⁶Zacchaeus climbed down quickly and was so happy to welcome Jesus to his home. ⁷When the people saw this they all complained, “He's gone to stay with such a sinner!” ⁸But Zacchaeus stood up and said before the Lord, “Look, I'm giving half of everything I own to the poor, and if I've cheated anybody, I'll pay them back four times as much!”

⁹In response Jesus said, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man has shown he is a son of Abraham too. ¹⁰For the Son of man came to search for and save those who are lost.”

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¹¹While they were still paying attention, Jesus told them a story for they were close to Jerusalem and the people thought that God's kingdom was going to become a reality right away.

¹²“Once there was a nobleman who left home to go to a distant country to be crowned king there, and then to return. ¹³He called ten of his servants, divided money^a equally among them, and told them, ‘Invest this money until I return.’ ¹⁴But his people hated him, and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We won’t have this man as king over us.’ ¹⁵After he had been crowned king he returned. He ordered his servants brought to him. He wanted to know what profit they had made by investing the money he had given them. ¹⁶The first servant came in and said, ‘Lord, your money has earned ten times as much.’

¹⁷“‘Well done! You’re a good servant,’ said the king. ‘Since you proved yourself trustworthy in a very small matter, I’m placing you in charge of ten cities.’

¹⁸“The second servant came in and said, ‘Lord, your money has earned five times as much.’

¹⁹“‘I’m placing you in charge of five cities,’ said the king.

²⁰“Another servant came in and said, ‘Lord, look, here’s your money back. I kept it safe, wrapped up in a cloth. ²¹I was afraid of you because you’re a hard man. You take what doesn’t belong to you, and you harvest what you didn’t plant.’

²²“‘I’ll judge you by your own words,’ the king replied. ‘You know I’m a hard man, “who takes what doesn’t belong to me, and I harvest what I didn’t plant.” ²³Why then didn’t you deposit my money in the bank, so that when I returned I could have had my money with interest?’

²⁴“The king told those who were standing beside him, ‘Take the money away from him, and give it to the one who made ten times as much.’

²⁵“‘But master, he already has ten times as much,’ they replied.

²⁶“The king said, ‘I tell you, to those who have, more will be given; but those who do not have, even what they have will be taken away from them. ²⁷And as for my enemies who didn’t

^a 19:13. Money: actually one *mina* worth 100 *drachmas*, equivalent to 100 days pay.

want me to be king over them, bring them here and kill them in front of me.”

²⁸After he’d finished telling them this story, Jesus left for Jerusalem, walking on ahead. ²⁹As he approached Bethphage and Bethany on the Mount of Olives, he sent two disciples, telling them:

³⁰“Go to the village farther on. As you enter it you’ll find a colt tied up that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.

³¹If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say, ‘The Lord needs it.’”

³²So the two disciples went and found that everything was just as Jesus had said. ³³As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” ³⁴The disciples replied, “The Lord needs it.” ³⁵They brought the colt to Jesus. Then they threw their cloaks over it, and sat Jesus on its back.

³⁶As he rode along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

³⁷As he approached Jerusalem^a, right where the road goes down from the Mount of Olives, the crowd of disciples all began shouting joyful praises to God at the top of their voices for all the miracles they had seen.

³⁸“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord,” they shouted. “Peace in heaven and glory in highest heaven.”

³⁹Some of the Pharisees who were in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, stop your disciples from saying that.” ⁴⁰But Jesus replied, “I tell you that if they kept quiet then the stones will shout!”

⁴¹But as he got closer, he saw the city and wept over it. ⁴²“I really wish today that you, even you, had known the path that leads to peace!” he said. “But now it’s hidden from your eyes.

⁴³The time is coming upon you when your enemies will besiege you, building ramps to attack you, encircling you and closing you in from every side. ⁴⁴They will smash you to the ground, you and your children within you. They won’t leave one stone on another within you, for you refused to accept salvation when it came to you.”

^a 19:37. “Jerusalem” implied.

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⁴⁵Jesus entered the Temple and began driving out all the people trading^a there. ⁴⁶He told them, “Scriptures state that ‘my house will be a house of prayer,’ but you’ve turned it into a den of thieves.”

⁴⁷He was teaching in the Temple every day. The chief priests, the religious teachers, and the leaders of the people were trying to kill him. ⁴⁸But they couldn’t find a way to do it because everyone appreciated him, hanging on his every word.

20 ¹Once when Jesus was teaching the people in the Temple, telling them the good news, some of the chief priests and religious teachers came with the elders. ²They asked him, “Tell us: by whose authority are you doing what you do? Who gave you the right to do this?”

³“Let me ask you a question too,” Jesus replied. “Tell me: ⁴the baptism of John—was it from heaven, or was it just human?”

⁵They talked about it among themselves: “If we say it was from heaven, he’ll ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’

⁶And if we say it was just human, everybody will stone us for they’re sure John was a prophet.”

⁷So they answered, “We don’t know where it came from.”

⁸Jesus replied, “Then I won’t tell you by whose authority I do what I do.” ⁹Then he began to tell the people a story:

“Once there was a man who planted a vineyard, leased it to some farmers, and went to live in another country for a long while. ¹⁰At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenant farmers to collect his share of the crop, but the farmers beat the servant and sent him away with nothing. ¹¹So the owner sent another servant, but they beat him too and treated him shamefully, and sent him away with nothing. ¹²So he sent a third servant, but they wounded him and threw him out.

¹³“The owner of the vineyard asked himself, ‘What shall I do? I know, I’ll send my son whom I love. Perhaps they will respect him.’ ¹⁴But when they saw him coming, the farmers said to themselves, ‘This is the owner’s heir. Let’s kill him! That way we can take his inheritance.’ ¹⁵They threw him out of the

^a 19:45. Particularly in reference to selling animals for sacrifice.

vineyard and killed him. Now what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶He will come and kill these farmers and let others have the vineyard.”

When they heard the story, they said, “May this never happen!” ¹⁷But Jesus looked at them and said, “Then why is it written in the Scriptures, ‘The stone the builders rejected has now become the chief cornerstone’? ¹⁸Anyone who falls on that stone will be broken in pieces; anyone it falls upon will be crushed.” ¹⁹Immediately the religious teachers and the chief priests wanted to arrest him because they realized that the story Jesus told was aimed at them, but they were afraid of what the people would do.

²⁰Watching for an opportunity they sent spies who pretended to be sincere. They tried to catch Jesus out in something he said so they could hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. ²¹They said, “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you’re not swayed by the opinions of others. You truly teach the way of God. ²²So should we pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

²³But Jesus saw through their trickery, and said to them, ²⁴“Show me a coin—a *denarius*^a. Whose image and inscription is on it?” “Caesar’s,” they answered.

²⁵“Then give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give back to God what belongs to God,” he told them. ²⁶They weren’t able to trap him by what he told the people. They were stunned at his reply, and fell silent.

²⁷Then some of the Sadducees, who deny the resurrection, came to Jesus with this question: ²⁸“Teacher,” they began, “Moses gave us a law that if a married man dies leaving a wife without children, then his brother should marry the widow and have children for his dead brother. ²⁹Once there were seven brothers. The first had a wife, and died without having children. ³⁰The second ³¹and then the third brother also married her. In the end all seven brothers married her, and then died without having children. ³²Finally the wife died too. ³³Now whose wife will she be in the resurrection, since all seven brothers had married her?”

^a 20:24. Jesus specifically asks for a *denarius*, a Roman coin.

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³⁴“Here in this age people marry and are given in marriage,” Jesus explained. ³⁵“But those who are considered worthy to share in the age to come and the resurrection from the dead don’t marry or are given in marriage. ³⁶They can’t die any longer; they’re like the angels and are children of God since they’re children of the resurrection. ³⁷But on the question of whether the dead are raised, even Moses proved this when he wrote about the burning^a bush, when he calls the Lord, ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ ³⁸He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him they all are alive.”

³⁹“Some of the religious teachers responded, “That was a good answer, Teacher.” ⁴⁰After this no one dared to ask him any more questions.

⁴¹Then Jesus asked them, “Why is it said that Christ is the son of David? ⁴²For David himself says in the book of Psalms, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand ⁴³until I make all your enemies a footstool for your feet.”’ ⁴⁴David calls him ‘Lord,’ so how can he be David’s son?”

⁴⁵While everyone was paying attention, he said to his disciples, ⁴⁶“Watch out for religious leaders who like to go around in long robes, and love to be greeted with respect in the markets, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets. ⁴⁷ They cheat widows out of what they own^b, and cover up the kind of people they really are with long-winded prayers. They will receive severe condemnation in the judgment.”

21 ¹Looking around, Jesus watched rich people putting their gifts into the collection box^c. ²He also saw a very poor widow put in two small coins^d.

³“I tell you the truth,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the rest together. ⁴All of them gave from their wealth what they had, but she gave from her poverty all she had to live on.

^a 20:37. “Burning bush”—the Greek simply says “bush.”

^b 20:47. Literally, “they devour widow’s houses.”

^c 21:1. In the Temple (See 20:1).

^d 21:2. Small low value coins called “*lepta*.”

⁵Some of those^a there were talking about the Temple, its fine stonework and the beautiful gifts that had been donated. But Jesus said, ⁶“Regarding these things you’re looking at... The time is coming when not one stone will be left on another; everything will be destroyed!”

⁷“Teacher, when will this happen?” they asked him. “What will be the sign that these things are about to happen?”

⁸“Make sure you’re not deceived,” Jesus warned them. “Many people will come claiming to be me^b, saying, ‘Here I and, ‘The time has come!’ but don’t follow them. ⁹When you hear of wars and revolutions, don’t be frightened, because these things have to happen first, but the end won’t come immediately.”

¹⁰“Nation will fight nation, and kingdom will fight kingdom,” he told them. ¹¹“There will be severe earthquakes, famines, and epidemic diseases in many lands, and extraordinary signs in the sky that are terrifying. ¹²But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will drag you before synagogues and throw you into prison, and put you on trial before kings and governors on account of me. ¹³But this will provide you an opportunity to speak on my behalf before them. ¹⁴So make up your mind beforehand not to worry about how to defend yourselves, ¹⁵for I will give you words of wisdom that your enemies won’t be able to dispute or contradict. ¹⁶You will be betrayed even by your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will kill some of you. ¹⁷Everyone will hate you because of me. ¹⁸But not a single hair of your head will be lost. ¹⁹By standing firm you will gain your lives^c.

²⁰“However when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then you know that its destruction is near. ²¹Those who are in Judea should run away to the mountains, and those who are in Jerusalem should leave, and those who are the countryside shouldn’t enter the city. ²²For these are days of punishment, fulfilling all that’s written.

^a 21:5. Probably some of the disciples by reference to Mark 13:1.

^b 21:8. Or “come in my name.”

^c 21:19. Meaning eternal life, or even that you gain who you really were intended to be.

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²³“How hard it will be for those who are pregnant or nursing babies at that time! For terrible trouble is coming on the land and punishment against this people. ²⁴They will be killed by the sword and taken away as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trodden down by the foreign nations until their time is fulfilled.

²⁵“There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and on the earth the nations will be in distress, confused by the sea’s rolling and crashing. ²⁶People will be faint from fear, terrified about what is happening to the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. ²⁷Then they’ll see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸But when these things happen, stand up and look up, because you will soon be saved.”

²⁹Then he told them this story as an illustration. “Look at the fig tree, or any other kind of tree. ³⁰When you see new leaves appear, you don’t need to be told that summer is near. ³¹In the same way, when you see these things happening, you don’t need to be told that God’s kingdom is near. ³²I tell you the truth, this generation won’t come to an end before all this happens.

³³Heaven and earth will come to an end, but my word will not.

³⁴“Watch out that you don’t become distracted by partying or getting drunk or by the worries of this life, so that this day^a catches you by surprise. ³⁵For this day will come upon everyone who lives on the face of the earth. ³⁶Always keep watch and pray, so that you may be able to escape all that will happen and stand before the Son of man.”

³⁷Every day Jesus taught in the Temple, and every evening he went and stayed on the Mount of Olives. ³⁸All the people came early in the morning to listen to him in the Temple.

22 ¹Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, also called the Passover, was approaching. ²The chief priests and religious teachers were looking for a way to kill Jesus, but were afraid of what the people would do.

³Satan entered into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples. ⁴He went and discussed with the chief priests and guard officers how he could betray Jesus. ⁵They were

^a 21:34. “This day”—the coming of the Son of man.

delighted, and offered him money. ⁶He agreed, and began to look for an opportunity to hand over Jesus when a crowd would not be there.

⁷The Day of Unleavened Bread arrived when the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸Jesus sent Peter and John, telling them, “Go and prepare the Passover meal, so we can eat it together.”

⁹They asked him, “Where do you want us to prepare for it?”

¹⁰He replied, “When you enter the city you’ll meet a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him and go into the house he enters. ¹¹Tell the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks you, ‘Where is the dining room where I can eat the Passover with my disciples?’” ¹²He’ll show you a large upstairs room that already has the necessary furniture. Prepare the meal there.”

¹³They went and found that everything was just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover meal there. ¹⁴When the time came, he sat down at the table with his apostles. He told them, ¹⁵“I’ve been really looking forward to eating this Passover meal with you before my sufferings begin. ¹⁶I tell you I shall not eat it again until the time it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

¹⁷Jesus took the cup, and after he had given thanks, he said, “Take this and share it among yourselves. ¹⁸I tell you that I won’t drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” ¹⁹He picked up some bread, and after he had given thanks, he broke it into pieces and gave it to them. “This is my body which is given for you; do this in order to remember me,” Jesus told them. ²⁰In the same way after they had finished supper, he picked up the cup and said, “This cup is the new agreement^a in my blood which is poured out for you.”

²¹“In spite of this, my betrayer^b is sitting right here with me at the table. ²²For it has been determined that the Son of man will die, yet how disastrous it will be for his betrayer!” ²³They began to argue among themselves as to who this might be and who could do this. ²⁴At the same time they also got into a quarrel about which of them was the most important.

^a 22:20. Or “covenant.”

^b 22:21. Literally, “the hand of the one betraying me.”

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²⁵Jesus told them, “Foreign kings lord it over their subjects, and those having power even want people to call them ‘benefactors.’ ²⁶“But it should not be so with you! Whoever is highest among you should be like the lowest, and the leader should be like a servant. ²⁷Who is greater—the one who sits at the table, or the one who serves? Isn’t it the one who sits at the table? But I’m among you as the one who serves. ²⁸You have stayed with me throughout my trials. ²⁹And I grant to you authority to rule, just as my Father granted it to me, ³⁰so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

³¹“Simon, Simon—Satan has asked to have all of you^a to sift like wheat, ³²but I have prayed for you that your trust in me may not fail. And when you have returned^b, encourage your brothers.”

³³Peter said, “Lord, I’m ready to go with you to prison, and to die with you!”

³⁴Jesus replied, “I’m telling you, Peter, before the cock crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.”

³⁵Jesus asked them, “When I sent you out without money, without a bag, and without an extra pair of sandals, did you lack anything?”

“No, nothing,” they replied.

³⁶“But now, if you have money you should take it, as well as a bag, and if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one. ³⁷I tell you that this statement in Scripture about me must be fulfilled: ‘He was counted with the wicked.’ What was said about me is now being fulfilled.

³⁸“Look, Lord, here are two swords,” they said.

“That’s enough,” he replied.

³⁹Jesus left and as usual went to the Mount of Olives together with his disciples. ⁴⁰When he arrived he said to them, “Pray that you don’t give in to temptation.” ⁴¹Then he left them and walked about a stone’s throw away, where he kneeled down and prayed.

^a 22:31. The first “you” in this statement is plural, the rest are singular, applying specifically to Peter.

^b 22:32. Meaning “return to the truth.”

⁴²“Father,” he prayed, “if you’re willing, please take away this cup of suffering from me. But I want to do what you want, not what I want.”⁴³ Then an angel appeared from heaven to strengthen him.

⁴⁴In great distress Jesus prayed even harder, and his sweat fell like drops of blood onto the ground^a.⁴⁵ He finished praying, stood up, and went over to the disciples. He found them asleep, worn out by grief. ⁴⁶“Why are you sleeping?” he asked them. “Get up and pray so that you won’t fall into temptation.”

⁴⁷While he was still speaking, a crowd appeared led by Judas, one of the twelve disciples. Judas went up to Jesus to kiss him. ⁴⁸But Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of man with a kiss?”

⁴⁹Jesus’ followers asked him, “Lord, should we attack them with our swords?”⁵⁰ And one of them struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear.

⁵¹“Stop! No more of this!” said Jesus. He touched the man’s ear and healed him. ⁵²Then Jesus spoke to the chief priests, and the officers of the Temple guard, and the elders. “Am I some kind of criminal that you had to come with swords and clubs?” he asked. ⁵³“You didn’t arrest me before, even though I was with you in the Temple every day. But this is your moment now, the time when darkness is in power.”

⁵⁴They arrested him and led him away, taking him to the chief priest’s house. Peter followed at a distance. ⁵⁵They started a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down by it. Peter was there among them. ⁵⁶As he sat there, a servant girl noticed him in the firelight, and stared directly at him and said, ⁵⁷“This man was with him.” But Peter denied it. “Woman, I don’t know him!” he said.

⁵⁸A little later someone else looked at him and said, “You’re also one of them.” “No, I’m not!” Peter replied. ⁵⁹About an hour later, another person insisted, “I’m sure he was with him too—he’s a Galilean.” ⁶⁰“I’ve no idea what you’re talking about!” Peter replied. Right then, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. ⁶¹And Peter

^a 22:44. The authenticity of verses 43 and 44 are disputed. Manuscript evidence is divided.

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remembered what the Lord had said, how he'd told him: "Before the cock crows today, you'll deny me three times." ⁶²Peter went out and wept bitterly.

⁶³The men guarding Jesus began to mock him and beat him.

⁶⁴They put a blindfold on him, and then asked him, "If you can prophesy, tell us who hit you that time!" ⁶⁵and shouted many other insults at him.

⁶⁶Early in the morning the council of elders gathered together with the chief priests and religious teachers. Jesus was led before the council. ⁶⁷"If you really are the Messiah then tell us," they said.

"Even if I were to tell you, you wouldn't believe me," Jesus replied. ⁶⁸"And if I were to ask you a question, you wouldn't answer. ⁶⁹But from now on the Son of man will sit at the right hand of the mighty God."

⁷⁰They all asked, "So are you the son of God?"

"You say that I am," Jesus replied.

⁷¹"Why do we need any more witnesses?" they said. "We've heard it ourselves from his own mouth!"

23 ¹The whole council rose and took him to Pilate. ²There they started to accuse him. "We found this man deceiving our nation, telling people not to pay taxes to Caesar, and claiming he is Messiah, a king," they said.

³"Are you the King of the Jews?" Pilate asked him.

"So you say," replied Jesus.

⁴Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I don't find this man guilty of any crime."

⁵But they insisted, saying, "He is inciting rebellion all over Judea with his teachings, from Galilee to right here in Jerusalem."

⁶When he heard this, Pilate asked, "Is this man a Galilean?"

⁷When he discovered that Jesus came under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod who was also in Jerusalem at the time.

⁸Herod was very pleased to see Jesus since he had wanted to meet him for a long time. He had heard about Jesus and was hoping to see him perform a miracle. ⁹He asked Jesus many questions, but Jesus did not answer him at all. ¹⁰The chief priests and religious teachers stood there, angrily accusing him. ¹¹Herod

and his soldiers treated Jesus with contempt and mocked him. Then they placed a royal robe on him and sent him back to Pilate. ¹²From that day on Herod and Pilate were friends—before that they had been enemies.

¹³Pilate called together the chief priests, rulers, and the people, ¹⁴and told them, “You brought this man before me, accusing him of inciting the people to rebellion. I’ve carefully examined him in your presence, and do not find him guilty of the charges you have brought against him. ¹⁵Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. He has done nothing that demands he should be put to death. ¹⁶So I will have him flogged and then release him.”^a

¹⁸But they all shouted together, “Kill this man, and release Barabbas to us.” ¹⁹(Barabbas had been put in prison for taking part in a rebellion in the city, and for murder.).

²⁰Pilate wanted to release Jesus, so spoke to them again.

²¹But they kept on shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

²²Pilate asked them for the third time, “But why? What crime has he committed? I don’t find any reason for executing him. So I will have him flogged and then release him.”

²³But they continued insisting with loud shouts, demanding that he be crucified. Their shouting succeeded, ²⁴and Pilate gave the sentence they demanded. ²⁵He released the man imprisoned for rebellion and murder, but he sent Jesus to be put to death in accordance with their demands^b.

²⁶As the soldiers^c led him away, they seized a man called Simon of Cyrene, who had come in from the countryside. They put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷A large crowd followed him, along with women who were mourning and lamenting him. ²⁸Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don’t weep for me. Weep for yourselves and your children. ²⁹For the time is coming when they’ll say, ‘Happy are those who are childless, and those who never had babies, and those who never nursed them.’ ³⁰They’ll

^a 23:16. Verse 17 is not in most early manuscripts.

^b 23:25. Literally, “handed Jesus over to their will.” It does not say that Pilate handed Jesus over to the Jews, since Jesus was executed by the Romans, but that Pilate acceded to their demands for Jesus’ death.

^c 23:26. Implied.

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say to the mountains, ‘Fall down on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ ³¹For if they do this to wood that is new, what will happen when it’s dried out?”^a

³²They also took two others who were criminals to be executed with him. ³³When they reached the place called the Skull they crucified him together with the criminals, one on his right, and the other on his left.

³⁴Jesus said, “Father, please forgive them, for they don’t know what they’re doing.” They divided up his clothes by throwing dice for them.

³⁵The people stood and watched and the leaders sneered at Jesus. “He saved others, let him save himself, if he is really God’s Messiah, the Chosen One,” they said.

³⁶The soldiers also mocked him, coming up to him and offering him wine vinegar, saying, ³⁷“If you’re the King of the Jews, then save yourself.”

³⁸Above Jesus was a sign on which it was written, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹One of the criminals hanging there joined in the insults against Jesus. “Aren’t you the Messiah?” he asked. “Then save yourself—and us too!”

⁴⁰But the other criminal disagreed and argued with him, “Don’t you fear God even when you’re suffering the same punishment?” he asked. ⁴¹“For us the sentence is right since we’re being punished for what we did, but this man didn’t do anything wrong.”

⁴²Then he said, “Jesus, please remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

⁴³Jesus replied, “I promise you today you will be with me in paradise.” ⁴⁴By this time it was around noon and darkness fell over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁵The sun’s light was shut out, and the Temple veil was torn in two.

⁴⁶Jesus called out in a loud voice, “Father, I place myself in your hands.” Having said this he breathed his last^b.

^a 23:31. Meaning that things become worse later.

^b 23:46. “Myself”: Literally “my spirit.” Breath and spirit are the same word.

⁴⁷When the centurion saw what had happened he praised God and said, “Surely this man was innocent.” ⁴⁸When all the crowds that had come to watch saw what happened they went home beating their chests in grief. ⁴⁹But all those who knew Jesus, including the women who’d followed him from Galilee, watched from a distance.

⁵⁰There was a man called Joseph who was good and honest. He was a member of the council, ⁵¹but he hadn’t agreed with its decisions and actions. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. ⁵²Joseph went to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. ⁵³Once he’d taken it down, he wrapped it in a linen cloth. He laid Jesus in an unused tomb cut into the rock. ⁵⁴It was preparation day^a and the Sabbath would soon begin. ⁵⁵The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee had followed Joseph and had seen the tomb where Jesus’ body had been laid. ⁵⁶They returned home and prepared spices and ointments^b. But on the Sabbath they rested, observing the commandment.

24 ¹Very early on the first day of the week^c, the women went to the tomb, taking the spices they’d prepared. ²They found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance to the tomb, ³but when they went in they didn’t find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴While they were wondering what was going on, two men suddenly appeared dressed in clothes that shone brilliantly. ⁵The women were terrified and bowed down, their faces on the ground.

They said to the women, “Why are you looking for someone who is alive among the dead? ⁶He’s not here; he’s risen from the dead! Remember what he told you while you were still in Galilee: ⁷‘The Son of man must be betrayed into the hands of evil men, be crucified, and on the third day rise again.’”

⁸Then they remembered what he’d said. ⁹When they returned from the tomb they reported all that had happened to the eleven disciples and to all the others. ¹⁰Those who told the

^a 23:54. Meaning Friday.

^b 23:56. To anoint Jesus’ body.

^c 24:1. i.e. Sunday.

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apostles what had happened were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and other women with them. ¹¹But it seemed like nonsense to them, so they didn't believe the women. ¹²However Peter got up and ran to the tomb. Bending down, he looked in and saw only the linen grave-clothes. So he went back home, wondering what had happened.

¹³The same day two disciples were on their way to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴They were talking about all that had happened. ¹⁵As they discussed and debated, Jesus came up and fell into step with them. ¹⁶But they were kept from recognizing him.

¹⁷“What are you discussing as you walk along?” he asked them. They stopped, their faces sad. ¹⁸One of them, called Cleopas, replied, “Are you just visiting Jerusalem? You must be the only person who doesn't know the things that have happened in the past few days.”

¹⁹“What things?” Jesus asked. “About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet who spoke powerfully and performed great miracles before God and all the people. ²⁰But our high priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him. ²¹We had hoped he was the one who was going to rescue Israel. It's been three days now since all this happened.”

²²“But then some of the women in our group surprised us. ²³At dawn they went to the tomb and they didn't find his body. They came back saying that they'd seen a vision of angels who told them he's alive. ²⁴Some of us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women said—but they didn't see him.”

²⁵Jesus told them, “You're so dull! How slow you are to trust in all that the prophets said! ²⁶Didn't the Messiah have to suffer before he could enter into his glory?” ²⁷Then, starting with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them everything that was said in Scripture about himself.

²⁸As they approached the village they were going to, Jesus made it seem as if he was going farther. ²⁹But they urged him, saying, “Please come and stay with us. It's getting late—the day is almost over.” So he went to stay with them.

³⁰When he sat down to eat with them, he took the bread and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Their eyes were

opened, and they recognized him. Then he disappeared from view.

³²The two disciples said to each other, “Weren’t our thoughts on fire when he spoke to us, as he explained the Scriptures to us?” ³³They got up right away and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven disciples and those who were with them meeting together, ³⁴who said, “The Lord has really risen again! He has appeared to Simon.”

³⁵Then those who had just arrived explained to the other disciples what had happened to them on the road, and how they had recognized Jesus when he broke bread. ³⁶While they were talking, Jesus himself stood among them, and said, “Peace to you!” ³⁷They were startled and afraid, thinking they were seeing a ghost.

³⁸“Why are you frightened? Why are you doubting?” he asked them. ³⁹“Look at my hands and my feet—you can see it’s me. Touch me and you’ll be certain, for a spirit doesn’t have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

⁴⁰Having said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹But they still couldn’t believe it because they were so elated and amazed. He asked them, “Do you have anything to eat?” ⁴²They gave him a piece of cooked fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate it in front of them.

⁴⁴Then Jesus said to them, “This is what I explained to you while I was still with you. Everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms, had to be fulfilled.”

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds so they were able to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He told them, “It was written like this: the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and in his name ⁴⁷repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of all this. ⁴⁹Now I’m going to send you what my Father promised—but wait in the city until you receive power from heaven.”

⁵⁰Then he led them out until they were near Bethany, and lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he left them, and was taken up to heaven. ⁵²They worshiped him, and then they returned to Jerusalem full of joy.

⁵³They spent all their time in the Temple praising God.

