
NEW WORLD TRANSLATION OF THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES

STUDY EDITION

Matthew—Acts

This Bible belongs to

NEW WORLD TRANSLATION OF THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES

STUDY EDITION

Text Rendered From the Original Languages by the
NEW WORLD BIBLE TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

Matthew—Acts

“This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah
[יהוה, *YHWH*] says: ‘ . . . Look! I am creating new heavens
and a new earth; and the former things will not be
called to mind, nor will they come up into the heart.’ ”

—Isaiah 65:13, 17; also see 2 Peter 3:13.

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FOREWORD

THE HOLY BIBLE is God’s written communication to all of us. We must study it to get to know its Author. (John 17:3; 2 Timothy 3:16) Within its pages, Jehovah God reveals his purpose for humans and for their earthly home.—Genesis 3:15; Revelation 21:3, 4.

No other book has such an impact on people’s lives. The Bible inspires us to reflect Jehovah’s qualities of love, mercy, and compassion. It gives hope, helping people to endure even the worst suffering. And it continues to expose the elements of this world that are out of harmony with the perfect will of God.—Psalm 119:105; Hebrews 4:12; 1 John 2:15-17.

Originally composed in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, the Bible has been translated, in whole or in part, into over 3,000 languages. It is by far the most widely translated and distributed book in history. We should expect nothing less. Bible prophecy states: “This good news of the Kingdom [the key message contained in the Bible] will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”—Matthew 24:14.

Recognizing the importance of the Bible’s message, we have undertaken the revision of this text with a profound respect for the content of the Bible. We feel the full weight of our responsibility to convey its message accurately. This revised edition has built on the fine foundation laid in previous editions of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, a Bible that was first released more than 60 years ago. However, the English language has changed during the past half century. Such change prompted current members of the New World Bible Translation Committee to initiate this comprehensive revision. Our goal has been to produce a translation that is not only faithful to the original texts but also clear and easy to read. The Appendix articles “Principles of Bible Translation,” “Features of This Revision,” and “How the Bible Came to Us” discuss some of the linguistic refinements that were made in this edition.

Those who love Jehovah God and worship him desire an accurate, understandable translation of God’s Word. (1 Timothy 2:4) To that end, we have made this revision available in English, with the intention of translating it into as many languages as possible. It is our hope and prayer that you, dear reader, will find this edition of the Holy Scriptures beneficial as you endeavor to “seek God . . . and really find him.”—Acts 17:27.

New World Bible Translation Committee, August 2013
Study Edition (Matthew—Acts) September 2019

NEW WORLD TRANSLATION STUDY EDITION

This Bible edition offers a number of features that help the reader to get a deeper understanding of God’s Word. Some of them are listed here.

WIDE MARGINS ^①

Many pages offer space for personal notes. Also, the paper is suitable for making handwritten notes.

FOOTNOTES ^②

Footnotes for the corresponding page are enclosed in a shaded box, separate from the study notes.

STUDY NOTES ^③

Study notes appear at the bottom of the same two-page spread. Each note indicates in bold face the word(s) or phrase within the verse that is being explained. Some study notes direct the reader to a supplemental section. Such sections are indicated with an icon. (See *opposite page*.)

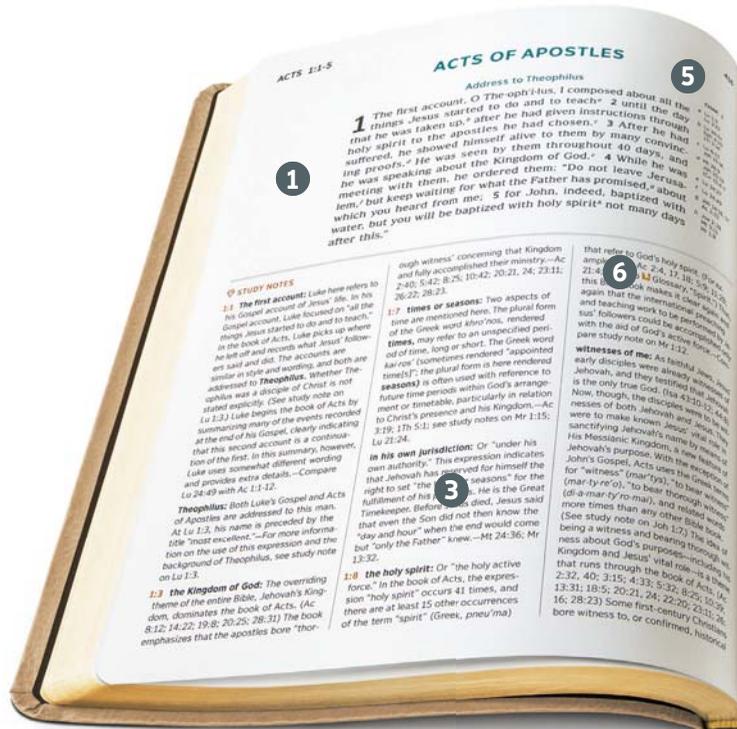


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SUBHEADINGS

④

Subheadings offer a summary of sections of the Bible text and help the reader to locate specific accounts more easily. Though appearing within the sacred text, the subheadings are not part of the inspired record.

MARGINAL REFERENCES

④

Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth:
Jesus Ascends to Heaven

6 So when they had assembled, they asked him, "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?" 7 He said to them: "It does not belong to you to know the times or seasons that the Father has placed in his own jurisdiction." 8 But you will receive power when the holy spirit comes upon you, and you will be witnesses of me in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the most distant part of the earth." 9 After he had said these things, while they were looking on, he was lifted up and a cloud caught him up from their sight. 10 And as they were gazing into the sky while he was on his way, suddenly two men in white garments stood beside them. 11 and said: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus who was taken up from you into the sky will come in the same manner as you have seen him going into the sky."

②

1:30 men in white garments: This is a reference to angels. (Compare Lu 24:4, 23:1 in the book of Acts, the term "angel" [Greek, *angelos*] is found 21 times, the first occurrence at Ac 5:19.)

1:11 the sky: The Greek word *ouranos* can refer to the physical heavens, but it is, the sky, or to the spiritual heavens.

will come in the same manner: The Greek word for "come" (*erchomai*) is used frequently in the Scriptures in a way that refers to Jesus' coming as Judge to pronounce tribulation. (Mt 24:30; Mt 13:26; Lu 21:27) However, this Greek word is used regarding Jesus on other occasions, (Mt 16:28-17:2; Mt 21:5, 9; 23:39; Lu 19:38) Therefore, the context determines in what sense the term "come" is used here. The angels said that Jesus would "come," or return, in the same "manner" (*erchomai*, *trōpos*) as he departed. The term *trōpos* does not refer to the same form, shape, or body but to the same way. As the context shows, Jesus' manner of departure was not observed by the world in general. Only the apostles were aware that Jesus

⑤

MARGINAL REFERENCES

The marginal references direct the reader to related words, thoughts or events, biographical information, geographic details, fulfillments of prophecies, and quotations from other parts of the Bible. Marginal references help the reader to appreciate the internal harmony of the Bible.

ICONS

⑥

Four icons are used to represent the supplementary sections of the Study Edition and to help the reader locate them. The icons appear within the study notes to indicate a reference to another section.



IMAGE GALLERY

The Image Gallery contains images for the Bible books of Matthew through Acts. The images are numbered in order of appearance. The study notes will indicate the image number referenced. *Begins on page 534.*



MAP GALLERY

The Map Gallery includes 11 maps designed to help the reader to understand the Gospel accounts and Acts of Apostles. Each map traces a different series of events, and when possible, events are listed in chronological order. *Begins on page 654.*



APPENDIXES A, B, C

Appendixes A and B contain information about this translation as well as charts, maps, and diagrams. Appendix C focuses on translation and the restoration of the divine name in the Christian Greek Scriptures. *Appendixes begin on page 680.*



GLOSSARY

The Glossary of Biblical and non-Biblical terms gives definitions of words and expressions that are used in the main text or in the study notes but that may not be commonly understood. *Begins on page 860.*

TABLE OF BIBLE BOOKS

HEBREW SCRIPTURES

WRITTEN BEFORE THE COMMON (CHRISTIAN) ERA

Name of Book	Writer(s)	Place Written	Writing Completed (B.C.E.)	Time Covered (B.C.E.)
Genesis	Moses	Wilderness	1513	"In the beginning" to 1657
Exodus	Moses	Wilderness	1512	1657-1512
Leviticus	Moses	Wilderness	1512	1 month (1512)
Numbers	Moses	Wilderness and Plains of Moab	1473	1512-1473
Deuteronomy	Moses	Plains of Moab	1473	2 months (1473)
Joshua	Joshua	Canaan	c. 1450	1473-c. 1450
Judges	Samuel	Israel	c. 1100	c. 1450-c. 1120
Ruth	Samuel	Israel	c. 1090	11 years of Judges' rule
1 Samuel	Samuel; Gad; Nathan	Israel	c. 1078	c. 1180-1078
2 Samuel	Gad; Nathan	Israel	c. 1040	1077-c. 1040
1 Kings	Jeremiah	Judah and Egypt	1 roll	c. 1040-580
2 Kings	Jeremiah		580	
1 Chronicles	Ezra	Jerusalem (?)	1 roll	After 1Ch 9:44: c. 1077-537
2 Chronicles	Ezra	Jerusalem (?)	c. 460	
Ezra	Ezra	Jerusalem	c. 460	537-c. 467
Nehemiah	Nehemiah	Jerusalem	a. 443	456-a. 443
Esther	Mordecai	Shushan, Elam	c. 475	493-c. 475
Job	Moses	Wilderness	c. 1473	Over 140 years between 1657 and 1473
Psalms	David and others		c. 460	
Proverbs	Solomon; Agur; Lemuel	Jerusalem	c. 717	
Ecclesiastes	Solomon	Jerusalem	b. 1000	
Song of Solomon	Solomon	Jerusalem	c. 1020	
Isaiah	Isaiah	Jerusalem	a. 732	c. 778-a. 732
Jeremiah	Jeremiah	Judah; Egypt	580	647-580
Lamentations	Jeremiah	Near Jerusalem	607	
Ezekiel	Ezekiel	Babylon	c. 591	613-c. 591
Daniel	Daniel	Babylon	c. 536	618-c. 536
Hosea	Hosea	Samaria (District)	a. 745	b. 804-a. 745
Joel	Joel	Judah	c. 820 (?)	
Amos	Amos	Judah	c. 804	
Obadiah	Obadiah		c. 607	
Jonah	Jonah		c. 844	
Micah	Micah	Judah	b. 717	c. 777-717
Nahum	Nahum	Judah	b. 632	
Habakkuk	Habakkuk	Judah	c. 628 (?)	
Zephaniah	Zephaniah	Judah	b. 648	
Haggai	Haggai	Jerusalem rebuilt	520	112 days (520)
Zechariah	Zechariah	Jerusalem rebuilt	518	520-518
Malachi	Malachi	Jerusalem rebuilt	a. 443	

GREEK SCRIPTURES

WRITTEN DURING THE COMMON (CHRISTIAN) ERA

Name of Book	Writer	Place Written	Writing Completed (C.E.)	Time Covered
Matthew	Matthew	Israel	c. 41	2 B.C.E.–33 C.E.
Mark	Mark	Rome	c. 60-65	29-33 C.E.
Luke	Luke	Caesarea	c. 56-58	3 B.C.E.–33 C.E.
John	John (apostle)	Ephesus or near	c. 98	After prologue, 29-33 C.E.
Acts	Luke	Rome	c. 61	33–c. 61 C.E.
Romans	Paul	Corinth	c. 56	
1 Corinthians	Paul	Ephesus	c. 55	
2 Corinthians	Paul	Macedonia	c. 55	
Galatians	Paul	Corinth or Syrian Antioch	c. 50-52	
Ephesians	Paul	Rome	c. 60-61	
Philippians	Paul	Rome	c. 60-61	
Colossians	Paul	Rome	c. 60-61	
1 Thessalonians	Paul	Corinth	c. 50	
2 Thessalonians	Paul	Corinth	c. 51	
1 Timothy	Paul	Macedonia	c. 61-64	
2 Timothy	Paul	Rome	c. 65	
Titus	Paul	Macedonia (?)	c. 61-64	
Philemon	Paul	Rome	c. 60-61	
Hebrews	Paul	Rome	c. 61	
James	James (Jesus' brother)	Jerusalem	b. 62	
1 Peter	Peter	Babylon	c. 62-64	
2 Peter	Peter	Babylon (?)	c. 64	
1 John	John (apostle)	Ephesus or near	c. 98	
2 John	John (apostle)	Ephesus or near	c. 98	
3 John	John (apostle)	Ephesus or near	c. 98	
Jude	Jude (Jesus' brother)	Israel (?)	c. 65	
Revelation	John (apostle)	Patmos	c. 96	

Names of writers of some books and of places where written are uncertain. Many dates are only approximate.

ABBREVIATIONS IN THIS BIBLE

a.	after	g	gram(s)	m	meter(s)
App.	Appendix(es)	gal	liquid gallon(s)	mi	mile(s)
b.	before	in.	inch(es)	oz	ounce(s)
c.	circa/about	kg	kilogram(s)	oz t	ounce(s) troy
cm	centimeter(s)	km	kilometer(s)	pt	pint(s) U.S.
dry qt	dry quart(s) U.S.	L	liter(s)	Sup	Superscription
ft	foot/feet	lb	pound(s) avoirdupois	vs.	verse
ftn.	footnote	Lit.	Literally	vss.	verses

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Fill in the dates that you plan to read each group of chapters listed. Check them off as you complete each section. You can read the Bible books in order or select topics based on the categories shown. If you read one set of chapters each day, you will have read the entire Bible in one year.

- ◆ Read days marked with an ORANGE diamond to gain a historical overview of God's dealings with the Israelites.
- Read days marked with a GREEN dot to gain a chronological overview of the development of the Christian congregation.

FROM CREATION TO THE DEATH OF MOSES

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Genesis 1-3			19-21 ◆			16-18 ◆	
	4-7			22-25			19-21 ◆	
	8-11			26-28			22-24 ◆	
	12-15 ◆			29-30			25-27 ◆	
	16-18 ◆			31-33 ◆			28-30	
	19-22 ◆			34-35 ◆			31-32 ◆	
	23-24 ◆			36-38			33-36 ◆	
	25-27 ◆			39-40			Deuteronomy 1-2	
	28-30 ◆			Leviticus 1-4			3-4 ◆	
	31-32 ◆			5-7			5-7	
	33-34 ◆			8-10			8-10	
	35-37 ◆			11-13			11-13	
	38-40 ◆			14-15			14-16	
	41-42 ◆			16-18			17-19 ◆	
	43-45 ◆			19-21			20-22	
	46-48 ◆			22-23			23-26	
	49-50 ◆			24-25			27-28	
	Exodus 1-4 ◆			26-27			29-31 ◆	
	5-7 ◆			Numbers 1-3			32 ◆	
	8-10 ◆			4-6			33-34 ◆	
	11-13 ◆			7-9				
	14-15 ◆			10-12 ◆				
	16-18 ◆			13-15 ◆				

ISRAEL ENTERS THE PROMISED LAND

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Joshua 1-4 ◆			19-21 ◆			10-11 ◆	
	5-7 ◆			22-24 ◆			12-13 ◆	
	8-9 ◆			Judges 1-2 ◆			14-16 ◆	
	10-12 ◆			3-5 ◆			17-19 ◆	
	13-15 ◆			6-7 ◆			20-21 ◆	
	16-18 ◆			8-9 ◆			Ruth 1-4 ◆	

WHEN THE KINGS RULED ISRAEL

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	1 Samuel	1-2 ♦		1 Kings	1-2 ♦		1 Chronicles	1-2
		3-6 ♦			3-5 ♦			3-5
		7-9 ♦			6-7 ♦			6-7
		10-12 ♦			8 ♦			8-10
		13-14 ♦			9-10 ♦			11-12
		15-16 ♦			11-12 ♦			13-15
		17-18 ♦			13-14 ♦			16-17
		19-21 ♦			15-17 ♦			18-20
		22-24 ♦			18-19 ♦			21-23
		25-27 ♦			20-21 ♦			24-26
		28-31 ♦			22 ♦			27-29
	2 Samuel	1-2 ♦		2 Kings	1-3 ♦		2 Chronicles	1-3
		3-5 ♦			4-5 ♦			4-6
		6-8 ♦			6-8 ♦			7-9
		9-12 ♦			9-10 ♦			10-14
		13-14 ♦			11-13 ♦			15-18
		15-16 ♦			14-15 ♦			19-22
		17-18 ♦			16-17 ♦			23-25
		19-20 ♦			18-19 ♦			26-28
		21-22 ♦			20-22 ♦			29-30
		23-24 ♦			23-25 ♦			31-33
								34-36

THE JEWS RETURN FROM EXILE

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Ezra	1-3 ♦			4-6 ♦		Esther	1-4 ♦
		4-7 ♦			7-8 ♦			5-10 ♦
		8-10 ♦			9-10 ♦			
	Nehemiah	1-3 ♦			11-13 ♦			

THE ACCOUNT OF JOB

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Job	1-5			21-24			39-42
		6-9			25-29			
		10-14			30-31			
		15-18			32-34			
		19-20			35-38			

BOOKS OF SONGS AND PRACTICAL WISDOM

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Psalms	1-8		73-77			145-150	
		9-16		78-79			Proverbs	1-4
		17-19		80-86				5-8
		20-25		87-90				9-12
		26-31		91-96				13-16
		32-35		97-103				17-19
		36-38		104-105				20-22
		39-42		106-108				23-27
		43-47		109-115				28-31
		48-52		116-119:63			Ecclesiastes	1-4
		53-58		119:64-176				5-8
		59-64		120-129				9-12
		65-68		130-138			Song of Solomon	1-8
		69-72		139-144				

THE PROPHETS

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Isaiah	1-4		24-26			34-36	
		5-7		27-29			37-38	
		8-10		30-31			39-40	
		11-14		32-33			41-43	
		15-19		34-36			44-45	
		20-24		37-39			46-48	
		25-28		40-42			Daniel	1-2
		29-31		43-44				3-4
		32-35		45-48				5-7
		36-37		49-50				8-10
		38-40		51-52				11-12
		41-43		Lamentations	1-2		Hosea	1-7
		44-47			3-5			8-14
		48-50		Ezekiel	1-3		Joel	1-3
		51-55			4-6		Amos	1-5
		56-58			7-9			6-9
		59-62			10-12		Obadiah/Jonah	
		63-66			13-15		Micah	1-7
	Jeremiah	1-3			16		Nahum/Habakkuk	
		4-5			17-18		Zephaniah/Haggai	
		6-7			19-21		Zechariah	1-7
		8-10			22-23			8-11
		11-13			24-26			12-14
		14-16			27-28		Malachi	1-4
		17-20			29-31			
		21-23			32-33			

ACCOUNTS OF JESUS' LIFE AND MINISTRY

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Matthew	1-4		11-13	●		6-7	
		5-7		14-16	●		8-9	
		8-10		Luke	1-2		10-12	
		11-13			3-5		13-15	
		14-17			6-7		16-18	
		18-20			8-9		19-21	
		21-23			10-11			
		24-25			12-13			
		26			14-17			
		27-28			18-19			
	Mark	1-3			20-22			
		4-5			23-24			
		6-8		John	1-3			
		9-10			4-5			

GROWTH OF THE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Acts	1-3		12-14	●		22-23	●
		4-6		15-16	●		24-26	●
		7-8		17-19	●		27-28	●
		9-11		20-21	●			

THE LETTERS OF PAUL

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	Romans	1-3		2 Corinthians	1-6		2 Thessalonians	1-3
		4-7			7-10		1 Timothy	1-6
		8-11			11-13		2 Timothy	1-4
		12-16		Galatians	1-6		Titus/Philemon	
	1 Corinthians	1-6		Ephesians	1-6		Hebrews	1-6
		7-10		Philippians	1-4			7-10
		11-14		Colossians	1-4			11-13
		15-16		1 Thessalonians	1-5			

THE WRITINGS OF THE OTHER APOSTLES AND DISCIPLES

Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓	Date	Chapter(s)	✓
	James	1-5		2 John/3 John/Jude			15-18	
	1 Peter	1-5		Revelation	1-4		19-22	
	2 Peter	1-3			5-9			
	1 John	1-5			10-14			

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO

MATTHEW



- Evidence indicates that Matthew originally wrote his Gospel in Hebrew just eight years after Jesus' death; he may personally have translated it into Greek.
- It has been estimated that Matthew's Gospel contains about a hundred references to the Hebrew Scriptures. Some 40 of these are actual quotations.
- Matthew's account of Jesus' life was likely written primarily with the Jewish audience in mind.
- Matthew had been a tax collector, which may explain why he was explicit in his mention of money, figures, and values. (Mt 17:27; 26:15; 27:3)
- Matthew alone mentions Jesus' repeated insistence that mercy is required in addition to sacrifice. (Mt 9:9-13; 12:7; 18:21-35)
- Matthew uses the term "Kingdom" more than 50 times.
- In the first 18 chapters, Matthew highlights the Kingdom theme, leading him to depart from a chronological arrangement. However, the last ten chapters (19 to 28) generally follow a chronological sequence.
- Over 40 percent of Matthew's Gospel account is not found in any other Gospel. This includes at least ten illustrations: the weeds in the field (Mt 13:24-30), the hidden treasure (Mt 13:44), the pearl of high value (Mt 13:45, 46), the dragnet (Mt 13:47-50), the unmerciful slave (Mt 18:23-35), the workers and the denarius (Mt 20:1-16), the father and two children (Mt 21:28-32), the marriage of the king's son (Mt 22:1-14), the ten virgins (Mt 25:1-13), and the talents (Mt 25:14-30).

Writer: Matthew

Place Written: Israel

Writing Completed: c. 41 C.E.

Time Covered: 2 B.C.E.–33 C.E.

STUDY NOTES

Matthew: The Greek name rendered "Matthew" is probably a shortened form of the Hebrew name rendered "Mattithiah" (1Ch 15:18), meaning "Gift of Jehovah."

According to Matthew: None of the Gospel writers identify themselves as such in their accounts, and titles were

evidently not part of the original text. In some manuscripts of Matthew's Gospel, the title appears as *Eu-ag-ge'li-on Ka-ta' Math-thai'on* ("Good News [or, "Gospel"] According to Matthew"), whereas in others a shorter title, *Ka-ta' Math-thai'on* ("According to Matthew"), is used. It is not clear exactly when such titles were added or began to be used. Some suggest that it was in the second century C.E., since examples of the longer title have been found in Gospel manuscripts that have been dated to the end of the second century or early third century.

According to some scholars, the opening words of Mark's book ("The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God") may have been the reason why the term "gospel" (lit., "good news") came to be used to describe these accounts. The use of such titles along with the name of the writer may have come about for practical reasons, providing a clear means of identification of the books.

See [📖](#) Gallery, map 1, Gospel of Matthew—Some Major Events.

OVERVIEW OF MATTHEW

1:1-17

Genealogy of Jesus Christ

1:18-3:17

From Events Surrounding Jesus' Birth to His Baptism

Mary pregnant by holy spirit and Joseph's reaction (1:18-25)
Astrologers' visit and Herod's murderous plan (2:1-12)
Joseph and Mary take Jesus and flee to Egypt (2:13-15)
Herod kills young boys in Bethlehem and all its districts (2:16-18)
Jesus' family settles in Nazareth (2:19-23)
Ministry of John the Baptist (3:1-12)
Baptism of Jesus (3:13-17)

4:1-25

Devil's Temptation of Jesus and Beginning of Jesus' Preaching Activity in Galilee

Jesus rejects Devil's temptations (4:1-11)
Jesus starts preaching about the Kingdom of the heavens (4:12-17)
First four disciples called to be "fishers of men" (4:18-22)
Jesus preaches, teaches, and heals (4:23-25)

5:1-7:29

Sermon on the Mount

Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount (5:1, 2)
Nine happinesses (5:3-12)
"Salt of the earth" and "light of the world" (5:13-16)
Jesus to fulfill the Law (5:17-20)
Counsel on anger and on settling personal conflicts (5:21-26)
Counsel on adultery and divorce (5:27-32)
Counsel on oaths, retaliation, and love for enemies (5:33-48)
Avoid the display of righteousness (6:1-4)
How to pray and the model prayer (6:5-15)
Avoid hypocritical fasting (6:16-18)
Treasures on earth and in heaven (6:19-24)
Stop being anxious; seek first God's Kingdom (6:25-34)
Stop judging (7:1-6)
Keep on asking, seeking, and knocking (7:7-11)
Golden Rule (7:12)
The narrow gate (7:13, 14)
False prophets; trees known by their fruits (7:15-23)
House on rock versus house on sand (7:24-27)
Crowds astounded at Jesus' way of teaching (7:28, 29)

8:1-9:34

Jesus Performs Various Miracles in Galilee

A leper healed (8:1-4)
Faith of an army officer (8:5-13)
Jesus heals many in Capernaum (8:14-17)
Requirements for following Jesus (8:18-22)
Jesus calms storm on the Sea of Galilee (8:23-27)
Demons sent into swine (8:28-34)
Jesus heals paralytic (9:1-8)
Jesus calls Matthew (9:9-13)
Question about fasting (9:14-17)
Ruler's daughter resurrected; woman touches Jesus' outer garment (9:18-26)
Jesus heals the blind and the speechless (9:27-34)

9:35-11:1

Jesus Describes Great Teaching Work and Instructs Teachers

Harvest is great but workers are few (9:35-38)
The 12 apostles chosen (10:1-4)
Instructions for the ministry (10:5-15)
Disciples will be persecuted (10:16-25)
Fear God, not men (10:26-31)

Jesus came to bring, not peace, but a sword (10:32-39)
 Receiving Jesus' disciples brings reward (10:40-42)
 Jesus sets out to teach and preach (11:1)

11:2–12:50

Jesus Travels Through Galilee and Teaches

John asks about "the Coming One" (11:2-6)
 Jesus praises John the Baptist (11:7-15)
 Unresponsive generation (11:16-19)
 Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum condemned (11:20-24)
 Jesus praises his Father for favoring the humble (11:25-27)
 Jesus' yoke of discipleship refreshes (11:28-30)
 Jesus, "Lord of the Sabbath" (12:1-8)
 Man with a withered hand healed on the Sabbath (12:9-14)
 Jesus as God's beloved servant (12:15-21)
 Demons expelled by holy spirit, not by Beelzebub (12:22-30)
 Unforgivable sin (12:31, 32)
 Tree known by its fruit (12:33-37)

Sign of Jonah (12:38-42)
 The return of an unclean spirit (12:43-45)
 Jesus' mother and brothers (12:46-50)

13:1-58

Jesus Teaches About the Kingdom by Means of Illustrations

From a boat, Jesus teaches large crowds (13:1, 2)
 Seed sown on four different types of soil (13:3-9)
 Why Jesus used illustrations (13:10-17)
 Illustration of the sower explained (13:18-23)
 The wheat and the weeds (13:24-30)
 The mustard grain and the leaven (13:31-33)
 Jesus' use of illustrations fulfills prophecy (13:34, 35)
 Illustration of the wheat and the weeds explained (13:36-43)
 Hidden treasure and the fine pearl (13:44-46)
 The dragnet (13:47-50)
 A public instructor brings out treasures new and old (13:51, 52)
 People of Jesus' hometown reject him (13:53-58)

14:1–18:35

Conclusion of Jesus' Ministry in Galilee and Nearby Regions

Death of John the Baptist (14:1-12)
 Jesus feeds about 5,000 men, as well as women and children (14:13-21)
 Jesus walks on water (14:22-33)
 Healings in Gennesaret (14:34-36)
 Issue about ritual washing of hands (15:1-9)
 Defilement comes from the heart (15:10-20)
 Phoenician woman's great faith (15:21-28)
 Jesus heals many ailments (15:29-31)
 Jesus feeds 4,000 men, as well as women and children (15:32-39)
 Pharisees and Sadducees ask for a sign from heaven (16:1-4)
 Jesus warns against leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees (16:5-12)
 Peter identifies Jesus as the Christ (16:13-17)
 Jesus gives Peter the keys of the Kingdom (16:18-20)
 Jesus foretells his death and resurrection (16:21-23)
 Requirements of true discipleship (16:24-28)
 Jesus' transfiguration (17:1-13)

Jesus heals a demon-possessed boy (17:14-18)

Faith the size of a mustard grain (17:19, 20)

Jesus again foretells his death and resurrection (17:22, 23)

Tax paid with coin from the mouth of a fish (17:24-27)

Who is the greatest in the Kingdom? (18:1-6)

Stumbling blocks (18:7-10)

Illustration of the lost sheep (18:12-14)

How to settle differences and gain a brother (18:15-20)

Illustration of the unforgiving slave (18:21-35)

19:1–20:34

Jesus' Ministry in Perea and the Vicinity of Jericho

Marriage and divorce (19:1-9)

Gift of singleness (19:10-12)

Jesus blesses young children (19:13-15)

A rich young man's question (19:16-26)

Sacrifices for the Kingdom will be rewarded (19:27-30)

Vineyard workers all receive payment of one denarius (20:1-16)

Jesus again foretells his death and resurrection (20:17-19)

Request for positions in the Kingdom (20:20-28)

Jesus heals two blind men near Jericho (20:29-34)

21:1–23:39

Jesus' Final Ministry in Jerusalem

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (21:1-11)

Jesus cleanses the temple (21:12-17)

Fig tree cursed (21:18-22)

Jesus' authority challenged (21:23-27)

Illustration of the father and two children (21:28-32)

Illustration of the murderous vineyard cultivators (21:33-46)

Illustration of the marriage feast (22:1-14)

God and Caesar (22:15-22)

Question about the resurrection (22:23-33)

Two greatest commandments (22:34-40)

Is the Christ the son of David? (22:41-46)

Do not imitate scribes and Pharisees (23:1-12)

Woes to scribes and Pharisees (23:13-36)

Jesus laments over Jerusalem (23:37-39)

24:1–25:46

Jesus' Great Prophecy About the Sign of His Presence

Question about the sign of Jesus' presence (24:1-3)

Features of composite sign and the great tribulation (24:4-22)

Dangers of being misled by false Christs (24:23-28)

The coming of the Son of man (24:29-31)

Illustration of the fig tree (24:32, 33)

This generation will not pass away (24:34, 35)

Day and hour unknown by man and angels; Jesus' presence like the days of Noah (24:36-39)

Keep on the watch (24:40-44)

The faithful and discreet slave and characteristics of an evil slave (24:45-51)

Illustration of the ten virgins (25:1-13)

Illustration of the talents (25:14-30)

Illustration of the sheep and the goats (25:31-46)

26:1–27:66**Jesus' Betrayal, Suffering, Execution, and Burial**

Priests plot to kill Jesus (26:1-5)

Woman pours perfumed oil on Jesus (26:6-13)

Jesus' last Passover and Judas' betrayal (26:14-25)

Instituting the Lord's Evening Meal (26:26-30)

Peter's denial foretold (26:31-35)

Jesus prays in Gethsemane (26:36-46)

Jesus arrested and brought before Sanhedrin (26:47-68)

Peter denies Jesus three times and weeps bitterly (26:69-75)

Jesus handed over to Pilate (27:1, 2)

Judas feels remorse and hangs himself (27:3-10)

Jesus stands before Pilate (27:11-26)

Soldiers publicly mock Jesus (27:27-31)

Jesus nailed to stake at Golgotha (27:32-44)

Death of Jesus (27:45-56)

Burial of Jesus (27:57-61)

Jesus' tomb securely guarded (27:62-66)

28:1-20**Jesus Is Resurrected; Gives Commission to Make Disciples**

Jesus is resurrected; he appears to his disciples (28:1-10)

Soldiers bribed to lie about Jesus' resurrection (28:11-15)

Jesus gives commission to make disciples (28:16-20)

ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Genealogy of Jesus Christ

- 1** The book of the history* of Jesus Christ, son of David,^a son of Abraham:^b
- 2** Abraham^c became father to Isaac;^d
Isaac became father to Jacob;^e
Jacob became father to Judah^f and his brothers;^g
- 3** Judah became father to Pe'rez and Ze'rah^h by Ta'mar;ⁱ
Pe'rez became father to Hez'ron;^j
Hez'ron became father to Ram;^k
- 4** Ram became father to Am-min'a-dab;
Am-min'a-dab became father to Nah'shon;^l
Nah'shon became father to Sal'mon;
- 5** Sal'mon became father to Bo'az^m by Ra'hab;ⁿ
Bo'az became father to O'bed^o by Ruth;^p
O'bed became father to Jes'se;^q
- 6** Jes'se became father to David^r the king.^s
David became father to Sol'o-mon^t by the wife of U-ri'ah;^{*u}

r 1Sa 16:11-13; 1Ch 2:13, 15; s 2Sa 5:4; t 2Sa 12:24; 1Ch 3:5; u 2Sa 23:8, 39.

CHAP. 1

- a 1Ch 17:11
Mt 9:27
Lu 1:32, 33
- b Ge 22:18
- c Ge 11:26
- d Ge 21:3
- e Ge 25:26
1Ch 1:34
- f Ge 29:35
- g Ge 35:23-26
- h Ge 38:29, 30
- i Ge 38:6
1Ch 2:4
- j Ge 46:12
Ru 4:18-22
- k 1Ch 2:9
- l Nu 1:4, 7
Nu 2:3
1Ch 2:10, 11
- m Ru 2:1
- n Jos 2:1
- o Ru 4:17
- p Ru 1:3, 4
Ru 4:13
- q 1Sa 16:1
1Ch 2:12

FOOTNOTES

1:1 *Or “genealogy; line of descent; origin.” **1:6** *Or “by her who had belonged to Uriah.”

STUDY NOTES

1:1 book of the history: Matthew’s opening words in Greek, *Bi’blos ge-ne’se-os* (form of *ge’ne-sis*), could also be rendered “historical record” or “record of the genealogy.” The Greek word *ge’ne-sis* literally means “origin; birth; line of descent.” It is used in the *Septuagint* to render the Hebrew term *toh-le-dhohth’*, which has a similar meaning and is usually rendered “history” in the book of Genesis.—Ge 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2.

history of Jesus Christ: Matthew traces the line through David’s son Solomon. By contrast, Luke traces the line through David’s son Nathan. (Mt 1:6, 7; Lu 3:31) Matthew traces Jesus’ legal right to the throne of David from Solomon through Joseph, who was legally Jesus’ father.

Luke evidently follows the ancestry of Mary, tracing Jesus’ natural descent from David.

Christ: This title is derived from the Greek word *Khri-stos’* and is equivalent to the title “Messiah” (from Hebrew *ma-shi’ach*), both meaning “Anointed One.” In Bible times, rulers were ceremonially anointed with oil.

son: In this genealogy, “son” may refer to an immediate son, a grandson, or a descendant.

son of David: Indicates that Jesus is the heir of the Kingdom covenant made with David that is to be fulfilled by someone in David’s line.—2Sa 7:11-16; Ps 89:3, 4.

son of Abraham: With the Jewish audience in mind, Matthew begins tracing Jesus’ legal descent by highlighting that Jesus is the lawful offspring, or heir of God’s promise to Abraham, through whom all nations of the earth can obtain a blessing.

1:2 father: In the expression **became father to** (lit., “generated; brought forth”),

“father” can refer to an immediate father, a grandfather, or a more remote male ancestor.—Mt 1:8, 11.

1:3 Tamar: The first of five women listed in Matthew’s genealogy of the Messiah. The other four are Rahab and Ruth, both non-Israelite women (vs. 5); Bathsheba, “the wife of Uriah” (vs. 6); and Mary (vs. 16). These women are likely included in an otherwise all-male genealogy because there is something outstanding in the way each one came to be an ancestor of Jesus.

1:6 David the king: Although several kings are mentioned in this genealogy, David is the only one identified by the title “king.” Israel’s royal dynasty was referred to as “the house of David.” (1Ki 12:19, 20) By calling Jesus “son of David” in verse 1, Matthew emphasizes the Kingdom theme and identifies Jesus as the heir of the kingship promised in the Davidic covenant.—2Sa 7:11-16.

the wife of Uriah: That is, Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, one of David’s foreign warriors.—2Sa 11:3; 23:8, 39.

CHAP. 1

- a 1Ki 11:43
 b 1Ki 14:31
 c 1Ch 3:10-19
 2Ch 14:1
 d 1Ki 15:24
 e 2Ch 21:1
 f 2Ch 26:1, 3
 g 2Ki 15:32
 h 2Ki 15:38
 i 2Ki 18:1
 j 2Ki 20:21
 k 2Ki 21:18, 19
 2Ch 33:20
 l 2Ki 21:24
 m 2Ki 23:34
 n 2Ki 24:6, 8
 1Ch 3:15, 16
 o 2Ki 24:12, 15
 2Ch 36:9, 10
 Jer 29:1
 p Ezr 3:2
 Ne 12:1
 q Mt 13:55
 Mr 6:3
 r Lu 3:23-38
- 7** Sol'o-mon became father to Re-ho-bo'am;^a
 Re-ho-bo'am became father to A-bi'jah;^b
 A-bi'jah became father to A'sa;^c
- 8** A'sa became father to Je-hosh'a-phat;^d
 Je-hosh'a-phat became father to Je-ho'ram;^e
 Je-ho'ram became father to Uz·zi'ah;^f
- 9** Uz·zi'ah became father to Jo'tham;^g
 Jo'tham became father to A'haz;^h
 A'haz became father to Hez·e·ki'ah;ⁱ
- 10** Hez·e·ki'ah became father to Ma-nas'seh;^j
 Ma-nas'seh became father to A'mon;^k
 A'mon became father to Jo-si'ah;^l
- 11** Jo-si'ah^m became father to Jec·o·ni'ahⁿ and to his
 brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.^o
- 12** After the deportation to Babylon, Jec·o·ni'ah
 became father to She-al'ti-el;
 She-al'ti-el became father to Ze-rub'ba-bel;^p
- 13** Ze-rub'ba-bel became father to A-bi'ud;
 A-bi'ud became father to E-li'a-kim;
 E-li'a-kim became father to A'zor;
- 14** A'zor became father to Za'dok;
 Za'dok became father to A'chim;
 A'chim became father to E-li'ud;
- 15** E-li'ud became father to El·e·a'zar;
 El·e·a'zar became father to Mat'than;
 Mat'than became father to Jacob;
- 16** Jacob became father to Joseph the husband of Mary,
 of whom Jesus was born,^q who is called Christ.^r

 STUDY NOTES
1:8 Jehoram became father to Uziah:

"Father" is here used in the sense of "forefather," as is often done in genealogical lists. As shown at 1Ch 3:11, 12, three wicked kings (Ahaziah, Jehoash, and Amaziah) in the Davidic line are omitted between Jehoram and Uziah (also called Azariah).

1:11 father: Used here in the sense of "grandfather," since Josiah was actually the father of Jehoiaqim, who in turn was the father of Jehoiachin, also called Jehoiachin and Coniah.—2Ki 24:6; 1Ch 3:15-17; Es 2:6; Jer 22:24.

1:12 Shealtiel became father to Zerub-

babel: Although Shealtiel in many instances is called the father of Zerubbabel (Ezr 3:2, 8; 5:2; Ne 12:1; Hag 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 23; Lu 3:27), Pedaiah, Shealtiel's brother, is once so identified. (1Ch 3:19) Zerubbabel was likely the natural son of Pedaiah, but he was evidently legally reckoned as the son of Shealtiel.—See study notes on Lu 3:27.

1:16 Joseph: Matthew's account does not use the expression "became father to" (see study note on Mt 1:2) in describing Joseph's relationship to Jesus. It simply says that Joseph was **the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born.** The

Greek pronoun rendered "whom" is feminine and can refer only to Mary. So Matthew's genealogy highlights that while Jesus is not the physical son of Joseph, he is his adoptive son and therefore a legal heir of David. Luke's genealogy highlights that Jesus through his mother, Mary, is the natural heir of David.

Christ: See study note on Mt 1:1 and  Glossary.

17 All the generations, then, from Abraham until David were 14 generations; from David until the deportation to Babylon,^a 14 generations; from the deportation to Babylon until the Christ, 14 generations.

Birth of Jesus

18 But this is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. During the time his mother Mary was promised in marriage to Joseph,^b she was found to be pregnant by holy spirit^c before they were united. **19** However, because her husband Joseph was righteous and did not want to make her a public spectacle,^{*} he intended to divorce her[#] secretly.^d **20** But after he had thought these things over, look! Jehovah's angel appeared to him in a dream, saying: "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take your wife Mary home, for what has been conceived in her is by holy spirit.^e **21** She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus,^f for he will save his people from their sins."^g **22** All of this actually came about to fulfill what was spoken by Jehovah through his prophet, saying: **23** "Look! The virgin

CHAP. 1

a 2Ki 24:12, 15
2Ch 36:9, 10

b Lu 1:26, 27

c Lu 1:35

d De 24:1

e Lu 1:35

f Mt 1:25

Lu 1:31

g Lu 2:30

Joh 1:29

Ac 4:12

Ac 5:31

Eph 1:7

Heb 7:25

1Pe 2:24

FOOTNOTES

1:19 *Or "to disgrace her publicly."
#Or "send her away; release her."

STUDY NOTES

1:18 promised in marriage: Among the Hebrews, to be "promised in marriage," or engaged, was a binding arrangement. An engaged couple was viewed as already married, although the man and the woman did not begin living together as husband and wife until the wedding formalities were completed.

spirit: The first occurrence of the Greek word *pneu'ma* in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It refers here to God's active force.—See  Glossary.

1:19 husband . . . divorce: Since engaged people were viewed as married, Joseph could rightly be referred to as Mary's husband and Mary as Joseph's wife. (Mt 1:20) A divorce was required to dissolve the engagement.

1:20 look! The Greek word *i-dou'*, here rendered "look!," is often used to focus attention on what follows, encouraging the reader to visualize the scene or to take note of a detail in a narrative. It is

also used to add emphasis or to introduce something new or surprising. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term occurs most frequently in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and in the book of Revelation. A corresponding expression is often used in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Jehovah's: This is the first of 237 places in the Christian Greek Scriptures where the divine name, Jehovah, occurs in the main text of this version.—See  App. C.

Jehovah's angel: This expression occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures, starting at Ge 16:7. When it occurs in early copies of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. That is how the expression is handled at Zec 3:5, 6 in a copy of the *Septuagint* found in Nahal Hever, Israel, dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. (See  App. C.) A number of Bible translations retain the divine name when rendering the expression "Jehovah's angel" in this verse.—See  App. A5 and App. C3 introduction; Mt 1:20.

son of David: To prepare Joseph for what he was about to hear, the angel called him "son of David," reminding him of the

promise in the Davidic covenant.—See study notes on Mt 1:1, 6.

to take your wife Mary home: According to Jewish custom, marriage began when a couple became engaged. The wedding formalities were completed when the husband took his bride to live in his own home. This event usually took place on a set day and was accompanied by a celebration. The man thereby publicly declared that he was taking the woman as his marriage partner. The marriage was thus made known, acknowledged, and recorded and was binding.—Ge 24:67; see study notes on Mt 1:18, 19.

conceived: Or "begotten." Lit., "generated; brought forth." The same Greek word is rendered "was born" in verse 16; the active form is rendered "became father to" in verses 2-16.—See study note on Mt 1:2. See  Gallery, image 6, A First-Century House.

1:21 Jesus: Corresponds to the Hebrew name Jeshua or Joshua, a shortened form of Jehoshua, meaning "Jehovah Is Salvation."

CHAP. 1

- a Isa 7:14
 b Isa 8:8, 10
 c Lu 2:7
 d Lu 2:21

CHAP. 2

- e Mic 5:2
 Lu 2:4
 f Lu 1:5
 g 1Sa 16:1, 13
 Mt 27:37

will become pregnant and will give birth to a son, and they will name him Im-man'u-el,"^a which means, when translated, "With Us Is God."^b

24 Then Joseph woke up from his sleep and did as the angel of Jehovah had directed him, and he took his wife home.

25 But he did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son,^c and he named him Jesus.^d

Astrologers' Visit

2 After Jesus had been born in Beth'le-hem^e of Ju-de'a in the days of Herod^f the king, look! astrologers from the East came to Jerusalem, **2** saying: "Where is the one born king of the Jews?^g For we saw his star when we were in the East, and we have come to do obeisance to him." **3** At hearing this, King

STUDY NOTES

1:22 Jehovah: The quotation that immediately follows in verse 23 is taken from Isa 7:14, where Jehovah is said to be the one giving the sign. (See  App. C3 introduction; Mt 1:22.) This is Matthew's first quote from the Hebrew Scriptures.

to fulfill what was spoken by Jehovah through his prophet: This and similar expressions occur many times in Matthew's Gospel, apparently to emphasize to the Jewish audience Jesus' role as the promised Messiah.—Mt 2:15, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:56; 27:9.

1:23 virgin: Matthew here quotes from the *Septuagint* version of Isa 7:14, which uses *par-the'nos*, "one who has never engaged in sexual intercourse," to render the Hebrew word 'al-mah', a broader term that may mean "virgin" or simply "a young woman." Under inspiration, Matthew applies the Greek term for "virgin" to the mother of Jesus.

Immanuel: A Hebrew name occurring at Isa 7:14; 8:8, 10. Immanuel is one of the prophetic title-names by which Messiah would be identified.

1:24 Jehovah: See study note on Mt 1:20 and  App. C3 introduction; Mt 1:24.

1:25 did not have sexual relations with: Lit., "did not know." In Biblical Greek, the verb "to know" can be used as a euphemism for sexual relations; the same is true of the Hebrew verb for "to

know," rendered "had sexual relations with," at Ge 4:1, 1Sa 1:19, and in other occurrences.

2:1 Bethlehem of Judea: Since there was another Bethlehem, in the territory of Zebulun (Jos 19:10, 15), the town in Judah (Judea) was often referred to as "Bethlehem in Judah" (Jg 17:7-9; 19:1, 2, 18). The earlier name of this town was evidently Ephrath, or Ephrathah, explaining why Mic 5:2 says that the Messiah would come from "Bethlehem Ephrathah."—Ge 35:19; 48:7.

Herod: Refers to Herod the Great.—See  Glossary.

astrologers: Greek *ma'goi* (plural of *ma'gos*), most likely referring to experts in astrology and other occult practices condemned in the Holy Scriptures. (De 18:10-12) The Bible does not indicate the number. The same Greek term is rendered "sorcerer" at Ac 13:6, 8 and is used in the *Septuagint* as an equivalent for the Hebrew and Aramaic words rendered "conjurer" at Da 2:2, 10.

See  Gallery, image 7, Winter in Bethlehem.

2:2 star: Most probably not a real star or a conjunction of planets. Only the astrologers "saw" the star.

when we were in the East: The Greek word rendered "East" literally means "rising." In this context, the expression evidently refers to the location of the as-

trologers when they saw the star, though some have understood it to mean that the astrologers saw the star on the eastern sky or as it was "rising," or appearing.

do obeisance: Or "bow down." When the Greek verb *pro-sky-ne'o* is used to refer to the worship of a god or a deity, it is rendered "to worship." In this context, however, the astrologers were asking for "the one born king of the Jews." So it is clear that it refers to obeisance or homage to a human king, not a god. A similar usage is found at Mr 15:18, 19, where the term is used of the soldiers who mockingly "bowed down" to Jesus and called him "King of the Jews."—See study note on Mt 18:26.

Herod was agitated, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** On gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. **5** They said to him: “In Beth’le-hem^a of Ju-de’a, for this is how it has been written through the prophet: **6** ‘And you, O Beth’le-hem of the land of Judah, are by no means the most insignificant city among the governors* of Judah, for out of you will come a governing one,[#] who will shepherd my people Israel.’”^b

7 Then Herod secretly summoned the astrologers and carefully ascertained from them the time of the star’s appearing. **8** When sending them to Beth’le-hem, he said: “Go make a careful search for the young child, and when you have found him, report back to me so that I too may go and do obeisance to him.” **9** After they had heard the king, they went their way, and look! the star they had seen when they were in the East^c went ahead of them until it came to a stop above where the young child was. **10** On seeing the star, they rejoiced with great joy. **11** And when they went into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and falling down, they did obeisance to him. They also opened their treasures and presented him with gifts—gold and frankincense and myrrh.

CHAP. 2

a Joh 7:42

b 2Sa 5:2
Mic 5:2

c Mt 2:2

FOOTNOTES

2:6 *Or “rulers; leaders.” #Or “a ruler; a leader.”

STUDY NOTES

2:4 chief priests: The Greek term is rendered “high priest” when it is singular and refers to the chief representative of the people before God. Here the plural refers to principal men of the priesthood, including former high priests and, possibly, the heads of the 24 priestly divisions.

scribes: This term originally referred to copyists of the Scriptures, but during Jesus’ time, it referred to those who were experts in the Law and teachers of it.

the Christ: Here the title “Christ” is preceded by the definite article in Greek, evidently as a way of emphasizing Jesus’ office as the Messiah.

2:5 Bethlehem: From the Hebrew name meaning “House of Bread.” Bethlehem was David’s hometown and was some-

times called “David’s city.”—Lu 2:4, 11; Joh 7:42.

2:6 by no means the most insignificant:

The prophecy at Mic 5:2 here quoted shows that Bethlehem, although insignificant in population (called a village at Joh 7:42) and governing power, would become very significant because the greatest **governing one** would come from there to **shepherd** God’s people Israel.

2:8 do obeisance to him: Or “honor him; pay him homage.” Here Herod is claiming that he wants to perform an act of respect to a human king, not to worship a god.—For further information on the Greek word, see study note on Mt 2:2.

2:11 house: The reference to a house shows that the astrologers did not visit Jesus when he was a newborn baby in a manger.

the young child: Jesus is here not referred to as “an infant,” as he is at Lu 2:12, 16.

did obeisance: Or “bowed down.” The term often denotes respect to a human, such as a king, not worship.—See study notes on Mt 2:2; 18:26.

gifts: When presenting Jesus at the temple 40 days after his birth (Lu 2:22-24; Lev 12:6-8), Joseph and Mary were poor, indicating that these gifts were given sometime after that occasion. The gifts may have been timely, useful for financing the family’s stay in Egypt.

frankincense: See  Glossary.

myrrh: See  Glossary.

2:13 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

Jehovah’s angel: See study note on Mt 1:20 and  App. C3 introduction; Mt 2:13.

Egypt: At this time, Egypt was a Roman province and home to a large Jewish population. Bethlehem was about 9 km (6 mi) SSW of Jerusalem, so Joseph and Mary could travel SW to Egypt without passing through Jerusalem, where Herod issues his murderous edict.

CHAP. 2

- a Mt 2:22
 b Mt 1:20
 Mt 2:19
 c Ho 11:1
 d Mt 2:7
 e Jer 1:1
 f Ge 29:10
 Ge 35:19
 g Jer 31:15

12 However, because they were given divine warning in a dream^a not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

Flight to Egypt

13 After they had departed, look! Jehovah's angel appeared to Joseph in a dream,^b saying: "Get up, take the young child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I give you word, for Herod is about to search for the young child to kill him." **14** So Joseph got up and by night took along the young child and the child's mother and went into Egypt. **15** He stayed there until the death of Herod. This fulfilled what was spoken by Jehovah through his prophet, saying: "Out of Egypt I called my son."^c

Herod Kills Young Boys

16 Then Herod, seeing that he had been outwitted by the astrologers, flew into a great rage, and he sent out and had all the boys in Beth'le-hem and in all its districts killed, from two years of age and under, according to the time that he had carefully ascertained from the astrologers.^d **17** Then was fulfilled what was spoken through Jeremiah^e the prophet, who said: **18** "A voice was heard in Ra'mah, weeping and much wailing. It was Rachel^f weeping for her children, and she was unwilling to take comfort, because they are no more."^g

STUDY NOTES

2:14 went into Egypt: From Bethlehem to Egypt was probably a distance of at least 120 km (75 mi).

2:15 death of Herod: Herod died likely in the year 1 B.C.E.

Jehovah: The quote that follows is taken from Ho 11:1, and the context (Ho 11:1-11) clearly shows that this is a statement made by Jehovah God.—See  App. C3 introduction; Mt 2:15.

fulfilled what was spoken by Jehovah through his prophet: See study note on Mt 1:22.

2:16 had all the boys . . . killed: Historians have recorded other similar acts of violence committed by Herod the Great. He murdered at least 45 supporters of

one rival. Suspicion led him to cause the murder of his wife Mariamne (I), three sons, his wife's brother, her grandfather (Hyrchanus), several who had been his best friends, and many others. To minimize the rejoicing that was sure to accompany his own death, he is said to have ordered that the principal men of the Jews be killed when he himself died. That edict was not carried out.

2:18 Ramah: A city in the territory of Benjamin, N of Jerusalem. It appears that when Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C.E., the Jews taken captive were assembled at Ramah before being moved to Babylon. Some scholars have concluded that such an assembling of Jews (perhaps accompanied by the slaughtering of some there) was referred to at Jer 31:15, quoted here.

Rachel: Mentioned as a symbol of all mothers in Israel. In Jeremiah's prophecy, Rachel, whose tomb was near Bethlehem, figuratively weeps over her sons taken into exile to the land of the enemy. Jeremiah's prophecy also contains the comforting promise of a return from enemy territory. (Jer 31:16) Matthew's inspired application of this prophecy has been understood to refer to a return from death, man's enemy, by means of a resurrection.

Return to Nazareth

19 When Herod had died, look! Jehovah’s angel appeared in a dream^a to Joseph in Egypt **20** and said: “Get up, take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the life of the young child are dead.” **21** So he got up and took the young child and the child’s mother and entered into the land of Israel. **22** But hearing that Archelaus ruled Ju-de’a instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Moreover, being given divine warning in a dream,^b he withdrew into the territory of Gal’i-lee.^c **23** And he came and settled in a city named Naz’a-reth,^d in order to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: “He will be called a Naz’a-rene’.”^e

John the Baptist Preaches

3 In those days John^f the Baptist came preaching^g in the wilderness of Ju-de’a, **2** saying: “Repent, for the Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.”^h **3** This, in fact, is the one spoken of through Isaiahⁱ the prophet^j in these words: “A voice of one calling out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of Jehovah!

CHAP. 2

a Mt 1:20
b Mt 2:12
c Mr 1:9
Lu 2:39
d Joh 1:45
e Isa 11:1
Isa 53:2
Jer 23:5
Zec 3:8

CHAP. 3

f Joh 1:6
g Mr 1:3, 4
Lu 3:3-6
h Mt 4:17
i Isa 1:1
j Mr 1:2
Joh 1:23

STUDY NOTES

2:19 Jehovah’s angel: See study note on Mt 1:20 and  App. C3 introduction; Mt 2:19.

2:20 life: This is the first occurrence of the Greek word *psy-khe’*, rendered “soul” in some Bible translations. Here it refers to a person’s life. The expression **seeking the life of** someone can also be rendered “seeking [wanting] to kill” someone.—Ex 4:19, ftn.; see  Glossary, “Soul.”

2:22 Archelaus: A cruel ruler who, like his father, Herod the Great, was unpopular with the Jews. In quelling a riot, he had 3,000 slain within the temple grounds. Joseph was warned by God about the danger when returning from Egypt, so he settled his family in Nazareth of Galilee, outside Archelaus’ jurisdiction.

2:23 Nazareth: Probably meaning “Sprout-Town.” Nazareth was the town in Lower Galilee where Jesus lived most of his earthly life.

spoken through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene”: Evidently referring to the book written by the prophet Isaiah (Isa 11:1), in which the promised Messiah is referred to as ‘a sprout [He-

brew, *ne’tser*] out of the roots of Jesse.’ Since Matthew speaks of “prophets” in plural, he may also have been referring to Jeremiah, who wrote about “a righteous sprout” as an offshoot of David (Jer 23:5; 33:15), and to Zechariah, who describes a king-priest “whose name is Sprout” (Zec 3:8; 6:12, 13). The term “Nazarene” became an epithet applied to Jesus and later to his followers.

See  Gallery, image 87, View of the Valley of Jezreel.

3:1 John: The English equivalent of the Hebrew name Jehohanan or Johanan, meaning “Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious.”

the Baptist: Or “the Immerser; the Dipper”; referred to as “the Baptizer” at Mr 1:4; 6:14, 24. Evidently used as a sort of surname, indicating that baptizing by immersing in water was distinctive of John. The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote of “John, surnamed the Baptist.”

preaching: The Greek word basically means “to make proclamation as a public messenger.” It stresses the *manner* of the proclamation: usually an open, public declaration rather than a sermon to a group.

wilderness of Judea: The generally uninhabited, barren eastern slope of the Judean mountains stretching down—a drop of some 1,200 m (3,900 ft)—toward the western bank of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. John begins his ministry in a section of this region N of the Dead Sea. See  Gallery, image 8, The Wilderness of Judea, West of the Jordan River.

See  Gallery, image 9, The Wilderness.

3:2 Repent: The Greek word used here could literally be rendered “to change one’s mind,” signifying a change in thinking, attitude, or purpose. In this context, “repent” refers to a person’s relationship with God.—See study notes on Mt 3:8, 11 and  Glossary, “Repentance.”

Kingdom: First occurrence of the Greek word *ba-si-lei’a*, which refers to a royal government as well as to the territory and peoples under the rule of a king. Of the 162 occurrences of this Greek word in the Christian Greek Scriptures, 55 can be found in Matthew’s account and most of them refer to God’s heavenly rule. Matthew uses the term so frequently that his Gospel might be called the Kingdom Gospel.—See  Glossary, “God’s Kingdom.”

CHAP. 3

- a Isa 40:3
 b 2Ki 1:8
 c Le 11:21, 22
 d Mr 1:6
 e Mr 1:5
 f Mr 1:9
 g Mt 9:14
 Mt 23:2
 Lu 7:30
 Lu 11:42
 h Mr 12:18
 Acts 5:17
 i Mt 12:34
 j Mt 23:33
 Lu 3:7-9
 Lu 21:23
 k Joh 8:33, 39
 l Mt 7:19
 Lu 13:6-9
 Joh 15:6
 m Ac 19:4
 n Mt 11:2, 3

Make his roads straight.’”^a **4** Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and had a leather belt around his waist.^b His food was locusts^c and wild honey.^d **5** Then the people of Jerusalem and all Ju-de’a and all the country around the Jordan were going out to him,^e **6** and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River,^f openly confessing their sins.

7 When he caught sight of many of the Pharisees^g and Sadducees^h coming to the baptism, he said to them: “You offspring of vipers,ⁱ who has warned you to flee from the coming wrath?”

8 Therefore, produce fruit that befits repentance. **9** Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’^k For I say to you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. **10** The ax is already lying at the root of the trees. Every tree, then, that does not produce fine fruit is to be cut down and thrown into the fire.^l **11** I, for my part, baptize you with water because of your repentance,^m but the one coming after meⁿ is stronger than I am, whose sandals

STUDY NOTES

3:2 Kingdom of the heavens: This expression occurs some 30 times and only in the Gospel of Matthew. In the Gospels of Mark and Luke, the parallel phrase “the Kingdom of God” is used, indicating that “the Kingdom of God” is based in and rules from the spiritual heavens.—Mt 21:43; Mr 1:15; Lu 4:43; Da 2:44; 2Ti 4:18.

has drawn near: Here in the sense that the future Ruler of the heavenly Kingdom was about to appear.

3:3 Jehovah: In this quote from Isa 40:3, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text. (See  App. C.) Matthew applies this prophecy to what John the Baptist did in preparing the way for Jesus. In John’s Gospel, John the Baptist applies this prophecy to himself.—Joh 1:23.

Make his roads straight: May allude to the custom of ancient rulers to have men prepare the way before the royal chariot by removing large stones and even building causeways and leveling hills.

3:4 clothed with camel’s hair: John’s garment of woven camel’s hair and his **leather belt** are reminiscent of the dress of the prophet Elijah.—2Ki 1:8; Joh 1:21.

locusts: Rich in protein, these insects are designated by the Law as clean for food.—Le 11:21, 22.

wild honey: That is, honey from natural beehives found in the wilderness, not from beehives kept by people. Eating locusts and wild honey was not unusual for people living in the wilderness.

See  Gallery, image 10, John the Baptist’s Clothing and Appearance.

See  Gallery, image 11, Locusts.

See  Gallery, image 12, Wild Honey.

3:6 baptized: Or “immersed; dipped.”—See study note on Mt 3:11.

openly confessing their sins: Refers to people who admitted publicly or acknowledged openly their sins against the Law covenant.

3:7 Pharisees: See  Glossary.

Sadducees: See  Glossary.

You offspring of vipers: So called because their wickedness and deadly spiritual harm was like poison to unsuspecting people.

See  Gallery, image 13, Garments Worn by a Pharisee in Jesus’ Day.

See  Gallery, image 14, Horned Viper.

3:8 fruit that befits repentance: Refers to evidence and actions that would indicate a change of mind or attitude on the part of those listening to John.—Lu 3:8; Ac 26:20; see study notes on Mt 3:2, 11 and  Glossary, “Repentance.”

3:11 baptize you: Or “immerse you.” The Greek word *ba-pti’zo* means “to dip; to plunge.” Other Biblical references indicate that baptism involves complete immersion. On one occasion, John was baptizing at a location in the Jordan Valley near Salim “because there was a great quantity of water there.” (Joh 3:23) When Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch, they both “went down into the water.” (Ac 8:38) The same Greek word is used in the *Septuagint* at 2Ki 5:14 when describing that Naaman “plunged into the Jordan seven times.”

repentance: Lit., “change of mind.”—See study notes on Mt 3:2, 8 and  Glossary.

stronger: Signifies having “more authority.”

sandals: To remove and carry another’s sandals or to untie another’s sandal laces (Mr 1:7; Lu 3:16; Joh 1:27) was considered a menial task that was often done by a slave.

I am not worthy to take off.^a That one will baptize you with holy spirit^b and with fire.^c **12** His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will clean up his threshing floor completely and will gather his wheat into the storehouse, but the chaff he will burn up with fire^d that cannot be put out.”

Baptism of Jesus

13 Then Jesus came from Gal'i-lee to the Jordan to John, in order to be baptized by him.^e **14** But the latter tried to prevent him, saying: “I am the one who needs to be baptized by you, and are you coming to me?” **15** Jesus replied to him: “Let it be this time, for in that way it is suitable for us to carry out all that is righteous.” Then he quit preventing him. **16** After being baptized, Jesus immediately came up from the water; and look! the heavens were opened up,^f and he saw God's spirit descending like a dove and coming upon him.^g **17** Look! Also, a voice from the heavens^h said: “This is my Son,ⁱ the beloved, whom I have approved.”^j

CHAP. 3

- a Joh 1:15, 27
- b Mr 1:7, 8
Joh 1:33
Ac 1:4, 5
Ac 2:1, 4
1Co 12:13
- c Lu 3:16, 17
- d Mal 4:1
- e Mr 1:9
- f Lu 3:21
- g Isa 11:2
Mr 1:10, 11
Lu 4:18
Joh 1:32
- h Joh 12:28
- i Ps 2:7
Lu 9:35
- j Isa 42:1
Mt 12:18
Mt 17:5
Lu 3:22
2Pe 1:17, 18

STUDY NOTES

3:11 baptize . . . with holy spirit and with fire: Refers to anointing with holy spirit and destroying by fire. The baptism with holy spirit began at Pentecost 33 C.E. The baptism with fire occurred in 70 C.E. when the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem and burned its temple.

See  Gallery, image 15, Sandals.

3:12 winnowing shovel: Probably made of wood and used for tossing threshed grain into the air so that the wind would blow the straw and chaff away.

chaff: The thin protective covering or husk on the kernels of cereal grains, such as barley and wheat. The chaff was often gathered and burned to prevent it from blowing into the piles of grain and contaminating them. John uses the winnowing process to illustrate how the Messiah would separate symbolic wheat from chaff.

fire that cannot be put out: Indicates that the complete end of the Jewish system of things was due.

See  Gallery, image 16, Winnowing Grain.

See  Gallery, image 17, Threshing Tools.

3:13 See  Gallery, image 18, The Jordan River.

3:15 to carry out all that is righteous: Jesus was not baptized in symbol of repentance, for he was sinless and had kept God's righteous laws faultlessly; nor did his baptism symbolize dedication, for he was already a member of a dedicated nation. His baptism was a symbol of his presenting himself to do Jehovah's righteous will in connection with his role as the Messiah, including offering himself as a ransom. Jesus acted in harmony with the prophecy concerning him at Ps 40:7, 8 and explained at Heb 10:5-9.

3:16, 17 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

3:16 the heavens: Can refer to the physical heavens, that is, the sky, or to the spiritual heavens.

the heavens were opened up: God evidently caused Jesus to perceive and understand heavenly matters, which may well have included the memory of his pre-human life in heaven.

like a dove: Doves had both a sacred use and a symbolic meaning. They were offered as sacrifices. (Mr 11:15; Joh 2:14-

16) They symbolized innocence and purity. (Mt 10:16) A dove released by Noah brought an olive leaf back to the ark, indicating that the floodwaters were receding (Ge 8:11) and that a time of rest and peace was at hand (Ge 5:29). Thus, at Jesus' baptism, Jehovah may have used the dove to call attention to the role of Jesus as the Messiah, the pure and sinless Son of God who would sacrifice his life for mankind and lay the basis for a period of rest and peace during his rule as King. As **God's spirit**, or active force, descended upon Jesus at his baptism, it may have looked like the fluttering of a dove as it nears its perch.

3:17 a voice from the heavens: The first of three instances in the Gospel accounts where Jehovah is reported as speaking audibly to humans.—See study notes on Mt 17:5; Joh 12:28.

This is my Son: As a spirit creature, Jesus was God's Son. (Joh 3:16) From the time of his birth as a human, Jesus was a “son of God,” just as perfect Adam had been. (Lu 1:35; 3:38) However, it seems reasonable that God's words here go beyond a mere statement of Jesus' identity. By this declaration accompanied by the

CHAP. 4

Jesus Rejects the Devil's Temptations

- a Heb 4:15
 b Mr 1:12, 13
 Lu 4:1-4
 Joh 8:44
 Heb 2:14
 Jude 9
 c 1Th 3:5
 d De 8:3
 Isa 55:1, 2
 Lu 4:4
 Joh 4:34
 e Ne 11:1
 Isa 52:1
 f Lu 4:9-12
 g Ps 91:11, 12
 h De 6:16
 Lu 4:12
 1Co 10:9
 i Lu 4:5-8

4 Then Jesus was led by the spirit up into the wilderness to be tempted^a by the Devil.^b **2** After he had fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, he felt hungry. **3** And the Tempter^c approached and said to him: “If you are a son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.” **4** But he answered: “It is written: ‘Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every word that comes from Jehovah’s mouth.’”^d

5 Then the Devil took him along into the holy city,^e and he stationed him on the battlement of the temple^f **6** and said to him: “If you are a son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written: ‘He will give his angels a command concerning you,’ and, ‘They will carry you on their hands, so that you may not strike your foot against a stone.’”^g **7** Jesus said to him: “Again it is written: ‘You must not put Jehovah your God to the test.’”^h

8 Again the Devil took him along to an unusually high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.ⁱ **9** And he said to him: “All these things I will give you if you fall down and do an act of worship to me.” **10** Then Jesus

STUDY NOTES

outpouring of holy spirit, God evidently indicated that the man Jesus was His spirit-begotten Son, “born again” with the hope of returning to life in heaven and anointed by spirit to be God’s appointed King and High Priest.—Joh 3:3-6; 6:51; compare Lu 1:31-33; Heb 2:17; 5:1, 4-10; 7:1-3.

whom I have approved: Or “with whom I am well-pleased; in whom I take great delight.” The same expression is used at Mt 12:18, which is a quotation from Isa 42:1 regarding the promised Messiah, or Christ. The outpouring of holy spirit and God’s declaration concerning his Son were a clear identification of Jesus as the promised Messiah.—See study note on Mt 12:18.

4:1 led by the spirit: Or “led by the active force.” The Greek word *pneuma* here refers to God’s spirit, which can act as a driving force, moving a person to do things in accord with God’s will.—See  Glossary, “Spirit.”

Devil: From the Greek word *di-a’bo-los*, meaning “slanderer.” (Joh 6:70; 2Ti 3:3)

The related verb *di-a-bal’lo* means “to accuse; bring charges against” and is rendered “was accused” at Lu 16:1.

See  Gallery, image 8, The Wilderness of Judea, West of the Jordan River.

See  Gallery, image 9, The Wilderness.

4:4 It is written: Jesus uses this expression three times when quoting from the Hebrew Scriptures in response to the Devil’s temptations.—Mt 4:7, 10.

Jehovah’s: In this quote from De 8:3, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

4:5 holy city: Refers to Jerusalem, which is often called holy because it was the location of Jehovah’s temple.—Ne 11:1; Isa 52:1.

battlement of the temple: Or “highest point of the temple.” Lit., “wing of the temple.” The Greek word for “temple” can refer to the temple sanctuary or to the entire temple complex. Therefore, the expression could refer to the top of the wall surrounding the temple complex.

See  Gallery, image 19, Battlement of the Temple.

4:7 Jehovah: In this quote from De 6:16, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

4:8 showed him: The ruler of the demons apparently caused Jesus to see a vision that appeared to be real.

kingdoms: Refers in a general sense to any or all human governments.

world: Renders the Greek word *ko’smos*, here referring to unrighteous human society.

4:9 do an act of worship: The Greek verb that can be rendered “to worship” is here in the aorist tense, which indicates a momentary action. Rendering it “do an act of worship” shows that the Devil did not ask Jesus to do constant or continuous worship to him; it was a single “act of worship.”

said to him: “Go away, Satan! For it is written: ‘It is Jehovah your God you must worship,^a and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.’”^b **11** Then the Devil left him,^c and look! angels came and began to minister to him.^d

CHAP. 4

- a Re 22:9
- b De 5:9
De 6:13
De 10:20
Lu 4:8
- c Lu 4:13
Jas 4:7
- d Lu 22:43
Joh 1:51
Heb 1:7, 14
- e Mr 6:17, 18
Lu 3:19, 20
- f Mr 1:14
Lu 4:14
Joh 4:1, 3
- g Lu 4:31
- h Joh 1:9
- i Isa 9:1, 2
- j Mt 3:1, 2
Mt 10:5-7
Mr 1:14, 15
Lu 4:14

Jesus Begins Preaching

12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested,^e he withdrew into Gal'i-lee.^f **13** Further, after leaving Naz'a-reth, he came and took up residence in Ca-per'na-um^g beside the sea in the districts of Zeb'u-lun and Naph'ta-li, **14** so as to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, who said: **15** “O land of Zeb'u-lun and land of Naph'ta-li, along the road of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Gal'i-lee of the nations! **16** The people sitting in darkness saw a great light, and as for those sitting in a region of deathly shadow, light^h rose on them.”ⁱ **17** From that time on, Jesus began preaching and saying: “Re-pent, for the Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.”^j

STUDY NOTES

4:10 Satan: From the Hebrew word *sa-tan'*, meaning “resister; adversary.”

Jehovah: In this quote from De 6:13, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See App. C.

and it is to him alone you must render sacred service: Or “and you must serve only him.” The Greek verb *la-treu'o* basically means serving, but since it is used in the Christian Greek Scriptures in reference to serving or worshipping God, it can appropriately be translated “to render sacred service; to serve; to worship.” (Lu 1:74; 2:37; 4:8; Ac 7:7; Ro 1:9; Php 3:3; 2Ti 1:3; Heb 9:14; 12:28; Re 7:15; 22:3) At De 6:13, the verse Jesus quoted, the Hebrew word rendered “serve” is *'a-vadh'*. It also means “to serve” but may likewise be rendered “to worship.” (Ex 3:12; ftn.; 2Sa 15:8, ftn.) Jesus was determined to render Jehovah exclusive devotion.

4:11 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

4:12 Now when he heard: Between verse 11 and this verse, about a year has elapsed, and the events of Joh 1:29 through 4:3 take place during that interval. John’s account also adds the detail

that when Jesus traveled from Judea into Galilee, he went via Samaria, where he met a Samaritan woman at a well near Sychar.—Joh 4:4-43; see App. A7, chart “The Beginning of Jesus’ Ministry,” and Map 2.

See Gallery, image 20, North Shore of the Sea of Galilee, Looking Northwest.

4:13 Capernaum: From a Hebrew name meaning “Village of Nahum” or “Village of Comforting.” (Na 1:1, ftn.) A city of major importance in Jesus’ earthly ministry, it was located at the NW shore of the Sea of Galilee and was called “his own city” at Mt 9:1.

the districts of Zebulun and Naphtali: Refers to regions W and N of the Sea of Galilee in the northern extremity of Israel and includes the district of Galilee. (Jos 19:10-16, 32-39) Naphtali’s territory bordered the entire western shore of the Sea of Galilee.

4:14 to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: See study note on Mt 1:22.

4:15 the road of the sea: Possibly referring to an ancient road that ran along the Sea of Galilee and led to the Mediterranean Sea.

on the other side of the Jordan: In this context, evidently referring to the W side of the Jordan River.

Galilee of the nations: Isaiah may have used this description because Galilee formed the frontier between Israel and surrounding nations. The location of Galilee and the roads that ran through it resulted in greater interaction with those nations, making it susceptible to invasion and settlement by non-Israelites. By the first century, many non-Jews lived here, making the description even more fitting.

4:16 a great light: In fulfillment of Isaiah’s Messianic prophecy, Jesus performed much of his public ministry in Galilee, in the districts of Zebulun and Naphtali. (Mt 4:13, 15) Thus, Jesus brought spiritual enlightenment to those who were thought to be in spiritual darkness and who were held in contempt even by their fellow Jews in Judea.—Joh 7:52.

deathly shadow: Or “shadow of death.” Evidently, the term conveys the idea that death figuratively casts its shadow over people as it approaches them. Jesus, however, brought enlightenment that could remove the shadow and rescue people from death.

CHAP. 4

- a Mt 16:16, 17
Ac 15:14
- b Joh 1:42
- c Joh 1:35,
40, 44
- d Mr 1:16-18
- e Lu 5:10, 11
- f Mr 10:28
Lu 18:28
- g Mt 10:2
Mt 27:55, 56
Mr 3:17
Mr 10:35
Joh 21:2
- h Mr 1:19, 20

First Disciples Called

18 Walking alongside the Sea of Gal'i-lee, he saw two brothers, Simon,^a who is called Peter,^b and Andrew^c his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.^d **19** And he said to them: "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."^e **20** At once they abandoned their nets and followed him.^f **21** Going on from there, he saw two others who were brothers, James the son of Zeb'e-dee and his brother John.^g They were in the boat with Zeb'e-dee their father, mending their nets, and he called them.^h **22** At once they left the boat and their father and followed him.

FOOTNOTES

4:19 *Or "people."

STUDY NOTES

4:17 preaching: That is, publicly proclaiming.—See study note on Mt 3:1.

the Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near:

This message of a new world government was the theme of Jesus' preaching. (Mt 10:7; Mr 1:15) John the Baptist started to proclaim a similar message about six months prior to Jesus' baptism (Mt 3:1, 2); yet Jesus could say with added meaning that the Kingdom had "drawn near," since he was now present as the anointed King-Designate. There is no record that after Jesus' death his disciples continued to proclaim that the Kingdom had "drawn near" or was at hand.

4:18 the Sea of Galilee: A freshwater inland lake in northern Israel. (The Greek word translated "sea" may also mean "lake.") It has been called the Sea of Chinnereth (Nu 34:11), the lake of Genesaret (Lu 5:1), and the Sea of Tiberias (Joh 6:1). It lies an average of 210 m (700 ft) below sea level. It is 21 km (13 mi) long from N to S and 12 km (8 mi) wide, and its greatest depth is about 48 m (160 ft).—See  App. A7, Map 3B, "Activity at the Sea of Galilee."

Simon, who is called Peter: Simon was his personal name; Peter (*Pe'tros*) is the Greek form of the Semitic name Cephas (*Ke-phas'*), which Jesus gave him.—Mr 3:16; Joh 1:42; see study note on Mt 10:2.

casting a net: An able fisherman, wading or in a small boat, could toss a circular net in such a way that it would land flat on the water's surface. The net, perhaps 6-8 m (20-25 ft) in diameter, was weighted around its perimeter so that it would sink and trap the fish.

fishermen: Fishing was a common occupation in Galilee. Peter and his brother Andrew were not lone fishermen but were engaged in a fishing business, evidently associated with James and John, the sons of Zebedee.—Mr 1:16-21; Lu 5:7, 10.

See  Gallery, image 21, Casting a Net.

See  Gallery, image 22, Fish of the Sea of Galilee.

4:19 fishers of men: A play on words based on the occupation of Simon and Andrew. It indicates that they would be "catching people alive" for the Kingdom. (Lu 5:10, ftn.) The implication may also be that, like fishing, disciple-making would be strenuous, labor-intensive work that required perseverance but sometimes produced few results.

4:20 followed him: Peter and Andrew had already been Jesus' disciples for some six months to a year. (Joh 1:35-42) Now Jesus invites them to leave their fishing business and follow him full-time.—Lu 5:1-11; see study note on Mt 4:22.

4:21 James . . . and his brother

John: James is always mentioned along with his brother John, and in the majority of instances, he is mentioned first. This may indicate that he was the older of the two.—Mt 4:21; 10:2; 17:1; Mr 1:29; 3:17; 5:

37; 9:2; 10:35, 41; 13:3; 14:33; Lu 5:10; 6:14; 8:51; 9:28, 54; Ac 1:13.

Zebedee: Possibly Jesus' uncle by marriage to Salome, the sister of Jesus' mother, Mary. If so, John and James were Jesus' cousins.—See study note on Mr 15:40.

See  Gallery, image 23, Mending a Fishing Net.

See  Gallery, image 24, First-Century Fishing Boat.

See  Gallery, image 25, Remains of a Galilean Fishing Boat.

4:22 At once they left: The Greek word *eu-the'os*, rendered "at once," occurs both here and in verse 20. Like Peter and Andrew, James and John quickly respond to Jesus' invitation to follow him full-time.

Jesus Preaches, Teaches, and Heals

23 Then he went throughout the whole of Gal'i-lee,^a teaching in their synagogues^b and preaching the good news of the Kingdom and curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity among the people.^c **24** And the report about him spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all those who were suffering with various diseases and torments,^d those who were demon-possessed^e and epileptic^f and paralyzed, and he cured them. **25** Consequently, large crowds followed him from Gal'i-lee and De-cap'o-lis and Jerusalem and Ju-de'a and from the other side of the Jordan.

CHAP. 4

- a Mt 9:35
Mr 1:39
Mr 6:6
- b Lu 4:16
Ac 13:13, 14
- c Lu 9:11
Ac 10:37, 38
- d Mr 6:55
- e Mr 1:32
Ac 5:16
- f Mt 17:15

Jesus Begins Teaching on the Mountain

5 When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. **2** Then he opened his mouth and began teaching them, saying:

STUDY NOTES

4:23 went throughout the whole of Galilee: This marks the beginning of Jesus' first preaching tour of Galilee with his four recently selected disciples—Peter, Andrew, James, and John.—Mt 4:18-22; see  App. A7.

synagogues: See  Glossary, “Synagogue.”

teaching . . . preaching: Teaching differs from preaching in that the teacher does more than proclaim; he instructs, explains, uses persuasive arguments, and offers proof.—See study notes on Mt 3:1; 28:20.

the good news: First occurrence of the Greek word *eu-ag-ge'li-on*, rendered “gospel” in some English Bibles. A related Greek expression *eu-ag-ge-li-stes'*, rendered “evangelizer,” means “a proclaimer of good news.”—Ac 21:8; Eph 4:11, fn.; 2Ti 4:5, fn.

See  Gallery, image 26, First-Century Synagogue.

4:24 Syria: That is, the Roman province of Syria, a Gentile region N of Galilee, between Damascus and the Mediterranean Sea.

epileptic: The Greek term literally means “be moonstruck.” (Some older translations use “lunatic.”) However, Matthew

employs the term in a medical sense, not superstitiously associating the disease with certain phases of the moon. The symptoms that Matthew, Mark, and Luke describe are certainly those associated with epilepsy.

4:25 Decapolis: See  Glossary and  App. B10.

the other side of the Jordan: In this context, evidently referring to the region E of the Jordan River, also known as Perea (from the Greek word *pe'ran*, meaning “the other side; beyond”).

5:1 on the mountain: Evidently close to Capernaum and the Sea of Galilee. Jesus apparently climbed to a higher spot on the mountain, where he began teaching the crowds spread out on a level place before him.—Lu 6:17, 20.

he sat down: The custom among Jewish teachers, especially for formal teaching sessions.

his disciples: The first occurrence of the Greek word *ma-the'tes'*, a noun rendered “disciple.” It refers to a learner, or one who is taught, and implies a personal attachment to a teacher, an attachment that shapes the disciple's whole life. Although large crowds were gathered to listen to Jesus, it seems that he spoke mainly for the benefit of his disciples, who sat closest to him.—Mt 7:28, 29; Lu 6:20.

See  Gallery, image 20, North Shore of the Sea of Galilee, Looking Northwest.

5:2 he opened his mouth: A Semitic idiom meaning that he began his speech. (Job 33:2; Da 10:16) At Ac 8:35 and 10:34, the same Greek expression is rendered “began to speak.”

5:3 Happy: The Greek word *ma-ka'ri-os* used here does not simply refer to a state of lightheartedness, as when a person is enjoying a good time. Rather, when used of humans, it refers to the condition of one who is blessed by God and enjoys his favor. The term is also used as a description of God and of Jesus in his heavenly glory.—1Ti 1:11; 6:15.

those conscious of their spiritual need: The Greek expression rendered “those conscious,” literally, “those who are poor (needy; destitute; beggars),” in this context is used about those who have a need and are intensely aware of it. The same word is used in reference to the “beggar” Lazarus at Lu 16:20, 22. The Greek phrase that some translations render those who are “poor in spirit” conveys the idea of people who are painfully aware of their spiritual poverty and of their need for God.—See study note on Lu 6:20.

them: Refers to Jesus' followers, since Jesus was primarily addressing them.—Mt 5:1, 2.

CHAP. 5

Nine Happinesses

- a Lu 6:20
 b Isa 61:2,3
 Mt 11:28
 c 1Ti 6:11
 Tit 3:2
 d Ps 37:11
 e Isa 55:1
 Lu 6:21
 f Joh 6:35
 Re 7:16, 17
 g Mt 6:14
 Mt 9:13
 Mt 12:7
 Mt 18:33
 Mt 23:23
 Lu 10:29-37
 Jas 2:13

3 “Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need,^a since the Kingdom of the heavens belongs to them.

4 “Happy are those who mourn, since they will be comforted.^b

5 “Happy are the mild-tempered,^c since they will inherit the earth.^d

6 “Happy are those hungering and thirsting^e for righteousness, since they will be filled.^{*f}

7 “Happy are the merciful,^g since they will be shown mercy.

8 “Happy are the pure in heart,^h since they will see God.ⁱ

h Ps 24:3, 4; Ps 73:1; i Pr 22:11.

FOOTNOTES

5:6 *Or “satisfied.”

STUDY NOTES

5:4 those who mourn: The Greek term rendered “mourn” (*pen-the’o*) may refer to a deep mourning in a general sense or to a feeling of being crushed because of sins. In this context, “those who mourn” are the same kind of people as “those conscious of their spiritual need,” mentioned at Mt 5:3. They may mourn because of their poor spiritual state, their sinful condition, or the distressing circumstances that have resulted from human sinfulness. Paul used this word when censuring the Corinthian congregation for failing to mourn because of the gross immorality that had taken place among them. (1Co 5:2) At 2Co 12:21, Paul expresses fear that he might “have to mourn over” those in the congregation in Corinth who sin and do not repent. The disciple James urged certain ones: “Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you indecisive ones. Give way to misery and *mourn* and weep.” (Jas 4:8-10) Those who are truly saddened over their sinful state are **comforted** when they learn that their sins can be forgiven if they exercise faith in Christ’s ransom sacrifice and show true repentance by doing Jehovah’s will.—Joh 3:16; 2Co 7:9, 10.

5:5 mild-tempered: The inward quality of those who willingly submit to God’s will and guidance and who do not try to dom-

inate others. The Greek term does not imply cowardice or weakness. In the *Septuagint*, the word was used as an equivalent for a Hebrew word that can be translated “meek” or “humble.” It was used with reference to Moses (Nu 12:3), those who are teachable (Ps 25:9), those who will possess the earth (Ps 37:11), and the Messiah (Zec 9:9; Mt 21:5). Jesus described himself as a mild-tempered, or meek, person.—Mt 11:29.

inherit the earth: Jesus is likely referring to Ps 37:11, where “the meek” are said to “possess the earth.” Both the Hebrew (*‘e’rets*) and the Greek (*ge*) words for “earth” can refer to the entire planet or to a specific land area, such as the Promised Land. The Scriptures indicate that Jesus is the foremost example of one who is mild-tempered. (Mt 11:29) Various Bible verses show that as King he would inherit authority over the entire earth, not just a portion of it (Ps 2:8; Re 11:15), and his anointed followers would share in this inheritance (Re 5:10). In another sense, those of his mild-tempered disciples who would be his earthly subjects would “inherit,” not the ownership of the earth, but the privilege of enjoying life in Paradise, the earthly realm of the Kingdom.—See study note on Mt 25:34.

5:6 those hungering and thirsting for righteousness: That is, those who long to see corruption and injustice replaced with God’s standards of right and wrong; they strive to conform to those standards.

5:7 merciful: The use of the Bible terms rendered “merciful” and “mercy” is not

limited to forgiveness or leniency in judgment. It most often describes the feelings of compassion and pity that move a person to take the initiative to assist those in need.

5:8 pure in heart: Inwardly clean, referring to moral and spiritual cleanness, including one’s affections, desires, and motives.

see God: Not necessarily to be understood literally, since “no man can see [God] and live.” (Ex 33:20) The Greek word used here for “see” can also mean “see with the mind, perceive, know.” Jehovah’s worshippers on earth thus “see God” by gaining insight into his personality through faith-building study of his Word and by observing his actions in their behalf. (Eph 1:18; Heb 11:27) When resurrected to spirit life, anointed Christians will actually see Jehovah “just as he is.” —1Jo 3:2.

9 “Happy are the peacemakers,^a since they will be called sons of God.

10 “Happy are those who have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake,^b since the Kingdom of the heavens belongs to them.^c

11 “Happy are you when people reproach* you^d and persecute you^e and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake.^f **12** Rejoice and be overjoyed,^g since your reward^h is great in the heavens, for in that way they persecuted the prophets prior to you.ⁱ

Salt and Light

13 “You are the salt^j of the earth, but if the salt loses its strength, how will its saltiness be restored? It is no longer usable for anything except to be thrown outside^k to be trampled on by men.

14 “You are the light of the world.^l A city cannot be hid when located on a mountain. **15** People light a lamp and set it, not under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it shines on all those in the house.^m **16** Likewise, let your light shine before men,ⁿ so that they may see your fine works^o and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens.^p

^p Joh 15:8; 1Pe 2:9, 12.

CHAP. 5

- a Ro 12:18
1Th 5:13
Heb 12:14
2 Pe 3:14
Jas 3:18
- b Mr 10:29, 30
2Ti 3:12
1Pe 2:19
1Pe 3:14
- c Heb 12:2
- d Mt 10:22
- e Joh 15:20
- f Lu 6:22, 23
Jas 1:2
1Pe 4:14
- g Ac 5:41
Ro 5:3
- h Heb 11:6
- i 2Ch 36:16
Ac 7:52
Heb 11:32, 37
Jas 5:10
- j Mr 9:50
- k Lu 14:34, 35
- l Joh 8:12
Joh 12:36
Php 2:15
- m Mr 4:21
Lu 8:16
Lu 11:33
- n Eph 5:8
Php 2:15
- o Eph 5:9

FOOTNOTES
5:11 *Or “insult.”

STUDY NOTES

5:9 peacemakers: Or “peaceable.” The Greek word *ei-re-no-poi-os*, derived from a verb meaning “to make peace,” refers to those who not only maintain peace but also bring peace to where it is lacking.

5:13 salt: A mineral used for preserving and flavoring food. In this context, Jesus likely focused on the preserving quality of salt; his disciples could help others to avoid spiritual and moral decay.

loses its strength: In Jesus’ day, salt was often obtained from the Dead Sea area and was contaminated by other minerals. If the salty portion was removed from this mixture, only a tasteless, useless residue remained.

See  Gallery, image 27, Salt on the Shore of the Dead Sea.

5:14 A city . . . located on a mountain: Jesus did not specify a particular city. In his day, many cities were located on mountains, often to make them less vulnerable to attack. Such cities were surrounded by large walls, making them visible for miles and impossible to hide. This would have been true even of small villages with their typically whitewashed houses.

5:15 a lamp: In Bible times, a common household lamp was a small earthenware vessel filled with olive oil.

a basket: Used for measuring dry commodities, such as grain. The type of “basket” (Greek, *mo’di-os*) mentioned here had a capacity of about 9 L (or 8 dry qt).

See  Gallery, image 28, First-Century Oil Lamp.

See  Gallery, image 29, Domestic Lampstand.

5:16 Father: The first of over 160 occurrences in the Gospels in which Jesus refers to Jehovah God as “Father.” Jesus’ use of the term shows that his listeners already understood its meaning in relation to God by its usage in the Hebrew Scriptures. (De 32:6; Ps 89:26; Isa 63:16) Earlier servants of God used many lofty titles to describe and address Jehovah, including the “Almighty,” “the Most High,” and the “Grand Creator,” but Jesus’ frequent use of the simple, common term “Father” highlights God’s intimacy with his worshippers.—Ge 17:1; De 32:8; Ec 12:1.

5:17 the Law . . . the Prophets: “The Law” refers to the Bible books of Genesis through Deuteronomy. “The Prophets” refers to the prophetic books of the Hebrew Scriptures. However, when these terms

CHAP. 5

Jesus to Fulfill the Law

- a Lu 4:21
 b Isa 40:8
 Isa 55:10,11
 Lu 16:17
 c Mt 15:7-9
 Mt 23:23
 Lu 11:42
 d Mt 18:3
 Joh 3:5
 e Ge 9:6
 Ex 20:13
 De 5:17
 f Le 24:17
 De 16:18
 De 17:8,9
 g Col 3:8
 Jas 1:19

17 “Do not think I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I came, not to destroy, but to fulfill.^a **18** Truly I say to you that sooner would heaven and earth pass away than for one smallest letter or one stroke of a letter to pass away from the Law until all things take place.^b **19** Whoever, therefore, breaks one of these least commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in relation to the Kingdom of the heavens. But whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in relation to the Kingdom of the heavens. **20** For I say to you that if your righteousness does not surpass that of the scribes and the Pharisees,^c you will by no means enter into the Kingdom of the heavens.^d

Counsel on Anger and on Settling Personal Conflicts

21 “You heard that it was said to those of ancient times: ‘You must not murder,^e but whoever commits a murder will be accountable to the court of justice.’^f **22** However, I say to you that everyone who continues wrathful^g with his brother will be accountable to the court of justice; and whoever addresses his brother with an unspeakable word of contempt will be

STUDY NOTES

are mentioned together, the expression could be understood to include the entire Hebrew Scriptures.—Mt 7:12; 22:40; Lu 16:16.

5:18 Truly: Greek, *a-men'*, a transliteration of the Hebrew *'a-men'*, meaning “so be it,” or “surely.” Jesus frequently uses this expression to preface a statement, a promise, or a prophecy, thereby emphasizing its absolute truthfulness and reliability. Jesus’ use of “truly,” or *amen*, in this way is said to be unique in sacred literature. When repeated in succession (*a-men' a-men'*), as is the case throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus’ expression is translated “most truly.”—See study note on Joh 1:51.

sooner would heaven and earth pass away: Hyperbole that is equivalent to “never.” The Scriptures indicate that the literal heavens and earth will remain forever.—Ps 78:69; 119:90.

smallest letter: In the Hebrew alphabet current at that time, the smallest letter was *yod* (י).

one stroke of a letter: Certain Hebrew characters featured a tiny stroke that differentiated one letter from another. Jesus’ hyperbole thus emphasized that God’s Word would be fulfilled down to the smallest detail.

5:21 You heard that it was said: This phrase can refer both to things stated in the inspired Hebrew Scriptures and to teachings of Jewish tradition.—Mt 5:27, 33, 38, 43.

accountable to the court of justice: Subject to trial in one of the local courts located throughout Israel. (Mt 10:17; Mr 13:9) These local courts had the authority to judge murder cases.—De 16:18; 19:12; 21:1, 2.

5:22 continues wrathful: Jesus associates such a wrong attitude with hatred that can lead to actual murder. (1Jo 3:15)

Ultimately, God may judge the person as being a murderer.

an unspeakable word of contempt: This expression renders the Greek word *rha-ka'* (possibly derived from Hebrew or Aramaic), meaning “empty” or “empty-headed.” Someone addressing a fellow worshipper with such a derogatory term would not only be nurturing hatred in his heart but also be giving vent to it by contemptible speech.

accountable to the Supreme Court; whereas whoever says, ‘You despicable fool!’ will be liable to the fiery Ge-hen’na.^a

23 “If, then, you are bringing your gift to the altar^b and there you remember that your brother has something against you, **24** leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go away. First make your peace with your brother, and then come back and offer your gift.^c

25 “Be quick to settle matters with your legal opponent, while you are with him on the way there, so that somehow the opponent may not turn you over to the judge, and the judge to the court attendant, and you get thrown into prison.^d **26** I say to you for a fact, you will certainly not come out of there until you have paid over your last small coin.

CHAP. 5

a 2Ki 23:10
Jer 7:31

Mt 10:28
Lu 12:5
1Jo 3:15

b De 16:16
c Mt 6:12-15

1Jo 4:20
d Lu 12:58, 59

e Ge 39:7-9
Ex 20:14

De 5:18
Lu 18:20

Ro 13:9
1Co 6:9, 10

Heb 13:4
f 2Sa 11:2

Job 31:1

Counsel on Adultery and Divorce

27 “You heard that it was said: ‘You must not commit adultery.’^e **28** But I say to you that everyone who keeps on looking at a woman^f so as to have a passion for her has already com-

STUDY NOTES

5:22 the Supreme Court: The full Sanhedrin—the judicial body in Jerusalem made up of the high priest and 70 elders and scribes. The Jews considered its rulings to be final.—See  Glossary, “Sanhedrin.”

You despicable fool: The Greek word for this expression sounded like a Hebrew term meaning “rebellious” or “mutinous.” It designates a person as morally worthless and an apostate. To address a fellow man in this way was tantamount to saying that he should receive a punishment fit for a rebel against God, that is, everlasting destruction.

Gehenna: This term comes from the Hebrew words *geh hin-nom’*, meaning “valley of Hinnom,” which lay to the S and SW of ancient Jerusalem. (See  App. B12, map “Jerusalem and Surrounding Area.”) By Jesus’ day, the valley had become a place for burning refuse, so the word “Gehenna” was a fitting symbol of complete destruction.—See  Glossary.

See  Gallery, image 30, The Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna).

See  Gallery, image 31, Modern-Day Valley of Hinnom.

5:23 your gift to the altar: Jesus did not limit his comments to particular offerings or specific transgressions. The gift could include any sacrificial offering presented at Jehovah’s temple in fulfillment of the Mosaic Law. The altar refers to the altar of burnt offering in the priests’ courtyard of the temple. Ordinary Israelites were not allowed to enter this courtyard; instead, they handed over their gifts to the priest at the entrance to it.

your brother: In some contexts, the Greek word *a-del-phos’* (brother) may refer to a family relationship. Here, though, it refers to a spiritual relationship and denotes a fellow worshipper of God, since the context refers to worship at Jehovah’s temple in Jesus’ day. In still other contexts, the term could refer more generally to one’s fellow man.

5:24 leave your gift . . . , and go away: In the scene Jesus describes, a worshipper is at the very point of handing over his sacrifice to the priest. Yet, he first needed to resolve an issue with his brother. Before offering his gift in a way that would be acceptable to God, he needed to go away and find his offended brother, who was likely among the many thousands of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem

for the seasonal festivals, the usual time for bringing such sacrifices to the temple.—De 16:16.

make your peace: The Greek expression has been defined “to change from enmity to friendship; to become reconciled; to be restored to normal relations or harmony.” So the goal is to effect a change by removing, if possible, ill will from the offended person’s heart. (Ro 12:18) Jesus’ point is that maintaining good relations with others is a prerequisite for enjoying good relations with God.

5:26 your last small coin: Lit., “the last quadrans,” 1/64 of a denarius. A denarius equaled a full day’s wage.—See  App. B14.

5:27 You heard that it was said: See study note on Mt 5:21.

commit adultery: That is, commit marital sexual unfaithfulness. The Greek verb *moi-kheu’o* is used in this quote from Ex 20:14 and De 5:18, where the corresponding Hebrew verb *na’aph’* is found. In the Bible, adultery refers to voluntary acts of “sexual immorality” between a married person and someone who is not his or her mate. (Compare the study note on Mt 5:32, where the term “sexual immorality,” rendered from the Greek word *por-nei’a*,

CHAP. 5

a Mr 7:20-22
De 5:21

b Lu 11:34

c Mt 18:9
Mr 9:47

d Col 3:5

e Mt 18:8
Mr 9:43

f De 24:1
Mt 19:3, 8
Mr 10:2, 4

g Mt 19:9
Mr 10:11, 12
Lu 16:18
Ro 7:3

h Le 5:4
Le 19:12
Ps 15:4

i Nu 30:2
De 23:21
Ps 50:14
Ec 5:4

mitted adultery with her in his heart.^a **29** If, now, your right eye is making you stumble, tear it out and throw it away from you.^b For it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be pitched into Ge·hen·na.^c **30** Also, if your right hand is making you stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you.^d For it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to land in Ge·hen·na.^e

31 “Moreover, it was said: ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’^f **32** However, I say to you that everyone divorcing his wife, except on account of sexual immorality, makes her a subject for adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.^g

Counsel on Oaths

33 “Again you heard that it was said to those of ancient times: ‘You must not swear without performing,^h but you must pay your vows to Jehovah.’ⁱ **34** However, I say to you: Do not swear

STUDY NOTES

is discussed.) During the time when the Mosaic Law was valid, having voluntary sexual relations with another man’s wife or fiancée was considered to be adultery.

5:29 is making you stumble: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *skan-da-li’zo* refers to stumbling in a figurative sense, which may include falling into sin or causing someone to fall into sin. In this context, the term could also be rendered “is causing you to sin; is becoming a snare to you.” As the term is used in the Bible, the sin may involve breaking one of God’s laws on morals or losing faith or accepting false teachings. The Greek word can also be used in the sense of “to take offense.”—See study notes on Mt 13:57; 18:7.

Gehenna: See study note on Mt 5:22 and  Glossary.

5:31 certificate of divorce: The Mosaic Law did not encourage divorce. A certificate was provided as a deterrent to a hasty breakup of marriages and as a protection for women. (De 24:1) A husband who wanted to obtain a certificate likely had to consult duly authorized men who might encourage the couple to reconcile. See  Gallery, image 32, Certificate of Divorce.

5:32 everyone divorcing his wife: See study note on Mr 10:12.

sexual immorality: The Greek word *por-nei’a* is a general term for all sexual intercourse that is unlawful according to the Bible. It includes adultery, prostitution, sexual relations between unmarried individuals, homosexuality, and bestiality.—See  Glossary.

makes her a subject for adultery: That is, puts her in danger of committing adultery. A wife does not become an adulteress simply by being divorced, but she is put at risk of committing adultery. If a husband divorces his wife on grounds other than sexual immorality (Greek, *por-nei’a*), she is exposed to the possibility of making herself an adulteress by having sexual relations with another man. According to Bible standards, she is not free to marry unless the circumstances change with regard to the husband who divorced her; for example, if he dies or becomes sexually unfaithful to her. For Christians, the same standards apply to a man if his wife were to divorce him on grounds other than sexual immorality.

a divorced woman: That is, a woman divorced for any reason other than “sexual immorality.” (Greek, *por-nei’a*; see study note on **sexual immorality** in this verse.)

As shown by Jesus’ words at Mr 10:12 (see study note), that standard applied whether it was a husband or a wife who was seeking a divorce. Jesus clearly teaches that if a divorce were obtained on grounds other than sexual immorality, the remarriage of either partner would constitute adultery. A single man or woman who marries such a divorced person would also be guilty of adultery.—Mt 19:9; Lu 16:18; Ro 7:2, 3.

5:33 you heard that it was said: See study note on Mt 5:21.

Jehovah: Although this is not a direct quote from one specific passage in the Hebrew Scriptures, the two commands that Jesus refers to allude to such scriptures as Le 19:12, Nu 30:2, and De 23:21, which do contain the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

at all,^a neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; **35** nor by earth, for it is the footstool of his feet;^b nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.^c **36** Do not swear by your head, since you cannot turn one hair white or black. **37** Just let your word 'Yes' mean yes, your 'No,' no,^d for what goes beyond these is from the wicked one.^{*e}

Counsel on Retaliation

38 "You heard that it was said: 'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth.'^f **39** However, I say to you: Do not resist the one who is wicked, but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other also to him.^g **40** And if a person wants to take you to court and get possession of your inner garment, let him also have your outer garment;^h **41** and if someone in authority compels you into service for a mile, go with him two miles. **42** Give to the one asking you, and do not turn away from one who wants to borrow from you.ⁱ

CHAP. 5

- a Jas 5:12
- b Isa 66:1
- c Ps 48:2
- d Jas 5:12
- e Joh 8:44
- f Ex 21:24, 25
Le 24:20
De 19:21
- g Pr 24:29
Isa 50:6
Lu 6:29
Ro 12:17
1Pe 2:23
1Pe 3:9
- h 1Co 6:7
- i Le 25:35-37
De 23:19

FOOTNOTES

5:37 *Or possibly, "from what is wicked."

STUDY NOTES

5:34 Do not swear at all: Jesus did not here prohibit the making of all oaths. God's Law, which allowed for the swearing of oaths or vows on certain serious occasions, was still in force. (Nu 30:2; Ga 4:4) Rather, Jesus was condemning frivolous and indiscriminate swearing that amounted to a perversion of oath-taking.

neither by heaven: In order to add weight to their word, people would swear "by heaven," "by earth," "by Jerusalem," and even "by [the] head," or life, of another person. (Mt 5:35, 36) But controversy existed among the Jews as to the validity of such oaths based on created things rather than on the name of God, and some evidently felt that they could retract such sworn statements with impunity.

5:35 the great King: That is, Jehovah God.—Mal 1:14.

5:37 what goes beyond these is from the wicked one: Any who feel compelled to go beyond a simple "yes" or "no" by continually swearing to what they say are

basically revealing themselves to be untrustworthy. They manifest the spirit of Satan, "the father of the lie."—Joh 8:44.

5:38, 43 You heard that it was said: See study note on Mt 5:21.

5:38 Eye for eye and tooth for tooth: In Jesus' day, these words from the Law (Ex 21:24; Le 24:20) were misapplied to condone personal vengeance. However, this law was properly applied only after cases came to trial and the appointed judges determined the appropriate punishment.—De 19:15-21.

5:39 slaps you on your right cheek: In this context, the Greek verb *rha-pi'zo*, "to slap," is used with the meaning "to strike with the open hand." Such an action would likely have been intended to provoke or insult rather than to injure. Jesus thus indicated that his followers should be willing to endure personal insult without retaliating.

5:40 let him also have your outer garment: Jewish men often wore two garments, an **inner garment** (Greek, *khi-ton'*, a shirtlike tunic with long sleeves or half sleeves, reaching to the knees or ankles and worn next to the skin) and an **outer garment** (Greek, *hi-ma'ti-on*, a loose robe or coat, or just a simple rectangular piece

of material). A garment could be used as a pledge to guarantee payment of a debt. (Job 22:6) Jesus is saying that for the sake of peace, his followers should be willing to give up not only their inner garment but also their more valuable outer garment.

5:41 compels you into service: A reference to the compulsory service that the Roman authorities could demand from a citizen. They could, for example, press men or animals into service or commandeer whatever was considered necessary to expedite official business. That is what happened to Simon of Cyrene, whom Roman soldiers "compelled into service" to carry Jesus' torture stake.—Mt 27:32.

mile: Probably the Roman mile, measuring 1,479.5 m (4,854 ft).—See  Glossary and  App. B14.

5:42 borrow: That is, borrow without interest. The Law forbade the Israelites to charge interest on loans to a needy fellow Jew (Ex 22:25), and it encouraged them to lend generously to the needy (De 15:7, 8).

5:43 You must love your neighbor: The Mosaic Law directed the Israelites to love their neighbor. (Le 19:18) While the term "neighbor" simply meant one's fellow

CHAP. 5

Counsel on Love for Enemies

- a Le 19:18
Mr 12:31
- b Pr 25:21
Ro 12:20
- c Lu 6:27, 28
Ac 7:59, 60
Ro 12:14
- d Mt 5:9
Eph 5:1
- e Ps 104:14, 15
Lu 6:35
Ac 14:17
- f Lu 6:32, 33
- g Le 19:2
De 18:13
Lu 6:36
1Pe 1:16

43 “You heard that it was said: ‘You must love your neighbor^a and hate your enemy.’ **44** However, I say to you: Continue to love your enemies^b and to pray for those who persecute you,^c **45** so that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens,^d since he makes his sun rise on both the wicked and the good and makes it rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous.^e **46** For if you love those loving you, what reward do you have?^f Are not also the tax collectors doing the same thing? **47** And if you greet your brothers only, what extraordinary thing are you doing? Are not also the people of the nations doing the same thing? **48** You must accordingly be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.^g

CHAP. 6

- h Mt 23:5
Col 3:23
- i Mt 19:21
Lu 12:33
Joh 13:29

Avoid Show of Righteousness

6 “Take care not to practice your righteousness in front of men to be noticed by them;^h otherwise you will have no reward with your Father who is in the heavens. **2** So when you make gifts of mercy,ⁱ do not blow a trumpet ahead of you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that

STUDY NOTES

man, some Jews narrowed the meaning to include only fellow Jews, especially those who kept the oral traditions; all other people were to be considered enemies.

hate your enemy: The Mosaic Law contained no such command. Some Jewish rabbis believed that the command to love their neighbor implied that they should hate their enemy.

5:44 Continue to love your enemies: Jesus’ counsel is in harmony with the spirit of the Hebrew Scriptures.—Ex 23:4, 5; Job 31:29; Pr 24:17, 18; 25:21.

5:46 tax collectors: Many Jews collected taxes for the Roman authorities. People hated such Jews because they not only collaborated with a resented foreign power but also extorted more than the official tax rate. Tax collectors were generally shunned by fellow Jews, who put them on the same level as sinners and prostitutes.—Mt 11:19; 21:32.

5:47 greet: Greeting others included expressing good wishes for their welfare and prosperity.

brothers: Refers to the entire nation of Israel. They were brothers, offspring of one common father, Jacob, and they were united in worship of the same God, Jehovah.—Ex 2:11; Ps 133:1.

people of the nations: Refers to non-Jews who had no relationship with God. The Jews viewed them as godless and unclean and as ones to be avoided.

5:48 perfect: The Greek term used here can mean “complete,” “mature,” or it can mean “faultless” according to standards set by an authority. Only Jehovah is perfect in an absolute sense, so when the term is applied to humans, it describes relative perfection. In this context, “perfect” refers to the completeness of a Christian’s love for Jehovah God and for fellow humans, something that is possible, even though a person is sinful.

6:2 gifts of mercy: The Greek word *e-le-e-mo-sy’ne*, traditionally rendered “alms,” is related to the Greek words for “mercy” and “to show mercy.” It refers to money or food freely given to relieve the poor.

blow a trumpet: This would attract attention. Evidently, the trumpeting mentioned here is figurative, the sense being that a person should not publicize his own acts of generosity.

hypocrites: The Greek word *hy-po-kri-tes*’ originally referred to Greek (and later Roman) stage actors who wore large masks designed to amplify the voice. The term came to be used in a metaphoric sense to apply to anyone hiding his real intentions or personality by playing false or putting on a pretense. Jesus here calls the Jewish religious leaders “hypocrites.”—Mt 6:5, 16.

they may be glorified by men.^a Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. **3** But you, when making gifts of mercy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, **4** so that your gifts of mercy may be in secret. Then your Father who looks on in secret will repay you.^b

How to Pray; Model Prayer

5 “Also, when you pray, do not act like the hypocrites,^c for they like to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the main streets to be seen by men.^d Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. **6** But when you pray, go into your private room and, after shutting your door, pray to your Father who is in secret.^e Then your Father who looks on in secret will repay you. **7** When praying, do not say the same things over and over again as the people of the nations do, for they imagine they will get a hearing for their use of many words. **8** So do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need^f even before you ask him.

9 “You must pray, then, this way:^g
 “Our Father in the heavens, let your name^h be sanctified.ⁱ

CHAP. 6

- a Lu 18:11, 12
- b Pr 19:17
Mt 10:42
- c Mt 15:7, 8
Mr 12:40
Lu 18:11
- d Mt 6:16
Mt 23:5
- e Lu 6:12
- f Lu 12:30
- g Lu 11:2-4
- h Ex 6:3
Le 22:32
Ps 83:18
- i Eze 36:23
Eze 38:23

STUDY NOTES

6:2 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

they have their reward in full: The Greek term *a-pe'kho*, meaning “to have in full,” often appeared on business receipts, with the sense of “paid in full.” The hypocrites gave in order to be seen by men, and they were seen and glorified by men for their charitable giving; thus, they have already received all the reward that they are going to get. They should not expect anything from God.

See  Gallery, image 26, First-Century Synagogue.

6:3 do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing: A figure of speech denoting the utmost discretion or secrecy. Jesus’ followers are not to advertise their charitable works even to those who are as close to them as the left hand is to the right, that is, even to intimate friends.

6:7 do not say the same things over and over again: Or “do not babble words; do not utter empty repetitions.” Jesus was warning his followers not to pray without

thinking. He does not mean that it is wrong to repeat requests. (Mt 26:36-45) It would be wrong, however, to mimic the repetitious prayers of **people of the nations** (that is, Gentiles, or non-Jews) who are in the habit of mindlessly repeating memorized phrases “over and over again.”

6:8 your Father: A few ancient manuscripts have the reading “God your Father,” but the shorter reading, “your Father,” has better manuscript support.

6:9 You: This form of address distinguishes Jesus’ listeners from the hypocrites whom he mentioned earlier.—Mt 6:5.

this way: That is, in contrast with the practice of those who were accustomed to saying “the same things over and over again.”—Mt 6:7.

Our Father: By using the plural pronoun “our,” the one praying acknowledges that others too have a close relationship with God and are part of His family of worshippers.—See study note on Mt 5:16.

name: The personal name of God, represented by the four Hebrew letters יהוה (YHWH) and commonly rendered “Jehovah” in English. In the *New World Translation*, the name occurs 6,979 times in the Hebrew Scriptures and 237 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (For information on the use of the divine name in the Christian Greek Scriptures, see  App. A5 and App. C.) In the Bible, the term “name” at times also stands for the person himself, his reputation, and all that he declares himself to be.—Compare Ex 34:5, 6; Re 3:4, ftn.

be sanctified: Or “be held sacred; be treated as holy.” This is a petition that all creation, including both humans and angels, hold God’s name holy. The petition also includes the thought that God take action to sanctify himself by clearing his name of the reproach that has been heaped on it ever since the rebellion of the first human pair in the garden of Eden.

6:10 Let your Kingdom come: God’s Kingdom is an expression of Jehovah’s sovereignty over the earth. This petition asks God to take decisive action by making his Kingdom, with its Messianic King and his associate rulers, the sole govern-

CHAP. 6

- a Da 2:44
Mt 6:33
Re 11:15
- b Mt 26:42
1Ti 2:4
Re 4:11
- c Ps 37:10
Lu 23:43
Ac 24:15
- d Ps 37:25
Pr 30:8
Mt 6:34
1Ti 6:8
- e Mt 18:21
Mr 11:25
Lu 17:3, 4
- f Mt 26:41
1Co 10:13
Re 3:10
- g Joh 17:15
1Jo 5:19

10 Let your Kingdom^a come. Let your will^b take place, as in heaven, also on earth.^c **11** Give us today our bread for this day;^d **12** and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.^e **13** And do not bring us into temptation,^f but deliver* us from the wicked one.^g

14 “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you;^h **15** whereas if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.ⁱ

Avoid Hypocritical Fasting

16 “When you fast,^j stop becoming sad-faced like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so they may appear to men to be fasting.^k Truly I say to you, they have their reward

h Eph 4:32; Col 3:13; i Mt 18:35; Jas 2:13; j Ac 13:2, 3; Ac 14:23; k Isa 58:5; Lu 18:11, 12.

FOOTNOTES

6:13 *Or “rescue.” # Or possibly, “from what is wicked.”

STUDY NOTES

ment to rule the earth. Jesus’ parable at Lu 19:11-27 confirms that God’s Kingdom will “come” in the sense of executing judgment, destroying all its enemies, and rewarding those hoping in it. (See Mt 24: 42, 44.) It will remove the present wicked system of things, including all human governments, and bring in a righteous new world.—Da 2:44; 2Pe 3:13; Re 16:14-16; 19:11-21.

Let your will take place: This petition does not refer primarily to the doing of God’s will by humans. Instead, it refers to God’s taking action to fulfill his will toward the earth and its inhabitants. It is a request that God use his power to accomplish his declared purpose. The person praying is also expressing his own preference for and submission to God’s will. (Compare Mt 26:39.) In this context, the phrase **as in heaven, also on earth** could be understood in either of two ways. It could be asking that God’s will be done on earth as it is already being done in heaven. Or it could be requesting that God’s will be done fully both in heaven and on earth.

6:11 our bread for this day: In many contexts, the Hebrew and Greek words for “bread” mean “food.” (Ge 3:19, fn.) Jesus thus indicates that those who serve God can confidently ask him to supply them, not with an excessive amount of provisions, but with adequate food for each day. This request is a reminder that God commanded the Israelites to gather the miraculously provided manna, each one “his amount day by day.”—Ex 16:4.

6:12 forgive: The Greek word literally means “to let go” but can also have the meaning “to cancel a debt,” as at Mt 18: 27, 32.

debts: Referring to sins. When sinning against someone, a person incurs a debt to that one, or has an obligation to him, and must therefore seek his forgiveness. Receiving God’s forgiveness depends on whether the person has **forgiven** his personal **debtors**, that is, those who have sinned against him.—Mt 6:14, 15; 18:35; Lu 11:4.

6:13 do not bring us into temptation: Or “do not allow us to give in to temptation.” The Bible sometimes speaks of God as causing things that he merely allows to take place. (Ru 1:20, 21) Therefore, Jesus is not saying here that God tempts people to sin. (Jas 1:13) Rather, he encourages his followers to pray for God’s help to avoid or endure temptation.—1Co 10:13.

6:14 trespasses: The Greek term for “trespass” may be rendered “a false step” (Ga 6:1) or a blunder, in contrast with walking uprightly in harmony with God’s righteous requirements.

6:16 fast: That is, abstain from food for a limited time. (See **L** Glossary.) Jesus never commanded his disciples to fast, nor did he direct them to avoid the practice altogether. Under the Mosaic Law, rightly motivated Jews humbled themselves before Jehovah and showed repentance for sin by means of fasts.—1Sa 7:6; 2Ch 20:3.

they disfigure their faces: Or “they make their faces unattractive (unrecognizable).” People could have done this by not washing or grooming and by sprinkling or smearing ashes on their heads.

in full. **17** But you, when fasting, put oil on your head and wash your face, **18** so that you may not appear to be fasting to men but only to your Father who is in secret. Then your Father who looks on in secret will repay you.

Treasures on Earth and in Heaven

19 “Stop storing up for yourselves treasures on the earth,^a where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal. **20** Rather, store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,^b where neither moth nor rust consumes,^c and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 “The lamp of the body is the eye.^d If, then, your eye is focused, your whole body will be bright.^{*e} **23** But if your eye is envious,^f your whole body will be dark. If the light that is in you is really darkness, how great that darkness is!

24 “No one can slave for two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other,^g or he will stick to the one and despise the other. You cannot slave for God and for Riches.^h

CHAP. 6

- a Mt 13:22
Lu 12:20
1Ti 6:9, 10
Jas 5:3
- b Mt 19:21
Mr 10:21
Lu 12:33, 34
Lu 18:22
1Ti 6:17
- c 1Pe 1:3, 4
- d Pr 4:25
Eph 1:18
- e Lu 11:34-36
- f Mt 20:15
- g Mt 22:37
Jas 4:4
- h Ex 34:14
Mt 13:22
Lu 16:13

FOOTNOTES

6:22 *Or “full of light.”

STUDY NOTES

6:17 put oil on your head and wash your face: Typically, normal personal grooming was not done while fasting, so Jesus is telling his disciples to avoid making a show of self-denial.

6:22 lamp of the body is the eye: A literal eye that functions properly is to the body like a lighted lamp in a dark place. It enlightens the entire person. Here “eye” is used in a figurative sense.—Eph 1:18.

focused: Or “clear; healthy.” The basic meaning of the Greek word *haplous* is “single; simple.” It can convey the idea of singleness of mind or devotion to one purpose. For a literal eye to function properly, it must be able to focus on one thing. A person whose figurative eye is “focused” on the one right thing (Mt 6:33) will experience a positive effect on his whole personality.

6:23 envious: Lit., “bad; wicked.” A literal eye that is bad or in an unhealthy condition does not see clearly. Similarly, an

envious eye cannot focus on what is truly important. (Mt 6:33) Such an eye is dissatisfied and greedy, distracted and shift. It causes its owner to estimate things incorrectly and pursue a selfish course of life.—See study note on Mt 6:22.

6:24 slave: The Greek verb refers to working as a slave, that is, someone owned by only one master. Jesus was here stating that a Christian cannot give God the exclusive devotion that He deserves and at the same time be devoted to gathering material possessions.

Riches: The Greek word *ma-mo-nas* (of Semitic origin), traditionally translated “Mammon,” can also be rendered “Money.” “Riches” is here personified as a master, or a kind of false god, though there is no conclusive proof that the word was ever used as the name of a specific deity.

6:25 Stop being anxious: Or “Stop worrying.” The tense of the Greek verb in this prohibition indicates to stop doing an action already in progress. The Greek term for “anxious” can refer to worry that divides a person’s mind and distracts him,

robbing him of joy. The same word occurs at Mt 6:27, 28, 31, 34.

lives . . . life: The Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to life. The combination **life** (soul) and **body** represents the entire person.

6:27 one cubit: Jesus here uses a word that refers to a short measure of distance (lit., “a forearm”), that is, about 44.5 cm (17.5 in.).—See  Glossary, “Cubit,” and  App. B14.

his life span: Jesus is evidently depicting life as a journey. His point is that by worrying, a person cannot add even a little to the length of his life.

6:28 Take a lesson: The Greek verb form could also be rendered “Learn well (thoroughly).”

the lilies of the field: Some identify this flower with the anemone, but it may have included a variety of lilylike flowers, such as tulips, hyacinths, irises, and gladiolus. Some suggest that Jesus referred simply to the many wildflowers growing in the area and therefore translate it “flowers of the field.” This may be inferred, since this

CHAP. 6

- a Ps 55:22
Lu 21:34
Php 4:6
1Pe 5:6, 7
- b 1Ti 6:8
Heb 13:5
- c Lu 12:22-28
- d Job 38:41
Ps 147:9
Mt 10:29
- e Ps 39:5
- f 1Ki 10:4, 5
- g Lu 10:41
- h Lu 12:29-31
- i Ps 37:25
Mal 3:10
Joh 6:27
Heb 13:5
- j Ex 16:4, 19

Stop Being Anxious; Keep Seeking Kingdom First

25 “On this account I say to you: Stop being anxious^a about your lives as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you will wear.^b Does not life mean more than food and the body than clothing?^c **26** Observe intently the birds of heaven;^d they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they are? **27** Who of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his life span?^e **28** Also, why are you anxious about clothing? Take a lesson from the lilies of the field, how they grow; they do not toil, nor do they spin; **29** but I tell you that not even Sol’o-mon^f in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. **30** Now if this is how God clothes the vegetation of the field that is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much rather clothe you, you with little faith? **31** So never be anxious^g and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or, ‘What are we to drink?’ or, ‘What are we to wear?’^h **32** For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing. Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 “Keep on, then, seeking first the Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you.ⁱ **34** So never be anxious about the next day,^j for the next day will have its own anxieties. Each day has enough of its own troubles.

STUDY NOTES

phrase is parallel with “vegetation of the field.”—Mt 6:30; Lu 12:27, 28.

See  Gallery, image 33, Lilies of the Field.

6:30 vegetation . . . oven: During the hot summer months, vegetation in Israel withers in as little as two days. Dried flower stalks and grass were collected from the fields as fuel for the baking ovens.

you with little faith: Jesus applied this expression to his disciples, indicating that their belief or trust was not strong. (Mt 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Lu 12:28) It implies not an absence of faith but, rather, a deficiency of faith.

6:33 Keep on . . . seeking: The Greek verb form indicates continuous action and could be rendered “Seek continually.”

Jesus’ true followers would not seek the Kingdom for a time and then go on to other things. Rather, they must always make it their first concern in life.

the Kingdom: Some ancient Greek manuscripts read “God’s Kingdom.”

his: Refers to God, the “heavenly Father” mentioned at Mt 6:32.

righteousness: Those who seek God’s righteousness readily do his will and conform to his standards of right and wrong. This teaching stood in stark contrast with that of the Pharisees, who sought to establish their own righteousness.—Mt 5:20.

6:34 never be anxious about the next day: The Scriptures encourage proper planning. (Pr 21:5) However, undue anxiety about what *may* happen in the future

can adversely affect a person’s relationship with God, causing him to rely on his own wisdom rather than on God’s.—Pr 3:5, 6.

Stop Judging

7 “Stop judging^a that you may not be judged;^b **2** for with the judgment you are judging, you will be judged,^c and with the measure that you are measuring out, they will measure out to you.^d **3** Why, then, do you look at the straw in your brother’s eye but do not notice the rafter in your own eye?^e **4** Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Allow me to remove the straw from your eye,’ when look! a rafter is in your own eye? **5** Hypocrite! First remove the rafter from your own eye, and then you will see clearly how to remove the straw from your brother’s eye.

6 “Do not give what is holy to dogs nor throw your pearls before swine,^f so that they may never trample them under their feet and turn around and rip you open.^g

Keep Asking, Seeking, Knocking

7 “Keep on asking, and it will be given you;^h keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you;ⁱ **8** for everyone asking receives,^j and everyone seeking finds, and to everyone knocking, it will be opened. **9** Indeed, which one of you, if his son asks for bread, will hand him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, he will not hand him a serpent, will he? **11** Therefore, if you, although being wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so will your Father who is in the heavens give good things^k to those asking him!

CHAP. 7

- a Ro 2:1
Ro 14:13
- b Lu 6:37
- c Mt 18:33, 34
Jas 2:13
- d Mr 4:24
Lu 6:38
Ga 6:7
- e Lu 6:41, 42
- f Pr 9:7
Mt 10:14
- g Pr 15:12
- h Mt 21:22
Mr 11:24
Col 4:2
Jas 1:5, 6
1Jo 5:14
- i Lu 11:9-13
- j Joh 14:13
1Jo 3:22
- k Jas 1:17
- l Lu 11:13

STUDY NOTES

7:1 Stop judging: Or “Stop condemning.” Jesus was aware that imperfect humans tend to be judgmental and that many Pharisees of his day set a bad example in this. They judged harshly those who did not live by the Mosaic Law and those who did not follow the unscriptural traditions that the Pharisees promoted. Jesus commanded any who had the habit of judging others to stop it. Instead of continually finding fault, disciples of Jesus should “keep on forgiving” the shortcomings of their fellow man. By doing so, they encourage others to show the same forgiving attitude.—See study note on Lu 6:37.

7:3 your brother’s: In this context, the Greek word *a-del-phos*’ (brother) refers to

a spiritual relationship and denotes a fellow worshipper of God. In a general sense, the term could also refer to one’s fellow man.—See study note on Mt 5:23.

straw . . . rafter: Jesus here uses striking hyperbole to describe a person who is critical of his brother. He compares a minor flaw to something small like a “straw.” The Greek word *kar’phos* can refer not only to a “straw” but also to a small piece of wood, so other Bibles render it a “splinter,” or a “speck of sawdust.” The critic implies that his brother’s spiritual vision, including his moral perception and judgment, is defective. By offering to “remove the straw,” he proudly asserts that he is qualified to help his brother see things more clearly and to judge matters correctly. Jesus, however, says that

the critic’s own spiritual vision and judgment are impaired by a symbolic “rafter,” a log or beam that might be used to support a roof. (Mt 7:4, 5) Some suggest that this powerful, even humorous contrast, indicates that Jesus was familiar with the work done in a carpenter’s shop.

7:4 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

7:5 Hypocrite!: At Mt 6:2, 5, 16, Jesus applied this term to the Jewish religious leaders, but here he uses it to address any disciple who fixes his attention on another’s faults while ignoring his own.

7:6 give what is holy to dogs . . . throw your pearls before swine: According to the Mosaic Law, pigs and dogs were unclean. (Le 11:7, 27) It was permissible to throw to dogs the flesh of an animal killed

CHAP. 7

a Lu 6:31

b Ro 13:10

Ga 5:14

c Lu 13:24

d Ac 14:22

1Pe 4:18

e Mt 24:11

2Pe 2:1

1Jo 4:1

f Lu 6:26

g Ac 20:29, 30

h Lu 6:44

i Mt 12:33

j Lu 6:43

Golden Rule

12 “All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must do to them.^a This, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean.^b

Narrow Gate

13 “Go in through the narrow gate,^c because broad is the gate and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are going in through it; **14** whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are finding it.^d

Known by Their Fruits

15 “Be on the watch for the false prophets^e who come to you in sheep’s covering,^f but inside they are ravenous wolves.^g **16** By their fruits you will recognize them. Never do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, do they?^h **17** Likewise, every good tree produces fine fruit, but every rotten tree produces worthless fruit.ⁱ **18** A good tree cannot bear worthless fruit, nor can a rotten tree produce fine fruit.^j

STUDY NOTES

by a wild beast. (Ex 22:31) But Jewish tradition forbade giving to dogs “holy flesh,” that is, meat of animal sacrifices. At Mt 7:6, the expressions “dogs” and “swine” are used figuratively of people who do not value spiritual treasures. Just as swine have no appreciation of the value of pearls, individuals who do not value spiritual treasures may abuse the one sharing them.

7:7 **Keep on asking, . . . seeking, . . . knocking:** The rendering “keep on” expresses the continuous action indicated by the Greek verb form used here and shows the need for perseverance in prayer. The use of three verbs indicates intensity. Jesus makes a similar point in his illustration at Lu 11:5-8.

7:9 **bread . . . stone:** Jesus may have contrasted bread with stones because bread was a staple in the diet of the Jews and surrounding peoples and the size and shape of loaves could have reminded people of stones. The answer to Jesus’ rhetorical question is: “It would be unthinkable for a father to do such a thing.” —See study note on Mt 7:10.

7:10 **fish . . . serpent:** Fish was a staple in the diet of people living around the Sea of Galilee. Some small serpents may have looked like the fish that were often eaten with bread. The rhetorical question implies that it would be unthinkable for a loving parent to do such a thing.

7:11 **you, although being wicked:** Because of inherited sin, all humans are imperfect and, consequently, comparatively wicked.

how much more so: Jesus often used this line of reasoning. First he presents an obvious fact or a familiar truth, and then he draws an even more convincing conclusion based on that fact, arguing from the lesser to the greater.—Mt 10:25; 12:12; Lu 11:13; 12:28.

7:12 **the Law and the Prophets:** See study note on Mt 5:17.

7:13 **Go in through the narrow gate:** In ancient times, roadways with gates were the means of entry into walled cities. The Bible uses such expressions as **road** or “path” or “way” to describe people’s life course and conduct. The image of two contrasting roads pictures life courses

that are either approved or disapproved by God, determining whether an individual gains entry into God’s Kingdom.—Ps 1:1, 6; Jer 21:8; Mt 7:21.

broad is the gate and spacious is the road: Although some manuscripts read “broad and spacious is the road,” the longer reading has strong manuscript support and harmonizes with the parallelism at Mt 7:14.—See  App. A3.

7:15 **in sheep’s covering:** Or “in sheep’s clothing,” that is, disguised in figurative garments and exhibiting sheeplike qualities in order to give the impression of being a harmless member of God’s “flock” of worshippers.

ravenous wolves: A metaphor describing those who are extremely covetous and who exploit others for personal gain. See  Gallery, image 34, Wolf.

7:16 **fruits:** Here used figuratively of people’s works, their words, or the results of what they do and say.

See  Gallery, image 35, Fig Tree, Grapevine, and Thornbush.

19 Every tree not producing fine fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.^a **20** Really, then, by their fruits you will recognize those men.^b

21 “Not everyone saying to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the Kingdom of the heavens, but only the one doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens will.^c **22** Many will say to me in that day: ‘Lord, Lord,^d did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works* in your name?’^e **23** And then I will declare to them: ‘I never knew* you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness!’^f

House on Rock; House on Sand

24 “Therefore, everyone who hears these sayings of mine and does them will be like a discreet man who built his house on the rock.^g **25** And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and lashed against that house, but it did not cave in, for it had been founded on the rock. **26** Furthermore, everyone hearing these sayings of mine and not doing them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.^h **27** And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and struck against that house,ⁱ and it caved in, and its collapse was great.”

Crowds Astounded at Jesus’ Way of Teaching

28 When Jesus finished these sayings, the effect was that the crowds were astounded at his way of teaching,^j **29** for he was teaching them as a person having authority,^k and not as their scribes.

CHAP. 7

- a Mt 3:10
Lu 13:6, 9
- b Mt 12:33
- c Ro 2:13
Jas 1:22
Jas 2:24
1Jo 2:17
1Jo 5:3
- d Lu 6:46
- e Jer 14:14
Jer 27:15
- f Lu 13:25-27
- g Lu 6:47-49
Jas 1:25
- h Jer 8:9
Jas 1:23, 24
- i 1Co 3:13
- j Mr 1:22
Lu 4:32
- k Joh 7:46

FOOTNOTES
7:22 *Or “many miracles.” **7:23** *Or “recognized.”

STUDY NOTES
7:23 lawlessness: See study note on Mt 24:12.
7:24 discreet: See study note on Mt 24:45.
7:25 rain . . . floods . . . winds: Sudden winter storms are not uncommon in Israel (especially during the month of Tebeth, that is, December/January), bringing high

winds, torrential rains, and destructive flash floods.—See **3** App. B15.
7:28 were astounded: The Greek verb used here can be defined “to be filled with amazement to the point of being overwhelmed.” The continuous verb form implies that his words had a lasting effect on the crowds.
his way of teaching: This expression refers to how Jesus taught, his teaching methods, which included what he taught, the whole body of instruction in the Sermon on the Mount.

7:29 not as their scribes: Rather than quote revered rabbis as an authority, as was the scribes’ custom, Jesus speaks as Jehovah’s representative, **as a person having authority**, basing his teachings on God’s Word.—Joh 7:16.
8:2 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.
a leper: A person suffering from a serious skin disease. The leprosy referred to in the Bible is not restricted to the disease known by that name today. Anyone diagnosed with leprosy became an outcast from society until he was cured.—Le 13:2,

CHAP. 8

- a Mr 1:40-44
Lu 5:12-14
- b Mt 10:7, 8
Mr 1:41
Lu 5:13
- c Isa 53:4
- d Mt 9:30
Mt 12:15, 16
Mr 7:35, 36
- e Le 14:2
- f Le 14:3, 4
Le 14:19, 20
- g Lu 17:11-15
- h Lu 7:1-9

A Leper Healed

8 After he came down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. **2** And look! a leper came up and did obeisance to him, saying: “Lord, if you just want to, you can make me clean.”^a **3** So stretching out his hand, he touched him, saying: “I want to! Be made clean.”^b Immediately his leprosy was cleansed away.^c **4** Then Jesus said to him: “See that you tell no one,^d but go, show yourself to the priest,^e and offer the gift that Moses appointed,^f for a witness to them.”^g

Faith of an Army Officer

5 When he entered Ca-per’na-um, an army officer came to him, pleading with him^h **6** and saying: “Sir, my servant is laid up in the house with paralysis, and he is suffering terribly.”* **7** He said to him: “When I get there, I will cure him.” **8** The army officer replied: “Sir, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but just say the word and my servant will be healed. **9** For I too am a man under authority, having soldiers under me, and I say to this one, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come!’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.” **10** When Jesus heard that, he was amazed and said to those following him: “I tell you the truth, with no one in Israel

FOOTNOTES

8:6 *Or “is terribly afflicted.”

STUDY NOTES

ftn., 45, 46; see  Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; honored him.” People mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures also bowed down when meeting prophets, kings, or other representatives of God. (1Sa 25:23, 24; 2Sa 14:4-7; 1Ki 1:16; 2Ki 4:36, 37) This man evidently recognized that he was talking to a representative of God who had power to heal people. It was appropriate to bow down to show respect for Jehovah’s King-Designate.—Mt 9:18; for more information on the Greek word used here, see study note on Mt 2:2.

8:3 he touched him: The Mosaic Law required that lepers be quarantined to protect others from contamination. (Le 13:45, 46; Nu 5:1-4) However, Jewish

religious leaders imposed additional rules. For example, no one was to come within four cubits, that is, about 1.8 m (6 ft) of a leper, but on windy days, the distance was 100 cubits, that is, about 45 m (150 ft). Such rules led to heartless treatment of lepers. Tradition speaks favorably of a rabbi who hid from lepers and of another who threw stones at them to keep them at a distance. By contrast, Jesus was so deeply moved by the leper’s plight that he did what other Jews would consider unthinkable—he touched the man. He did so even though he could have cured the leper with just a word.—Mt 8:5-13.

I want to: Jesus not only acknowledged the request but expressed a strong desire to respond to it, showing that he was motivated by more than just a sense of duty.

8:4 tell no one: See study note on Mr 1:44.

show yourself to the priest: In accord with the Mosaic Law, a priest had to verify that a leper had been healed. The cured

leper had to travel to the temple and bring as an offering, or **gift**, two live clean birds, cedarwood, scarlet material, and hyssop.—Le 14:2-32.

8:5 Capernaum: See study note on Mt 4:13.

army officer: Or “centurion,” that is, one in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army.

See  Gallery, image 36, A Roman Centurion, or Army Officer, Dressed for Battle.

8:6 my servant: The Greek term here rendered “servant” literally means “child; youth” and could be used of a slave who was regarded with some degree of affection, possibly a personal servant.

have I found so great a faith.^a **11** But I tell you that many from east and west will come and recline at the table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of the heavens;^b **12** whereas the sons of the Kingdom will be thrown into the darkness outside. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be.”^c **13** Then Jesus said to the army officer: “Go. Just as you have shown faith, so let it come to pass for you.”^d And the servant was healed in that hour.^e

Jesus Heals Many in Capernaum

14 And Jesus, on coming into Peter’s house, saw his mother-in-law^f lying down and sick with fever.^g **15** So he touched her hand,^h and the fever left her, and she got up and began ministering to him. **16** But after it became evening, people brought him many demon-possessed ones; and he expelled the spirits with a word, and he cured all who were suffering, **17** in order to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: “He himself took our sicknesses and carried our diseases.”ⁱ

Requirements for Following Jesus

18 When Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave the command to depart for the other side.^j **19** And a scribe came up and said to him: “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”^k **20** But Jesus said to him: “Foxes have dens and birds of heav-

CHAP. 8

- a Mt 15:28
Mr 5:34
Lu 7:9
Ac 14:9, 10
- b Lu 13:29
- c Lu 13:28
- d Mt 9:29
Mt 15:28
Mr 9:23
- e Lu 7:10
- f 1Co 9:5
- g Mr 1:29-34
Lu 4:38-41
- h Mr 5:41
Ac 3:7
- i Isa 53:4
Joh 1:29
- j Mr 4:35
Lu 8:22
- k Lu 9:57

STUDY NOTES

8:11 many from east and west: An indication that non-Jews would have a part in the Kingdom.

recline at the table: Or “dine.” In Bible times, couches were often placed around a table at banquets or large meals. Those partaking of the meal reclined on a couch with their head toward the table, often resting their left elbow on a cushion. Food was usually taken with the right hand. To recline at a table with someone indicated close fellowship with that person. Jews at that time would normally never have done so with non-Jews.

8:12 gnashing of their teeth: Or “grinding (clenching) their teeth.” The expression can include the idea of anguish, despair, and anger, possibly accompanied by bitter words and violent action.

8:14 his mother-in-law: See study note on Lu 4:38.

sick with fever: See study note on Lu 4:38.

8:16 after it became evening: That is, after the Sabbath day ended, as the parallel accounts at Mr 1:21-32 and Lu 4:31-40 show.

8:17 in order to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: See study note on Mt 1:22.

carried: Or “carried away; removed.” Under inspiration, Matthew here applies Isa 53:4 to the miraculous cures performed by Jesus. The greater fulfillment of Isa 53:4 will occur when Jesus carries away sin completely, just as the goat “for Azazel” carried the sins of Israel into the wilderness on Atonement Day. (Le 16:10, 20-22) By carrying away sin, Jesus would eliminate the root cause of sickness for all who exercise faith in the value of his sacrifice.

8:18 the other side: That is, the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

8:20 Son of man: Or “Son of a human.” This expression occurs about 80 times in the Gospels. Jesus used it to refer to himself, evidently emphasizing that he was truly human, born from a woman, and that he was a fitting human counterpart to Adam, having the power to redeem humankind from sin and death. (Ro 5:12, 14-15) The same expression also identified Jesus as the Messiah, or the Christ. —Da 7:13, 14; see  Glossary.

nowhere to lay down his head: That is, no residence that he could call his own.

See  Gallery, image 37, Foxes’ Dens and Birds’ Nests.

8:21 bury my father: See study note on Lu 9:59.

8:22 let the dead bury their dead: See study note on Lu 9:60.

CHAP. 8

- a Lu 9:58
2Co 8:9
- b Lu 9:59
- c Lu 9:60
- d Mr 4:36
- e Mr 4:37-41
Lu 8:23-25
- f Mt 14:31
Mr 4:40
- g Ps 89:9
Ps 107:29
Lu 8:25
- h Mr 5:1-3
Lu 8:26, 27
- i Lu 4:34, 41
- j Mr 1:24
Jas 2:19
- k Mr 5:7-10
Lu 8:28

en have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay down his head.”^a **21** Then another of the disciples said to him: “Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.”^b **22** Jesus said to him: “Keep following me, and let the dead bury their dead.”^c

Jesus Calms a Storm

23 And when he went aboard a boat, his disciples followed him.^d **24** Now look! a great storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was being covered by the waves; but he was sleeping.^e **25** And they came and woke him up, saying: “Lord, save us, we are about to perish!” **26** But he said to them: “Why are you so afraid,* you with little faith?”^f Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and a great calm set in.^g **27** So the men were amazed and said: “What sort of person is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him.”

Jesus Allows Demons to Enter Swine

28 When he came to the other side into the region of the Gadarenes,^h two demon-possessed men coming out from among* the tombs met him.^h They were unusually fierce, so nobody had the courage to pass by on that road. **29** And look! they screamed, saying: “What have we to do with you, Son of God?ⁱ Did you come here to torment usⁱ before the appointed time?”^k

FOOTNOTES

8:26 *Or “fainthearted.” **8:28** *Or “coming out of.”

STUDY NOTES

- 8:24 great storm:** Such storms are common on the Sea of Galilee. Its surface is about 210 m (700 ft) below sea level, and the air temperature is warmer on the sea than in the surrounding plateaus and mountains. Those conditions result in atmospheric disturbances and strong winds that can quickly whip up waves.
- 8:26 you with little faith:** Jesus did not imply an absence of faith but rather a deficiency of faith.—Mt 14:31; 16:8; Lu 12:28; see study note on Mt 6:30.
- 8:28 region of the Gadarenes:** A region on the **other** (the eastern) shore of the Sea of Galilee. It may have been the region extending from the sea to Gadara, which was 10 km (6 mi) from the sea. Supporting this idea, coins from Gadara

often depict a ship. Mark and Luke call the area “the region of the Gerasenes.” (See study note on Mr 5:1.) The different regions may have been overlapping.—See  App. A7, Map 3B, “Activity at the Sea of Galilee,” and App. B10.

two: The accounts of Mark (5:2) and Luke (8:27) mention only one demon-possessed man.—See study note on Mr 5:2.

tombs: Or “memorial tombs.” (See  Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”) These tombs were evidently caves or chambers cut into the natural rock and usually located outside the cities. These burial places were avoided by the Jews because of the ceremonial uncleanness connected with them, making them an ideal haunt for crazed or demonized people.

See  Gallery, image 38, Cliffs on the Eastern Side of the Sea of Galilee.

8:29 What have we to do with you, . . . ?: Or “What is there in common between us and you?” Literally translated,

this rhetorical question reads: “What to us and to you?” This Semitic idiom is found in the Hebrew Scriptures (Jos 22:24; Jg 11:12; 2Sa 16:10; 19:22; 1Ki 17:18; 2Ki 3:13; 2Ch 35:21; Ho 14:8), and a corresponding Greek phrase is used in the Christian Greek Scriptures (Mt 8:29; Mr 1:24; 5:7; Lu 4:34; 8:28; Joh 2:4). The exact meaning may vary, depending on context. In this verse, it expresses hostility and repulsion, and some have suggested a rendering such as: “Do not bother us!” or “Leave us alone!” In other contexts, it is used to express a difference in viewpoint or opinion or to refuse involvement in a suggested action, without indicating disdain, arrogance, or hostility.—See study note on Joh 2:4.

torment us: A related Greek term is used of “the jailers” at Mt 18:34, so in this context, the “torment” would seem to refer to a restraining or a confining to “the abyss” mentioned in the parallel account at Lu 8:31.

30 A long way off from them, a herd of many swine was feeding.^a **31** So the demons began to plead with him, saying: “If you expel us, send us into the herd of swine.”^b **32** And he said to them: “Go!” With that they came out and went off into the swine, and look! the entire herd rushed over the precipice* into the sea and died in the waters. **33** But the herders fled, and going into the city, they reported everything, including the account of the demon-possessed men. **34** And look! all the city turned out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they urged him to depart from their region.^c

CHAP. 8

- a Mr 5:11-17
b De 14:8
Lu 8:31-34
c Lu 8:35-37

CHAP. 9

- d Mt 4:13
Mr 2:1
e Mr 2:3-12
Lu 5:18-26
f Joh 10:33
Ac 6:11
g Joh 2:24, 25
h Mr 2:9
i Mr 2:10, 11
Lu 5:24
Joh 5:8

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

9 So boarding the boat, he traveled across and went into his own city.^d **2** And look! they were bringing him a paralyzed man lying on a stretcher. On seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic: “Take courage, child! Your sins are forgiven.”^e **3** Now certain scribes said to themselves: “This fellow is blaspheming.”^f **4** Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said: “Why are you thinking wicked things in your hearts?^g **5** For instance, which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?^h **6** However, in order for you to know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins—” then he said to the paralytic: “Get up, pick up your stretcher, and go to your home.”ⁱ **7** And he got up and went to his home. **8** When the crowds saw this, they were struck with fear, and they glorified God, who gave such authority to men.

FOOTNOTES

8:32 *Or “steep bank.”

STUDY NOTES

8:30 swine: Pigs were unclean according to the Law but were raised in this area. Whether “the herders” (Mt 8:33) were Jews violating the Law is not stated. However, there was a market for pork among the many non-Jews living in the Decapolis region, since both Greeks and Romans considered pork a delicacy.

9:1 his own city: That is, Capernaum, Jesus’ home base in the region. (Mt 4:13; Mr 2:1) This city was not far from Nazareth, where he grew up; from Cana, where he turned water into wine; from Nain, where he resurrected the son of a widow;

and from the vicinity of Bethsaida, where he miraculously fed about 5,000 men and restored sight to a blind man.

See  Gallery, image 20, North Shore of the Sea of Galilee, Looking Northwest.

9:2 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

seeing their faith: The use of the plural pronoun “their” shows that Jesus noted how much faith the entire group had, not just the paralyzed man.

child: Used by Jesus as a term of endearment.—2Ti 1:2; Tit 1:4; Phm 10.

9:5 which is easier: It would be easier for someone to say that he could forgive sins, since there would be no visible evidence to substantiate such a claim. But to say, **Get up and walk** required a miracle that would make plain for all to see that Jesus

also has the authority to forgive sins. This account and Isa 33:24 link sickness to our sinful condition.

9:6 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

to forgive sins—: The dash indicates that Jesus stopped in mid-sentence and then powerfully proved his point by publicly healing the man.

9:9 Matthew: See “Introduction to Matthew” and study note on **Matthew**; see also study note on Mt 10:3.

tax office: Or “tax collection booth.” This could be a small building or a booth where the tax collector sat and gathered taxes on exports, imports, and goods taken through a country by merchants. Matthew’s tax office was located in or near Capernaum.

CHAP. 9

Jesus Calls Matthew

- a Mr 2:14
Lu 5:27, 28
- b Mr 2:15-17
Lu 5:29-32
- c Lu 7:39
Lu 15:1, 2
Lu 19:7
- d Lu 5:31
- e Pr 21:3
Ho 6:6
Mt 12:7
- f Mr 2:18-20
Lu 5:33-35
- g Mt 22:2
Joh 3:28, 29
- h Mt 26:2
- i Mr 2:21, 22
Lu 5:36-39

9 Next, while moving on from there, Jesus caught sight of a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office, and he said to him: “Be my follower.” At that he rose up and followed him.^a **10** Later as he was dining* in the house, look! many tax collectors and sinners came and began dining* with Jesus and his disciples.^b **11** But on seeing this, the Pharisees said to his disciples: “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”^c **12** Hearing them, he said: “Healthy people do not need a physician, but those who are ill do.”^d **13** Go, then, and learn what this means: ‘I want mercy, and not sacrifice.’^e For I came to call, not righteous people, but sinners.”

Question About Fasting

14 Then John’s disciples came to him and asked: “Why do we and the Pharisees practice fasting but your disciples do not fast?”^f **15** At this Jesus said to them: “The friends of the bridegroom^g have no reason to mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, do they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them,^h and then they will fast. **16** Nobody sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old outer garment, for the new piece pulls away from the garment and the tear becomes worse.ⁱ **17** Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins. If they do, then the wineskins burst and the wine spills out and the wineskins are ruined. But people put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

FOOTNOTES

9:10 * Or “reclining at the table.”

STUDY NOTES

9:9 Be my follower: See study note on Mr 2:14.

See  Gallery, image 1, Jesus Invites Matthew to Be His Follower.

9:10 dining: See study note on Mr 2:15.

the house: Refers to Matthew’s house.—Mr 2:14, 15; Lu 5:29.

tax collectors: See study note on Mt 5:46.

sinners: The Bible shows that all humans are sinners. (Ro 3:23; 5:12) Therefore, the term is used here in a more specific way, evidently referring to those who had a

reputation for practicing sin, perhaps of a moral or a criminal nature. (Lu 7:37-39; 19:7, 8) This term was also used for non-Jewish people and by the Pharisees for Jewish people who did not observe the rabbinic traditions.—Joh 9:16, 24, 25.

9:13 mercy, and not sacrifice: Jesus twice refers to these words from Ho 6:6 (here and at Mt 12:7). Matthew, a despised tax collector who became an intimate associate of Jesus, is the only Gospel writer to record this quote as well as the illustration of the unmerciful slave. (Mt 18:21-35) His Gospel highlights Jesus’ repeated insistence that mercy is required in addition to sacrifice.

9:14 practice fasting: See study note on Mt 6:16.

9:15 friends of the bridegroom: Lit., “sons of the bridechamber,” an idiom describing wedding guests but especially the friends of the bridegroom.

9:17 wine into . . . wineskins: It was common in Bible times to store wine in animal skins. (1Sa 16:20) Skin bottles were made of the complete hides of domestic animals, such as sheep or goats. Old leather wineskins would become stiff and lose their elasticity. New wineskins, on the other hand, could stretch and swell and thus could withstand the pressure caused by the ongoing process of fermentation of new wine.—See  Glossary, “Wineskin.”

See  Gallery, image 39, Animal Skins Used to Store Wine.

Jairus' Daughter; a Woman Touches Jesus' Outer Garment

18 While he was telling them these things, look! a certain ruler who had approached did obeisance to him, saying: "By now my daughter must be dead, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will come to life."^a

19 Then Jesus got up and, with his disciples, followed him. **20** And look! a woman suffering for 12 years from a flow of blood^b approached from behind and touched the fringe* of his outer garment,^c **21** for she kept saying to herself: "If I only touch his outer garment, I will get well."^d **22** Jesus turned around and, noticing her, said: "Take courage, daughter! Your faith has made you well."^e And from that hour the woman was made well.^f

23 When, now, he came into the ruler's house and caught sight of the flute players and the crowd making a commotion,^g

24 Jesus said: "Leave the place, for the little girl did not die but is sleeping."^h At this they began to laugh at him scornfully.

25 As soon as the crowd had been sent outside, he went in and took hold of her hand,ⁱ and the little girl got up.^j **26** Of course, the talk about this spread into all that region.

CHAP. 9

- a Mr 5:22-24
Lu 8:41, 42
Joh 11:25
- b Le 15:25
- c Mt 14:36
Mr 5:25-34
Mr 6:56
Lu 8:43-48
- d Mt 14:36
Lu 6:19
- e Mr 10:52
Lu 7:50
Lu 17:19
Lu 18:42
- f Joh 4:53
- g Jer 9:17, 18
Mr 5:38-43
Lu 8:52-56
- h Joh 11:11
- i Mr 9:27
- j Lu 7:14, 15
Lu 8:55
Joh 11:43, 44
- k Mt 20:30
- l Ac 14:9, 10

Jesus Heals the Blind and the Speechless

27 As Jesus moved on from there, two blind men^k followed him, shouting out: "Have mercy on us, Son of David." **28** After he had gone into the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus asked them: "Do you have faith that I can do this?"^l They

FOOTNOTES

9:20 *Or "edge; border; tassels." **9:21** *Or "will be saved." **9:22** *Or "has saved you."

STUDY NOTES

9:18 a certain ruler: The name of this "ruler" (Greek, *ar'khon*), Jairus, is given in Mark's and Luke's parallel accounts, where he is called a presiding officer of the synagogue.—Mr 5:22; Lu 8:41.

did obeisance to him: Or "bowed down to him; honored him."—See study note on Mt 8:2.

9:20 flow of blood: Likely a chronic menstrual flow. According to the Mosaic Law,

this condition would render the woman ceremonially unclean. As such, she was not supposed to touch others.—Le 15:19-27.

9:22 daughter: The only recorded instance in which Jesus directly addressed a woman as "daughter," perhaps because of the delicate situation and her "trembling." (Lu 8:47) By using this term of endearment, a form of address that signifies nothing about the woman's age, Jesus emphasizes his tender concern for her.

9:24 did not die but is sleeping: See study note on Mr 5:39.

9:27 Son of David: By calling Jesus "Son of David," these men express their belief

that Jesus is heir to the throne of David and thus is the Messiah.—See study notes on Mt 1:1, 6.

9:35 teaching . . . preaching: See study note on Mt 4:23.

the good news: See study note on Mt 4:23.

See  Gallery, image 26, First-Century Synagogue.

9:36 felt pity: The Greek verb *splag-khni'zo-mai* used for this expression is related to the word for "intestines" (*splag'khna*), denoting a feeling experienced deep inside the body, an intense emotion. It is one of the strongest words in Greek for the feeling of compassion.

CHAP. 9

- a Mt 20:32-34
 b Isa 42:2
 Mt 12:15, 16
 Mr 1:44, 45
 Mr 7:35, 36
 c Mt 12:22
 Lu 11:14
 d Mt 15:31
 e Mt 7:28, 29
 Mr 2:12
 f Mt 12:24
 Mr 3:22
 Lu 11:15
 g Mt 4:23
 Lu 9:11
 h Mt 14:14
 Mt 15:32
 Mt 20:34
 Heb 4:15
 i Nu 27:16, 17
 1Ki 22:17
 Isa 61:1
 Eze 34:5
 Mr 6:34
 j Lu 10:2
 Joh 4:35
 k Ro 10:14

CHAP. 10

- l Mr 3:14, 15
 Mr 6:7
 Lu 9:1, 2
 Lu 10:17
 Ac 16:16-18
 m Mr 3:16-19
 Lu 6:13-16
 Ac 1:13
 n Joh 1:42
 Ac 15:14
 o Mr 1:16
 Joh 1:40
 p Mt 4:21
 q Joh 1:45

answered him: “Yes, Lord.” **29** Then he touched their eyes, saying: “According to your faith let it happen to you.” **30** And their eyes received sight.^a Moreover, Jesus sternly warned them, saying: “See that nobody gets to know it.”^b **31** But after going outside, they made it public about him in all that region.

32 When they were leaving, look! people brought him a speechless man possessed of a demon;^c **33** and after the demon had been expelled, the speechless man spoke.^d Well, the crowds were amazed and said: “Never has anything like this been seen in Israel.”^e **34** But the Pharisees were saying: “It is by the ruler of the demons that he expels the demons.”^f

Harvest Great but Workers Few

35 And Jesus set out on a tour of all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the Kingdom and curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity.^g **36** On seeing the crowds, he felt pity for them,^h because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd.ⁱ **37** Then he said to his disciples: “Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few.^j **38** Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”^k

The 12 Apostles

10 So he summoned his 12 disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits,^l in order to expel these and to cure every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity.

2 The names of the 12 apostles are these:^m First, Simon, the one called Peter,ⁿ and Andrew^o his brother; James the son of Zeb’e-dee and John^p his brother; **3** Philip and Bar·thol’o-mew;^q

STUDY NOTES

9:36 skinned: The Greek word originally meant “flayed,” or “stripped of the skin,” conveying an image of sheep with their skin ripped apart by wild animals or torn as they wandered among brambles and sharp rocks. The term came to be used figuratively, meaning “maltreated, harassed, wounded.”

thrown about: The image here is of sheep being thrown down, helpless and exhausted, figuratively conveying the idea of the crowd being dejected, neglected, and helpless.

10:2 apostles: Or “sent ones.” The Greek word *a-po’sto-los* is derived from the verb *a-po-stel’lo*, meaning “to send away (out).” (Mt 10:5; Lu 11:49; 14:32) Its basic meaning is clearly illustrated in Jesus’ statement at Joh 13:16, where it is rendered “one who is sent.”

Simon, the one called Peter: Peter is named in five different ways in the Scriptures: (1) the Greek form “Symeon,” which closely reflects the Hebrew form of the name (Simeon); (2) the Greek “Simon” (both Symeon and Simon come from a Hebrew verb meaning “hear; listen”); (3) “Peter” (a Greek name that means

“A Piece of Rock” and that he alone bears in the Scriptures); (4) “Cephas,” which is the Semitic equivalent of Peter (perhaps related to the Hebrew *ke-phem’* [rocks] used at Job 30:6; Jer 4:29); and (5) the combination “Simon Peter.”—Ac 15:14; Joh 1:42; Mt 16:16.

10:3 Bartholomew: Meaning “Son of Tol-mai.” He is thought to be the Nathanael mentioned by John. (Joh 1:45, 46) A comparison of the Gospels shows that Matthew and Luke link Bartholomew and Philip in the same way that John associates Nathanael with Philip.—Mt 10:3; Lu 6:14.

Thomas^a and Matthew^b the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus; and Thad-dae'us; **4** Simon the Ca-na-nae'an; and Judas Is-car'i-ot, who later betrayed him.^c

Instructions for the Ministry

5 These 12 Jesus sent out, giving them these instructions:^d “Do not go off into the road of the nations, and do not enter any Sa-mar'i-tan city;^e **6** but instead, go continually to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.^f **7** As you go, preach, saying: “The Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.”^g **8** Cure the sick,^h raise up the dead, make lepers clean, expel demons. You received free, give free.ⁱ **9** Do not acquire gold or silver or copper for your money belts,^j **10** or a food pouch for the trip, or two garments,^{*} or sandals, or a staff,^k for the worker deserves his food.^l

11 “Into whatever city or village you enter, search out who in it is deserving, and stay there until you leave.^m **12** When you enter the house, greet the household. **13** If the house is deserving, let the peace you wish it come upon it;ⁿ but if it is not deserving, let the peace from you return upon you. **14** Wherever anyone does not receive you or listen to your words, on

CHAP. 10

- a Joh 11:16
Joh 20:27
- b Mr 2:14
Lu 5:27
- c Ps 41:9
Mt 26:47
Joh 13:18
- d Mr 6:7
Lu 9:1, 2
- e 2Ki 17:24
- f Isa 53:6
Eze 34:6
Ac 13:45, 46
- g Mt 4:17
Lu 10:9
- h Lu 9:2
- i Acts 8:20
- j Mr 6:8, 9
- k Lu 9:3
- l Nu 18:30, 31
Lu 10:4, 7
1Co 9:7, 14
- m Mr 6:10
Lu 9:4
- n Lu 10:5

FOOTNOTES

10:10 *Or “an extra garment.”

STUDY NOTES

10:3 Matthew: Also known as Levi.—See study notes on Mr 2:14; Lu 5:27.

the tax collector: As a former tax collector, Matthew, the writer of this Gospel, makes numerous references to numbers and money values. (Mt 17:27; 26:15; 27:3) He is also more explicit with numbers. He broke up his genealogy of Jesus into three sets of 14 generations (Mt 1:1-17) and listed seven petitions in the Lord’s prayer (Mt 6:9-13), seven illustrations in Mt 13, and seven woes at Mt 23:13-36. As for the term “tax collector,” see study note on Mt 5:46.

James the son of Alphaeus: See study note on Mr 3:18.

Thaddaeus: In the listings of the apostles at Lu 6:16 and Ac 1:13, the name Thaddaeus is not included; instead, we find “Judas the son of James,” leading to the conclusion that Thaddaeus is another

name for the apostle whom John calls “Judas, not Iscariot.” (Joh 14:22) The possibility of confusing this Judas with the traitor, Judas Iscariot, might be a reason why the name Thaddaeus is sometimes used.

10:4 the Cananaean: A designation distinguishing the apostle Simon from the apostle Simon Peter. (Mr 3:18) This term is thought to be of Hebrew or Aramaic origin, meaning “Zealot; Enthusiast.” Luke referred to this Simon as “the zealous one,” using the Greek word *ze-lo-tes**, also meaning “zealot; enthusiast.” (Lu 6:15; Ac 1:13) While it is possible that Simon once belonged to the Zealots, a Jewish party opposed to the Romans, he may have been given this designation because of his zeal and enthusiasm.

Iscariot: Possibly meaning “Man From Kerioth.” Judas’ father, Simon, is also called “Iscariot.” (Joh 6:71) This term has commonly been understood to indicate that Simon and Judas were from the Judean town of Kerioth-hezron. (Jos 15:25) If this is so, Judas was the only Judean

among the 12 apostles, the rest being Galileans.

10:7 preach: That is, make an open, public declaration.—See study note on Mt 3:1.

The Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near: See study note on Mt 4:17.

10:8 lepers: See study note on Mt 8:2 and  Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

10:9 See  Gallery, image 40, Staff and Food Pouch.

10:11 stay there: See study note on Mr 6:10.

10:12 greet: A common Jewish greeting was: “May you have peace.”—Jg 19:20; Mt 10:13; Lu 10:5.

10:14 shake the dust off your feet: This gesture would signify that the disciples disclaimed responsibility for the consequences that would come from God. A similar expression occurs at Mr 6:11 and Lu 9:5. Mark and Luke add the expression “for a witness to [or, “against”] them.” Paul and Barnabas applied this instruction in Pisidian Antioch (Ac 13:51), and

CHAP. 10

- a Mr 6:11
Lu 9:5
Lu 10:6, 11
Ac 13:50, 51
Ac 18:5, 6
- b Ge 19:4, 5
2Pe 2:6
Jude 7
- c Lu 10:3
- d Php 2:14, 15
- e Mt 24:9
- f Ac 5:40
2Co 11:24
- g Mt 23:34
Mr 13:9
Lu 21:12, 13
- h Ac 4:8
Ac 24:10
Ac 25:23
Ac 26:25
Ac 27:23, 24
- i Mt 24:14
- j Jer 1:7
Mr 13:11
Lu 12:11, 12
Lu 21:14, 15
- k Joh 14:26
- l Mic 7:6
Mt 10:36
Mr 13:12, 13
Lu 21:16
Joh 16:2

going out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet.^a **15** Truly I say to you, it will be more endurable for the land of Sod'om and Go·mor'rah^b on Judgment Day than for that city.

Disciples Will Be Persecuted; Fear God, Not Men

16 “Look! I am sending you out as sheep among wolves;^c so prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves.^d **17** Be on your guard against men, for they will hand you over to local courts^e and they will scourge you^f in their synagogues.^g **18** And you will be brought before governors and kings^h for my sake, for a witness to them and the nations.ⁱ **19** However, when they hand you over, do not become anxious about how or what you are to speak, for what you are to speak will be given you in that hour;^j **20** for the ones speaking are not just you, but it is the spirit of your Father that speaks by you.^k **21** Further, brother will hand brother over to death, and a father his child, and children will rise up against parents and will have them put to death.^l **22** And you will be hated by all people on account of my name,^m but the one who has endured^{*}

m Mt 24:9; Lu 21:17; Joh 15:21; Ac 9:15, 16.

FOOTNOTES

10:22 *Or “who endures.”

STUDY NOTES

when Paul did something similar in Corinth by shaking out his garments, he added the explanatory words: “Let your blood be on your own heads. I am clean.” (Ac 18:6) Such gestures may already have been familiar to the disciples; pious Jews who had traveled through Gentile country would shake what they perceived to be unclean dust off their sandals before reentering Jewish territory. However, Jesus evidently had a different meaning in mind when giving these instructions to his disciples.

10:15 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

it will be more endurable for: See study note on Lu 10:12.

10:16 Look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

cautious as serpents: To be cautious here means to be prudent, sensible,

shrewd. Zoologists note that most snakes are wary, preferring to flee rather than attack. Likewise, Jesus warns his disciples to remain cautious toward opposers and avoid possible dangers as they carry out their preaching work.

yet innocent as doves: The two parts of Jesus’ admonition (to be cautious and to be innocent) complement each other. (See study note on **cautious as serpents** in this verse.) The Greek word rendered “innocent” (lit., “unmixed,” that is, “unspoiled; pure”) also occurs at Ro 16:19 (“innocent as to what is evil”) and Php 2:15 (“be blameless and innocent, children of God”). Here at Mt 10:16, being “innocent” apparently includes being genuine, honest, free of deceit and having pure motives. The dove is sometimes used in Hebrew word pictures and poetry to symbolize these and related qualities. (Ca 2:14; 5:2; compare study note on Mt 3:16.) Jesus’ point was that when his sheeplike followers faced persecution **as sheep among wolves**, they needed to *combine*

the characteristics of serpents and doves by being cautious, shrewd, pure of heart, blameless, and innocent.—Lu 10:3.

See  Gallery, image 34, Wolf.

10:17 local courts: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *sy-ne'dri-on*, here used in plural and rendered “local courts,” is most often used with reference to the Jewish high court in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin. (See  Glossary, “Sanhedrin,” and study notes on Mt 5:22; 26:59.) However, it was also a general term for an assembly or a meeting, and here it refers to local courts that were attached to the synagogues and had the power to inflict the penalties of scourging and excommunication.—Mt 23:34; Mr 13:9; Lu 21:12; Joh 9:22; 12:42; 16:2.

See  Gallery, image 41, Whip for Scourging.

10:22 on account of my name: See study note on Mt 24:9.

has endured: Or “endures.”—See study note on Mt 24:13.

to the end will be saved.^a **23** When they persecute you in one city, flee to another;^b for truly I say to you, you will by no means complete the circuit of the cities of Israel until the Son of man arrives.

24 “A student is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master.^c **25** It is enough for the student to become as his teacher, and the slave as his master.^d If people have called the master of the house Be-el’ze-bub,^e how much more those of his household? **26** So do not fear them, for there is nothing covered over that will not become uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known.^f **27** What I tell you in the darkness, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, * preach from the housetops.^g **28** And do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul;^h rather, fear him who can destroy both soul and body in Ge-hen’na.ⁱ **29** Two sparrows sell for a coin of small value, do they not? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father’s knowledge.^j **30** But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.^k **31** So have no fear; you are worth more than many sparrows.^l

Not Peace, But a Sword

32 “Everyone, then, who acknowledges me before men,^m I will also acknowledge him before my Father who is in the heavens.ⁿ **33** But whoever disowns me before men, I will also disown him before my Father who is in the heavens.^o **34** Do not think I

CHAP. 10

- a Mt 24:13
Lu 21:19
Re 2:10
- b Mt 23:34
Ac 8:1
- c Joh 13:16
Joh 15:20
- d 1Pe 2:21
- e Mt 12:24
Mr 3:22
Lu 11:15
Joh 8:48
- f Mr 4:22
Lu 8:17
Lu 12:2
- g Lu 12:3
- h Pr 29:25
Re 2:10
- i Lu 12:4, 5
Heb 10:31
- j De 22:6-7
Lu 12:6, 7
- k Lu 21:18
- l Mt 6:26
m Ro 10:9
- n Lu 12:8, 9
Re 3:5
- o Mr 8:38
Lu 9:26
2Ti 2:12

FOOTNOTES
10:27 * Lit., “hear in (into) the ear.”

STUDY NOTES
10:23 **Son of man:** See study note on Mt 8:20.
10:25 **Beelzebub:** Possibly an alteration of Baal-zebub, meaning “Owner (Lord) of the Flies,” the Baal worshipped by the Philistines at Ekron. (2Ki 1:3) Some Greek manuscripts use the alternate forms Beelzeboul or Beezeboul, possibly meaning “Owner (Lord) of the Lofty Abode (Habitation)” or if a play on the non-Biblical Hebrew word *ze’vei* (dung), “Owner (Lord) of the Dung.” As shown at Mt 12:24, this is a designation applied to Satan—the prince, or ruler, of the demons.

how much more: See study note on Mt 7:11.
10:27 **in the light:** That is, openly, publicly.
preach from the housetops: An idiom with the meaning “to proclaim publicly.” In Bible times, houses had flat roofs from which announcements could be made and certain actions could become widely known.—2Sa 16:22.
See  Gallery, image 42, Typical Flat-Roofed Houses.
10:28 **soul:** Or “life,” that is, a person’s future life by means of a resurrection. The Greek word *psy-khe* and its corresponding Hebrew word *ne’phesh* (both traditionally rendered “soul”) basically refer to (1) people, (2) animals, or

(3) the life that a person or an animal has. (Ge 1:20; 2:7; Nu 31:28; 1Pe 3:20; ftns.) Examples of the use of the Greek *psy-khe*’ to mean “life that a person has” may be found at Mt 6:25; 10:39; 16:25, 26; Mr 8:35-37; Lu 12:20; Joh 10:11, 15; 12:25; 13:37, 38; 15:13; Ac 20:10. Bible texts like these help to show the correct understanding of Jesus’ words here.—See  Glossary.
him who can destroy both soul and body: It is only God who is able to destroy a person’s “soul” (in this context, referring to his prospects for life) or who can resurrect him to enjoy everlasting life. This is one example of where the Greek word rendered “soul” is referred to as mortal and destructible. Other examples are Mr 3:4; Lu 17:33; Joh 12:25; Ac 3:23.

CHAP. 10

a Lu 12:51-53

b Mic 7:6

c Mt 19:29

Lu 14:26

d Mt 16:24, 25

Mr 8:34, 35

Lu 9:23

Lu 14:27

e Lu 9:24

Lu 17:33

Joh 12:25

f Mt 18:5

Mt 25:40

Lu 10:16

Joh 12:44

Joh 13:20

g 1Ki 17:9,10

1Ki 17:20-23

2Ki 4:8

2Ki 4:13-17

h Mt 25:40

Mr 9:41

Heb 6:10

came to bring peace to the earth; I came to bring, not peace, but a sword.^a **35** For I came to cause division, with a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.^b **36** Indeed, a man's enemies will be those of his own household. **37** Whoever has greater affection for father or mother than for me is not worthy of me; and whoever has greater affection for son or daughter than for me is not worthy of me.^c **38** And whoever does not accept his torture stake and follow after me is not worthy of me.^d **39** Whoever finds his soul will lose it, and whoever loses his soul for my sake will find it.^e

Receiving Jesus' Disciples

40 "Whoever receives you receives me also, and whoever receives me receives also the One who sent me.^f **41** Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will get a prophet's reward,^g and whoever receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will get a righteous man's reward. **42** And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water to drink because he is a disciple, I tell you truly, he will by no means lose his reward."^h

STUDY NOTES

10:28 Gehenna: This means everlasting destruction.—See study note on Mt 5:22 and  Glossary.

See  Gallery, image 30, The Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna).

10:29 sparrows: The Greek word *strou-thi'on* is a diminutive form meaning any small bird, but it often referred to sparrows, the cheapest of all birds sold as food.

for a coin of small value: Lit., "for an assarion," which was the wage a man earned for 45 minutes' work. (See  App. B14.) On this occasion, during his third Galilean tour, Jesus says that **two** sparrows cost an assarion. On another occasion, evidently about a year later during his ministry in Judea, Jesus says that five sparrows could be obtained for double this price. (Lu 12:6) Comparing these accounts, we learn that sparrows were of such little value to the merchants that the fifth one would be included free of charge.

See  Gallery, image 44, Sparrow.

10:30 even the hairs of your head are all numbered: The number of hairs on the human head is said to average more than 100,000. Jehovah's intimate knowledge of such minute details guarantees that he is keenly interested in each follower of Christ.

10:38 accept: Lit., "take (up); take hold of." Here used figuratively in the sense of taking on oneself the responsibilities and consequences connected with becoming a disciple of Jesus.

torture stake: Or "execution stake." This is the first occurrence of the Greek word *stau-ros'*. In classical Greek, it primarily referred to an upright stake or pole. Used figuratively, it sometimes stood for the suffering, shame, torture, and even death that a person experienced because of being a follower of Jesus.—See  Glossary.

10:39 soul: Or "life." See  Glossary.

10:41 because he is a prophet: Lit., "in the name of a prophet." In this context,

the Greek idiom "in the name of" indicates a recognition of the office and work of a prophet.—Compare study note on Mt 28:19.

a prophet's reward: Those who accept and support true prophets from God will be richly rewarded. The account of the widow in 1Ki 17 is an example of this.

Jesus Praises John the Baptist

11 When Jesus had finished giving instructions to his 12 disciples, he set out from there to teach and preach in their cities.^a

2 But John, having heard in jail^b about the works of the Christ, sent his disciples^c **3** to ask him: “Are you the Coming One, or are we to expect a different one?”^d **4** In reply Jesus said to them: “Go and report to John what you are hearing and seeing:^e **5** The blind are now seeing^f and the lame are walking, the lepers^g are being cleansed and the deaf are hearing, the dead are being raised up and the poor are being told the good news.^h **6** Happy is the one who finds no cause for stumbling in me.”ⁱ

7 While these were on their way, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see?^j A reed being tossed by the wind?^k **8** What, then, did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft garments?^{*} Why, those wearing soft garments are in the houses of kings. **9** Really, then, why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and far more than a prophet.^l **10** This is the one about whom it is written: ‘Look! I am sending my messenger^{*} ahead of you,[#] who will prepare your way ahead of you!’^m **11** Truly I say to you, among those born of women, there has not been raised up anyone greater than John the Baptist, but a lesser person in the Kingdom of the heavens is greater than he is.ⁿ **12** From the

CHAP. 11

- a Mt 4:23
Mt 19:1
Lu 9:6
- b Mt 14:3
Mr 6:17
- c Lu 7:18-23
- d Mt 3:11
Joh 1:15
- e Lu 7:22
- f Isa 35:5, 6
- g Mt 8:3
- h Isa 61:1
Mt 4:23
- i Mr 6:3
Lu 7:23
1Co 1:23
1Pe 2:7, 8
- j Mt 3:1, 5
- k Lu 7:24-28
- l Lu 1:67, 76
- m Isa 40:3
Mal 3:1
Mt 3:3
Mr 1:2
Lu 1:17
Joh 3:28
- n Lu 7:28
Joh 3:3

FOOTNOTES

11:8 *Or “fine (luxurious) clothing.”

11:10 *Or “angel.” [#]Lit., “before your face.”

STUDY NOTES

11:1 teach and preach: See study note on Mt 4:23.

their cities: Evidently referring to the Jewish cities of that region (Galilee).

11:2 the Christ: Here the title “Christ,” meaning “Anointed One,” is preceded by the definite article in Greek. This is a way of indicating that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the one who had been anointed in a special sense.—See study notes on Mt 1:1; 2:4.

11:3 the Coming One: That is, the Messiah.—Ps 118:26; Mt 3:11; 21:9; 23:39.

11:5 lepers: See study note on Mt 8:2 and  Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

11:8 See  Gallery, image 45, Royal Houses.

11:10 Look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

11:11 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

the Baptist: Or “the Immerser; the Dipper.”—See study note on Mt 3:1.

11:12 the goal toward which men press . . . those pressing forward: Two related Greek words used here convey the basic idea of forceful action or endeavor. Some Bible translators have understood them in a negative sense (that of acting with or suffering violence), but the context and

the only other Biblical occurrence of the Greek verb, at Lu 16:16, make it reasonable to understand the terms in the positive sense of “going after something with enthusiasm; seeking fervently.” These words evidently describe the forceful actions or endeavors of those who responded to the preaching of John the Baptist, which put them in line to become prospective members of the Kingdom.

11:13 the Prophets and the Law: The reversal of the usual order, “the Law and the Prophets” (Mt 5:17; 7:12; 22:40; Lu 16:16), occurs only here. The general meaning is evidently the same (see study note on Mt 5:17), although the prophetic aspect of the Scriptures seems to be given more emphasis here. Even the Law is said to have **prophesied**, emphasizing its prophetic character.

CHAP. 11

- a Lu 13:24
 b Lu 16:16
 c Mal 4:5
 Mt 17:10-13
 d Mt 13:9, 43
 e Lu 7:31-35
 f Lu 1:13, 15
 g Mt 9:10
 Mr 2:15
 Joh 2:2
 h Lu 5:30
 Lu 15:2
 Lu 19:7
 i Lu 7:34, 35
 j Joh 12:37, 38
 k Jon 3:5, 6
 Lu 10:13
 l Mt 15:21-28
 m Lu 10:14
 n Lu 4:31
 o Lu 10:15

days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of the heavens is the goal toward which men press, and those pressing forward are seizing it.^a **13** For all, the Prophets and the Law, prophesied until John;^b **14** and if you are willing to accept it, he is ‘E-li’jah who is to come.’^c **15** Let the one who has ears listen.^d

Unresponsive Generation Condemned

16 “With whom will I compare this generation?^e It is like young children sitting in the marketplaces who call out to their playmates, **17** saying: ‘We played the flute for you, but you did not dance; we wailed, but you did not beat yourselves in grief.’ **18** Likewise, John came neither eating nor drinking,^f but people say, ‘He has a demon.’ **19** The Son of man did come eating and drinking,^g but people say, ‘Look! A man who is a glutton and is given to drinking wine, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’^h All the same, wisdom is proved righteous* by its works.”^{#i}

20 Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his powerful works had taken place, for they did not repent:^j **21** “Woe to you, Cho-ra’zin! Woe to you, Beth-sa’i-da! because if the powerful works that took place in you had taken place in Tyre and Si’don, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes.^k **22** But I say to you, it will be more enduring for Tyre and Si’don^l on Judgment Day than for you.^m **23** And you, Ca-per’na-um,ⁿ will you perhaps be exalted to heaven? Down to the Grave you will come;^o because if the powerful

FOOTNOTES

11:19 *Or “is vindicated.” #Or “by its results.”

STUDY NOTES

11:14 **Elijah:** From the Hebrew name meaning “My God Is Jehovah.”

11:16 See  Gallery, image 43, Bone Flute.

See  Gallery, image 46, The Marketplace.

11:17 **beat yourselves in grief:** A person repeatedly beat his hands against his chest to express unusual grief or feelings of guilt and remorse.—Isa 32:12; Na 2:7; Lu 23:48.

11:18 **neither eating nor drinking:** This evidently refers to John’s life of self-denial, which included fasting as well as adhering to the Nazirite requirement of abstaining from alcoholic beverages.—Nu 6:2-4; Mt 9:14, 15; Lu 1:15; 7:33.

11:19 **Son of man:** See study note on Mt 8:20.

tax collectors: See study note on Mt 5:46.

wisdom is proved righteous by its works: Here wisdom is personified and depicted as having works. In the parallel account at Lu 7:35, wisdom is depicted as having “children.” Wisdom’s children, or works—that is, the evidence produced by John the Baptist and Jesus—prove that

the accusations against these two men are false. Jesus is, in effect, saying: ‘Look at the righteous works and conduct, and you will know that the charge is false.’

11:21 See  Gallery, image 47, Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida.

11:23 **Capernaum:** See study note on Mt 4:13.

heaven: Here used metaphorically to denote a highly favored position.

the Grave: Or “Hades,” that is, the common grave of mankind. (See  Glossary, “Grave.”) Here used figuratively to represent the debasement that Capernaum would experience.

works that took place in you had taken place in Sod'om, it would have remained until this very day. **24** But I say to you, it will be more endurable for the land of Sod'om on Judgment Day than for you.”^a

Jesus Praises His Father; Jesus' Yoke Refreshes

25 At that time Jesus said in response: “I publicly praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intellectual ones and have revealed them to young children.^b **26** Yes, O Father, because this is the way you approved. **27** All things have been handed over to me by my Father,^c and no one fully knows the Son except the Father;^d neither does anyone fully know the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son is willing to reveal him.^e **28** Come to me, all you who are toiling* and loaded down, and I will refresh you. **29** Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,* for I am mild-tempered^f and lowly in heart,^g and you will find refreshment for yourselves. **30** For my yoke is kindly,* and my load is light.”

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

12 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples got hungry and started to pluck heads of grain and to eat.^h **2** At seeing this, the Pharisees said to him: “Look! Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.”ⁱ **3** He said to them: “Have you not read what

CHAP. 11

a Mt 10:15
Lu 10:12

b Isa 29:14
Mt 13:15
Lu 10:21
1Co 1:27

c Joh 3:35

d Joh 1:18

e Lu 10:22
Joh 6:46
Joh 10:15
1Jo 5:20

f 2Co 10:1

g Zec 9:9

CHAP. 12

h Ex 12:16
De 23:25
Mr 2:23-28
Lu 6:1-5

i Ex 20:10
Ex 31:15
De 5:14

FOOTNOTES

11:28 *Or “struggling hard.” Or possibly, “weary; tired.” **11:29** *Or “become my disciples (learners).” **11:30** *Or “easy to bear; pleasant.”

STUDY NOTES

11:24 to you: Here the pronoun “you” is plural in Greek.

it will be more endurable for: See study note on Lu 10:12.

for you: Here the pronoun “you” is singular in Greek, evidently addressing the city.

11:25 to young children: Or “to childlike ones,” that is, humble, teachable individuals.

11:28 loaded down: Those whom Jesus beckons to come were “loaded down” by anxiety and toil. Their worship of Jehovah had become burdensome because of the human traditions that had been added to the Law of Moses. (Mt 23:4) Even the Sabbath, which was meant to be a source of refreshment, had become a burden. —Ex 23:12; Mr 2:23-28; Lu 6:1-11.

I will refresh you: The Greek word for “refresh” can refer both to rest (Mt 26:45; Mr 6:31) and to relief from toil in order to recover and regain strength (2Co 7:13; Phm 7). The context shows that taking on Jesus’ “yoke” (Mt 11:29) would involve service, not rest. The active Greek verb with Jesus as the subject conveys the thought of his rejuvenating and energiz-

ing weary ones so that they would desire to take up his light and kindly yoke.

11:29 Take my yoke upon you: Jesus used “yoke” figuratively in the sense of submission to authority and direction. If he had in mind a double yoke, one that God placed upon Jesus, then he would be inviting his disciples to get under the yoke *with him* and he would assist them. In that case, the phrase could be rendered: “Get under my yoke with me.” If the yoke is one that Jesus himself puts on others, then the reference is to submitting oneself to Christ’s authority and direction as his disciple.—See **L** Glossary, “Yoke.”

mild-tempered: See study note on Mt 5:5.

CHAP. 12

- a 1Sa 21:1-6
 b Ex 25:30
 Ex 40:22, 23
 c Le 24:5-9
 d Nu 28:9
 Joh 7:22
 e Lu 11:31, 32
 f Mt 23:23
 g Ho 6:6
 Mic 6:6, 8
 Mt 9:13
 h Ex 34:21
 Le 25:3, 4, 10
 Mr 2:27, 28
 Lu 6:5
 i Mr 3:1-6
 Lu 6:6-11
 j Lu 14:3
 Joh 9:16
 k Ex 23:4
 De 22:4
 Lu 14:5

David did when he and the men with him were hungry?^a **4** How he entered into the house of God and they ate the loaves of presentation,^b something that it was not lawful for him or those with him to eat, but for the priests only?^c **5** Or have you not read in the Law that on the Sabbaths the priests in the temple violate the Sabbath and continue guiltless?^d **6** But I tell you that something greater than the temple is here.^e **7** However, if you had understood what this means, ‘I want mercy^f and not sacrifice,’^g you would not have condemned the guiltless ones. **8** For the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath.”^h

Man With a Withered Hand Healed; Jesus Is God’s Beloved Servant

9 After departing from that place, he went into their synagogue, **10** and look! there was a man with a withered* hand!ⁱ So they asked him, “Is it lawful to cure on the Sabbath?” so that they might accuse him.^j **11** He said to them: “If you have one sheep and that sheep falls into a pit on the Sabbath, is there a man among you who will not grab hold of it and lift it out?^k **12** How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do a fine thing on the Sabbath.” **13** Then he said to

FOOTNOTES

12:10 *Or “paralyzed.”

STUDY NOTES

11:29 lowly in heart: The Greek word for “lowly” refers to the quality of being humble and unpretentious; it also occurs at Jas 4:6 and 1Pe 5:5, where it is rendered “humble ones.” The condition of a person’s figurative heart is reflected in his disposition or his attitude toward God and other people.

yourselves: Or “your souls.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

See  Gallery, image 48, Yoke.

12:1 through the grainfields: Perhaps by means of footpaths that separated one tract of land from another.

Sabbath: See  Glossary.

See  Gallery, image 49, Kernels of Grain.

12:2 what is not lawful: Jehovah had commanded that the Israelites do no work on the Sabbath. (Ex 20:8-10) Jewish re-

ligious leaders claimed the right to define exactly what constituted work. According to them, Jesus’ disciples were guilty of harvesting (plucking) and threshing (rubbing) grain. (Lu 6:1, 2) However, such a definition overstepped Jehovah’s command.

12:4 house of God: See study note on Mr 2:26.

loaves of presentation: Or “showbread.” The Hebrew expression literally means “bread of the face.” The bread was figuratively before Jehovah as a constant offering to him.—Ex 25:30; see  Glossary and  App. B5.

12:5 violate the Sabbath: That is, to treat the Sabbath as any other day. They did so by carrying on butchering and other work in connection with the animal sacrifices.—Nu 28:9, 10.

12:7 what this means: Lit., “what is.” Here the Greek word *e-stin*’ (literally meaning “is”) has the sense of “signifies; means.”—See study note on Mt 26:26.

mercy and not sacrifice: See study note on Mt 9:13.

12:8 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

Lord of the Sabbath: Jesus applies this expression to himself (Mr 2:28; Lu 6:5), indicating that the Sabbath was at his disposal for doing the work commanded by his heavenly Father. (Compare Joh 5:19; 10:37, 38.) On the Sabbath, Jesus performed some of his most outstanding miracles, which included healing the sick. (Lu 13:10-13; Joh 5:5-9; 9:1-14) This evidently foreshadowed the kind of relief he will bring during his Kingdom rule, which will be like a sabbath rest.—Heb 10:1.

12:9 See  Gallery, image 26, First-Century Synagogue.

12:10 hand: The Greek word rendered “hand” is broad in meaning and can refer to a person’s arm, hand, and fingers.—See also Mt 12:13.

12:12 How much more: See study note on Mt 7:11.

the man: “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and it was restored sound like the other hand. **14** But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him to kill him. **15** Having come to know this, Jesus departed from there. Many also followed him,^a and he cured them all, **16** but he sternly ordered them not to make him known,^b **17** in order to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, who said:

18 “Look! My servant^c whom I chose, my beloved, whom I have approved!^d I will put my spirit upon him,^e and what justice is he will make clear to the nations. **19** He will not quarrel^f nor cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the main streets. **20** No bruised reed will he crush, and no smoldering wick will he extinguish,^g until he brings justice with success. **21** Indeed, in his name nations will hope.”^h

CHAP. 12

- a Mr 3:7
- b Mt 8:3, 4
Mr 3:11, 12
Mr 7:35, 36
- c Ac 3:13
- d Mt 3:17
Mt 17:5
- e Isa 61:1
Mr 1:10
- f 2Ti 2:24
- g Mt 11:28
- h Isa 11:10
Isa 42:1-4
Ac 4:12
Ro 15:12
- i Mr 3:22-27
Lu 11:15-23

Demons Expelled by Holy Spirit

22 Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and speechless, and he cured him, so that the speechless man could speak and see. **23** Well, all the crowds were astounded and began to say: “May this not perhaps be the Son of David?” **24** At hearing this, the Pharisees said: “This fellow does not expel the demons except by means of Be-el’ze-bub, the ruler of the demons.”ⁱ **25** Knowing their thoughts, he said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself comes to ruin, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. **26** In the same way, if Satan expels Satan, he has become divided against himself; how, then, will his kingdom stand? **27** Moreover, if I expel the demons by means of Be-el’ze-bub, by whom

STUDY NOTES

12:16 not to make him known: See study note on Mr 3:12.

12:17 to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: See study note on Mt 1:22.

12:18 Look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

I have: Or “my soul has.” In this quote from Isa 42:1, the Greek word *psy-khe'* is used to render the Hebrew word *ne'phesh*, both traditionally rendered “soul.”—See ■ Glossary, “Soul.”

whom I have approved: Or “with whom I am well-pleased.”—See study note on Mt 3:17.

12:20 smoldering wick: A common household lamp was a small earthenware vessel filled with olive oil. A flax wick drew the oil up to feed the flame. The Greek expression rendered “smoldering wick” may refer to a wick that gives off smoke because an ember is still present but the flame is fading or is extinguished. The prophecy of Isa 42:3 foretold Jesus’ compassion; he would never extinguish the last spark of hope in humble and downtrodden people.

with success: Or “to victory.” The Greek word *ni'kos* is rendered “victory” at 1Co 15:55, 57.

12:24 Beelzebub: A designation applied to Satan.—See study note on Mt 10:25.

12:25 house: That is, a household. The original-language term for “house” could refer to an individual family or an extended household, including one associated with the palaces of kings. (Ac 7:10; Php 4:22) The term was used of ruling dynasties, such as those of the Herods and the Caesars, where internal dissension was common and destructive. Here in Matthew’s account, the term “house” is used in parallel with **city**.

12:26 Satan: See study note on Mt 4:10.

CHAP. 12

- a Lu 11:20
 b Mr 9:40
 Lu 9:50
 Lu 11:23
 c Mr 3:28, 29
 Ac 7:51
 Heb 6:4, 6
 d 1Ti 1:13
 e Lu 12:10
 Heb 10:26
 f Mt 7:17
 Lu 6:43
 g Mt 3:7
 Mt 23:33
 h Mt 15:11
 i Lu 6:45
 Jas 3:6
 j Ec 12:14
 Ro 14:12

do your sons expel them? This is why they will be your judges. **28** But if it is by means of God's spirit that I expel the demons, the Kingdom of God has really overtaken you.*^a **29** Or how can anyone invade the house of a strong man and seize his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Only then can he plunder his house. **30** Whoever is not on my side is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.^b

Unforgivable Sin

31 "For this reason I say to you, every sort of sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the spirit will not be forgiven.^c **32** For example, whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven him;^d but whoever speaks against the holy spirit, it will not be forgiven him, no, not in this system of things nor in that to come.^e

Tree Known by Its Fruit

33 "Either you make the tree fine and its fruit fine or make the tree rotten and its fruit rotten, for by its fruit the tree is known.^f **34** Offspring of vipers,^g how can you speak good things when you are wicked? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.^h **35** The good man out of his good treasure sends out good things, whereas the wicked man out of his wicked treasure sends out wicked things.ⁱ **36** I tell you that men will render an account^j on Judgment Day for every unprofitable* saying that they speak; **37** for by your words you will be declared righteous, and by your words you will be condemned."

FOOTNOTES

12:28 *Or "has already come to you; has caught you unawares." **12:36** *Or "worthless."

STUDY NOTES

12:27 **sons:** Here used in the sense of "followers; disciples."

they: That is, "your sons."

be your judges: That is, what their sons did refuted the Pharisees' argument.

12:28 **God's spirit:** Or "God's active force." In a later, similar conversation, recorded at Lu 11:20, Jesus refers to the

expelling of demons "by means of God's finger."—See study note on Lu 11:20.

12:31 **blasphemy:** Refers to defamatory, injurious, or abusive speech against God or against sacred things. Since holy **spirit** emanates from God himself, willfully opposing or denying its operation amounted to blasphemy against God. As shown at Mt 12:24, 28, Jewish religious leaders saw God's spirit at work in Jesus as he performed miracles; yet, they attributed this power to Satan the Devil.

12:32 **system of things:** The Greek word *ai-on'*, having the basic meaning "age," can refer to a state of affairs or

to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. Jesus is stating that blasphemy against the holy spirit will not be forgiven in the present ungodly system of things under Satan's rule (2Co 4:4; Eph 2:2; Tit 2:12) nor in the coming system of things under God's rule, in which "everlasting life" is promised (Lu 18:29, 30).—See  Glossary.

12:34 **Offspring of vipers:** See study note on Mt 23:33.

See  Gallery, image 14, Horned Viper.

Sign of Jonah

CHAP. 12

38 Then as an answer to him, some of the scribes and the Pharisees said: “Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.”^a

39 In reply he said to them: “A wicked and adulterous generation keeps on seeking a sign,^{*} but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jo’nah the prophet.^b **40** For just as Jo’nah was in the belly of the huge fish for three days and three nights,^c so the Son of man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.^d **41** Men of Nin’e-veh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at what Jo’nah preached.^e But look! something more than Jo’nah is here.^f **42** The queen of the south will be raised up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Sol’o-mon.^g But look! something more than Sol’o-mon is here.^h

- a Mt 16:1
Mr 8:11
Joh 2:18
b Mt 16:4
Lu 11:29-32
c Jon 1:17
d Mt 16:21
Mt 17:23
Mt 27:63
Lu 24:46
e Jon 3:5
f Lu 11:30
g 1Ki 10:1
2Ch 9:1
h Mt 12:6
Lu 11:31
i Lu 11:24-26
j Heb 6:4, 6
2Pe 2:20

When Unclean Spirit Returns

43 “When an unclean spirit comes out of a man, it passes through waterless places in search of a resting-place and finds none.ⁱ **44** Then it says, ‘I will go back to my house from which I moved,’ and on arriving, it finds the house unoccupied but swept clean and adorned. **45** Then it goes and takes along with it seven different^{*} spirits more wicked than itself, and after getting inside, they dwell there; and the final circumstances of that man become worse than the first.^j That is how it will be also with this wicked generation.”

FOOTNOTES

12:39 *Or “miraculous proof.” **12:45**
*Or “other.”

STUDY NOTES

12:39 **adulterous:** Refers to spiritual adultery, or unfaithfulness to God.—See study note on Mr 8:38.

sign of Jonah: Jonah compared his deliverance from the belly of the fish after about three days to being raised from the Grave. (Jon 1:17–2:2) Jesus’ resurrection from the literal grave was to be just as real as Jonah’s deliverance from the belly of the fish. However, even when Jesus was resurrected after being dead for parts of three days, his hard-hearted critics did not exercise faith in him.

12:40 **three days and three nights:**

Other Bible accounts show that this expression can mean parts of three days and that part of one day can be considered a whole day.—Ge 42:17, 18; 1Ki 12:5, 12; Mt 27:62-66; 28:1-6.

12:41; 13:3 **look!:** See study note on Mt 1:20.

12:42 **queen of the south:** That is, the queen of Sheba. Her kingdom is thought to have been located in SW Arabia.—1Ki 10:1.

12:46 **brothers:** That is, Jesus’ half brothers. Their names are mentioned at Mt 13:55 and Mr 6:3.—See study note on Mt 13:55 regarding the meaning of the term “brother.”

12:47 **So someone . . . to you:** This verse is omitted in some ancient manuscripts.

12:49 **Look! My mother and my brothers!:** Jesus here makes a distinction between his natural brothers, some of whom evidently lacked faith in him (Joh 7:5), and his spiritual brothers, his disciples. He shows that regardless of how precious the ties are that bind him to his relatives, his relationship with those who do “the will of [his] Father” is even more precious.—Mt 12:50.

13:1 See  Gallery, image 50, The Sea of Galilee Near Capernaum.

13:2 **sat down:** The custom among Jewish teachers.—Mt 5:1, 2.

CHAP. 12

- a Mt 13:55
Joh 2:12
Ac 1:14
1Co 9:5
Ga 1:19
- b Mr 3:31-35
Lu 8:19-21
- c Joh 20:17
Heb 2:11
- d Mr 3:35
Lu 8:21

CHAP. 13

- e Mr 4:1
- f Mt 13:34
- g Mr 4:2-9
Lu 8:4-8
- h Mt 13:19
- i Mt 13:20, 21
- j Mt 13:22
Mr 4:18, 19
Lu 8:14
- k Mt 13:23
Mr 4:8
Lu 8:8
- l Mt 11:15

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

46 While he was yet speaking to the crowds, his mother and brothers^a were standing outside, seeking to speak to him.^b **47** So someone said to him: “Look! Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak to you.” **48** In reply he said to the one who spoke to him: “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” **49** And extending his hand toward his disciples, he said: “Look! My mother and my brothers!^c **50** For whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, that one is my brother and sister and mother.”^d

The Illustration of the Sower

13 On that day Jesus left the house and was sitting by the sea. **2** And such large crowds gathered to him that he went aboard a boat and sat down, and all the crowd was standing on the beach.^e **3** Then he told them many things by illustrations,^f saying: “Look! A sower went out to sow.^g **4** As he was sowing, some seeds fell alongside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.^h **5** Others fell on rocky ground where there was not much soil, and they immediately sprang up because the soil was not deep.ⁱ **6** But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7** Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them.^j **8** Still others fell on the fine soil, and they began to yield fruit, this one 100 times more, that one 60, the other 30.^k **9** Let the one who has ears listen.”^l

STUDY NOTES

13:2 on the beach: Along the shore of the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum, there is a spot that forms a natural amphitheater. The good acoustic properties of this location would have allowed a large crowd to hear Jesus speak to them from a boat.

13:3 illustrations: Or “parables.” The Greek word *pa-ra-bo-le'*, which literally means “a placing beside (together),” may be in the form of a parable, a proverb, or an illustration. Jesus often explains a thing by ‘placing it beside,’ or comparing it with, another similar thing. (Mr 4:30) His illustrations were short and usually fictitious narratives from which a moral or spiritual truth could be drawn.

See  Gallery, image 51, Sowing Seed.

13:5 rocky ground: Not referring to spots where rocks were scattered in the soil but to bedrock or a shelf of rock where there was little soil. The parallel account at Lu 8:6 says that some seed fell “on the rock.” Such terrain would prevent seeds from sinking their roots deep enough to find needed moisture.

13:7 among the thorns: Jesus is evidently referring, not to full-grown thornbushes, but to weeds that had not been cleaned out of the plowed soil. These would grow and choke out the newly planted seeds.

Why Jesus Used Illustrations

10 So the disciples came and said to him: “Why do you speak to them by the use of illustrations?”^a **11** In reply he said: “To you it is granted* to understand the sacred secrets^b of the Kingdom of the heavens, but to them it is not granted. **12** For whoever has, more will be given him, and he will be made to abound; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.^c **13** That is why I speak to them by the use of illustrations; for looking, they look in vain, and hearing, they hear in vain, nor do they get the sense of it.^d **14** And the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled in their case. It says: ‘You will indeed hear but by no means get the sense of it, and you will indeed look but by no means see.’^e **15** For the heart of this people has grown unreceptive,^{*} and with their ears they have heard without response,[#] and they have shut their eyes, so that they might never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and get the sense of it with their hearts and turn back and I heal them.’^f

16 “However, happy are your eyes because they see and your ears because they hear.^g **17** For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things you are observing but did not see them,^h and to hear the things you are hearing but did not hear them.

Illustration of the Sower Explained

18 “Now listen to the illustration of the man who sowed.ⁱ **19** Where anyone hears the word of the Kingdom but does not get the sense of it, the wicked one^j comes and snatches away

CHAP. 13

- a Mr 4:10, 11
Lu 8:9, 10
- b 1Co 2:9, 10
Eph 1:9-12
Eph 3:4
Col 1:26, 27
Col 2:2
- c Mt 25:29
Mr 4:25
Lu 8:18
Lu 19:26
- d Isa 6:10
Jer 5:21
Eze 12:2
Mr 4:12
- e Joh 12:40
Ro 11:8
2Co 3:14
- f Isa 6:9, 10
Mr 4:12
Ac 28:26, 27
- g Lu 10:23, 24
- h Joh 8:56
Eph 3:5
1Pe 1:10
- i Mr 4:14
Lu 8:11
- j 1Pe 5:8

FOOTNOTES

13:11 * Or “You have been allowed (permitted).” **13:15** * Lit., “was made thick (fat).” # Or “heard unwillingly.”

STUDY NOTES

13:11 **sacred secrets:** The Greek word *my-ste’ri-on* is rendered “sacred secret” 25 times in the *New World Translation*. Here used in the plural, this expression refers to aspects of God’s purpose that are withheld until God chooses to make them known. Then they are fully revealed but only to those to whom he chooses to give understanding. (Col 1:25, 26) Once revealed, the sacred secrets of God are

given the widest possible proclamation. This is evident by the Bible’s use of such terms as “declaring,” “making known,” “preach,” “revealed,” and “revelation” in connection with the expression “the sacred secret.” (1Co 2:1; Eph 1:9; 3:3; Col 1:25, 26; 4:3) The primary “sacred secret of God” centers on the identification of Jesus Christ as the promised “offspring,” or Messiah. (Col 2:2; Ge 3:15) However, this sacred secret has many facets, including the role Jesus is assigned to play in God’s purpose. (Col 4:3) As Jesus showed on this occasion, “the sacred secrets” are connected with **the Kingdom of the heavens**, or “the Kingdom of God,” the heavenly government in which Jesus rules

as King. (Mr 4:11; Lu 8:10; see study note on Mt 3:2.) The Christian Greek Scriptures use the term *my-ste’ri-on* in a way different from that of the ancient mystery religions. Those religions, often based on fertility cults that flourished in the first century C.E., promised that devotees would receive immortality, direct revelation, and approach to the gods through mystic rites. The content of those secrets was obviously not based on truth. Those initiated into mystery religions vowed to keep the secrets to themselves and therefore shrouded in mystery, which was unlike the open proclamation of the sacred secrets of Christianity. When the Scriptures use this term in connection

CHAP. 13

- a Mr 4:15
Lu 8:12
- b Mr 4:16, 17
Lu 8:13
- c Lu 12:22
- d Mt 6:21
Mr 4:18, 19
Mr 10:23
Lu 8:14
1Ti 6:9
2Ti 4:10
- e Mr 4:20
Lu 8:15
- f Mr 4:26-30
- g Mt 13:38, 39
- h Re 14:15

what has been sown in his heart; this is the one sown alongside the road.^a **20** As for the one sown on rocky ground, this is the one hearing the word and at once accepting it with joy.^b **21** Yet, he has no root in himself but continues for a time, and after tribulation or persecution has arisen on account of the word, he is at once stumbled. **22** As for the one sown among the thorns, this is the one hearing the word, but the anxiety of this system of things^c and the deceptive power of riches* choke the word, and it[#] becomes unfruitful.^d **23** As for the one sown upon the fine soil, this is the one hearing the word and getting the sense of it, who really does bear fruit and produces, this one 100 times more, that one 60, the other 30.”^e

The Wheat and the Weeds

24 He presented another illustration to them, saying: “The Kingdom of the heavens may be likened to a man who sowed fine seed in his field.^f **25** While men were sleeping, his enemy came and oversowed weeds in among the wheat and left. **26** When the stalk sprouted and produced fruit, then the weeds also appeared. **27** So the slaves of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow fine seed in your field? How, then, does it have weeds?’ **28** He said to them, ‘An enemy, a man, did this.’^g The slaves said to him, ‘Do you want us, then, to go out and collect them?’ **29** He said, ‘No, for fear that while collecting the weeds, you uproot the wheat with them. **30** Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the harvest season, I will tell the reapers: First collect the weeds and bind them in bundles to burn them up; then gather the wheat into my storehouse.’”^h

FOOTNOTES

13:22 *Or “the seductiveness (deceptive pleasure) of being wealthy.” #Or possibly, “he,” that is, “the one hearing the word.”

STUDY NOTES

with false worship, it is rendered “mystery” in the *New World Translation*.—For the three occurrences where *my-ste’ri-on* is rendered “mystery,” see study notes on 2Th 2:7; Re 17:5, 7.

13:17 **truly:** See study note on Mt 5:18.

13:22 **system of things:** The Greek word *ai-on*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. Here the term is connected with the anxieties and problems that characterize life in the present system of things.—See  Glossary.

13:25 **oversowed:** This hostile act was not unknown in the ancient Near East.

weeds: Generally believed to be bearded darnel (*Lolium temulentum*), a species of the grass family. This poisonous plant closely resembles wheat when the wheat is in its early stages of development, before it reaches maturity.

13:28 **The slaves said:** Although a few manuscripts read “They said,” the current reading has stronger manuscript support.

13:29 **uproot the wheat with them:** The roots of the weeds and wheat would have become intertwined. So even if the weeds were identified, uprooting them would result in loss of the wheat.

13:30 **collect the weeds:** When bearded darnel (see study note on Mt 13:25) reaches maturity, it can readily be distinguished from wheat.

See  Gallery, image 52, Remains of Ancient Storehouses at Masada.

See  Gallery, image 53, Reapers.

The Mustard Grain; the Leaven

CHAP. 13

31 He presented another illustration to them, saying: “The Kingdom of the heavens is like a mustard grain that a man took and planted in his field.^a **32** It is, in fact, the tiniest of all the seeds, but when it has grown, it is the largest of the vegetable plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and find lodging among its branches.”

a Mr 4:30-32
Lu 13:18, 19
b Lu 13:21
c Mr 4:33, 34
d Ps 78:2
e Mt 24:14
Ro 10:18
Col 1:6
f Joh 8:44

33 He told them another illustration: “The Kingdom of the heavens is like leaven that a woman took and mixed with three large measures of flour until the whole mass was fermented.”^b

Use of Illustrations Fulfills Prophecy

34 All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds by illustrations. Indeed, without an illustration he would not speak to them,^c **35** in order to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet who said: “I will open my mouth with illustrations; I will proclaim things hidden since the founding.”^d

Illustration of the Wheat and the Weeds Explained

36 Then after dismissing the crowds, he went into the house. His disciples came to him and said: “Explain to us the illustration of the weeds in the field.” **37** In response he said: “The sower of the fine seed is the Son of man; **38** the field is the world.^e As for the fine seed, these are the sons of the Kingdom, but the weeds are the sons of the wicked one,^f **39** and the enemy who sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, and the reapers are angels. **40** There-

STUDY NOTES

13:31 mustard grain: Several kinds of mustard plants are found growing wild in Israel. Black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) is the variety commonly cultivated. The relatively small seed, 1-1.6 mm (0.039 to 0.063 in.) in diameter and weighing 1 mg (0.000035 oz) produces a treelike plant. Some varieties of the mustard plant attain a height of up to 4.5 m (15 ft).

See  Gallery, image 54, Mustard Grain.

13:32 the tiniest of all the seeds: The mustard seed was used in ancient Jewish writings as a figure of speech for the very smallest measure of size. Although there are smaller seeds known today, it was evidently the tiniest of seeds gathered and sown by Galilean farmers in Jesus' day.

13:33 leaven: That is, a small piece of fermented dough held over from a previous kneading and mixed into a new batch of dough to make it rise. Jesus here refers to the normal process of baking bread. Although the Bible often uses leaven to represent sin and corruption (see study note on Mt 16:6), it does not always have a negative connotation (Le 7:11-15). Here the fermenting process evidently pictures the spread of something good.

large measures: The Greek word used here, *sa'ton*, corresponds to the Hebrew for seah measure. A seah measure equaled 7.33 L (6.66 dry qt).—See Ge 18:6, fn.;  Glossary, “Seah,” and  App. B14.

13:35 to fulfill what was spoken

through the prophet: This is a quote from Ps 78:2, where the psalmist (here referred to as “the prophet”) used illustrative language to recount much of the history of God’s dealings with the nation of Israel. Similarly, Jesus freely used figurative language in the many illustrations he used to teach his disciples and the crowds that followed him.—See study note on Mt 1:22.

since the founding: Or possibly, “since the founding of the world.” This longer reading is found in some ancient manuscripts that add the Greek word for “world.” (Compare study note on Mt 25:34.) Other ancient manuscripts have the shorter wording used here in the main text.

CHAP. 13

a Mt 13:30

b Mt 13:30

c Jg 5:31

d Php 3:7

e Php 3:8

Lu 14:33

f Le 11:9

g Le 11:12

h Mt 24:3

fore, just as the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be in the conclusion of the system of things.^a **41** The Son of man will send his angels, and they will collect out from his Kingdom all things that cause stumbling and people who practice lawlessness, **42** and they will pitch them into the fiery furnace.^b There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be. **43** At that time the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun^c in the Kingdom of their Father. Let the one who has ears listen.

Hidden Treasure; the Fine Pearl

44 “The Kingdom of the heavens is like a treasure, hidden in the field, that a man found and hid; and because of his joy, he goes and sells everything he has and buys that field.^d

45 “Again the Kingdom of the heavens is like a traveling merchant seeking fine pearls. **46** Upon finding one pearl of high value, he went away and promptly sold all the things he had and bought it.^e

The Dragnet

47 “Again the Kingdom of the heavens is like a dragnet let down into the sea and gathering fish of every kind. **48** When it was full, they hauled it up onto the beach, and sitting down, they collected the fine ones^f into containers, but the unsuitable^g they threw away. **49** That is how it will be in the conclusion of the system of things.^h The angels will go out and separate the wicked from among the righteous **50** and will cast them into the fiery furnace. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be.

STUDY NOTES

13:37 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

13:38 world: Refers to the world of mankind.

13:39 a conclusion: The Greek word *syn-te'lei-a*, rendered “conclusion,” also occurs at Mt 13:40, 49; 24:3; 28:20; Heb 9:26.—See study note on Mt 24:3 and  Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things.”

a system of things: Or “an age.”—See study notes on Mt 13:22; 24:3 and  Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things”; “System(s) of things.”

13:41 lawlessness: See study note on Mt 24:12.

13:42 gnashing of their teeth: See study note on Mt 8:12.

13:44 everything: Although one early manuscript omits the Greek word *pan'ta* (all; everything) here, the current reading has stronger support in both early and later manuscripts.

13:46 pearl: In Bible times, fine pearls were harvested from the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean. This doubtless explains why Jesus spoke of the merchant who had to travel and expend effort to seek such a pearl.

13:47 See  Gallery, image 55, Fishermen Hauling in a Dragnet.

13:48 unsuitable: May refer to fish without fins and scales, which were unclean according to the Mosaic Law and could not be eaten, or may possibly refer to any other inedible fish that were caught.—Le 11:9-12; De 14:9, 10.

13:49 conclusion of the system of things: See study notes on Mt 13:39; 24:3 and  Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things”; “System(s) of things.”

Treasures New and Old

51 “Did you get the sense of all these things?” They said to him: “Yes.” **52** Then he said to them: “That being the case, every public instructor who is taught about the Kingdom of the heavens is like a man, the master of the house, who brings out of his treasure store things both new and old.”

Jesus Rejected in Home Territory

53 When Jesus had finished these illustrations, he departed from there. **54** After coming into his home territory,^a he began to teach them in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said: “Where did this man get this wisdom and these powerful works?^b **55** Is this not the carpenter’s son?^c Is not his mother called Mary, and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?^d **56** And his sisters, are they not all with us? Where, then, did he get all of this?”^e **57** So they began to stumble because of him.^f But Jesus said to them: “A prophet is not without honor except in his home territory and in his own house.”^g **58** And he did not perform many powerful works there on account of their lack of faith.

CHAP. 13

a Mt 2:23

b Mr 6:1-6

c Lu 3:23

Lu 4:22

Joh 6:42

d Mt 12:46

Joh 2:12

Ac 1:14

1Co 9:5

Ga 1:19

e Joh 7:15

f 1Pe 2:7, 8

g Mr 6:4

Lu 4:24

Joh 4:44

STUDY NOTES

13:52 public instructor: Or “learned person.” The Greek word *gram-ma-teus*’ is rendered “scribe” when referring to a group of Jewish teachers who were versed in the Law, but here the expression is used with regard to Jesus’ disciples who were trained to teach others.

13:54 his home territory: Lit., “his father’s place,” that is, his hometown, Nazareth, the area from which his immediate family came.

13:55 carpenter’s son: The Greek word *te’kton*, rendered “carpenter,” is a general term that can refer to any artisan or builder. When it refers to a woodworker, it can mean one who works in the building trade, in the construction of furniture, or in the making of other types of wooden objects. Justin Martyr, of the second century C.E., wrote that Jesus worked “as a carpenter when among men, making ploughs and yokes.” Early Bible translations in ancient languages also support the idea of a woodworker. Jesus was known both as “the carpenter’s son” and

as “the carpenter.” (Mr 6:3) Evidently, Jesus learned carpentry from his adoptive father, Joseph. Such an apprenticeship would typically have begun when a boy was about 12 to 15 years of age and would stretch over many years.

brothers: The Greek word *a-del-phos*’ can refer to a spiritual relationship in the Bible, but here it is used of Jesus’ half brothers, the younger sons of Joseph and Mary. Some who believe that Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Jesus claim that here *a-del-phos*’ refers to cousins. However, the Christian Greek Scriptures use a distinct term for “cousin” (Greek, *a-ne-psi-os*’ at Col 4:10) and a different term for “the son of Paul’s sister” (Ac 23:16). Also, Lu 21:16 uses the plural forms of the Greek words *a-del-phos*’ and *syg-ge-nes*’ (rendered “brothers and relatives”). These examples show that the terms denoting familial relationships are not used loosely or indiscriminately in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

James: This half brother of Jesus is evidently the James who is mentioned at Ac 12:17 (see study note) and Ga 1:19 and

who wrote the Bible book by that name.—Jas 1:1.

Judas: This half brother of Jesus is evidently the Jude (Greek, *I-ou’das*) who wrote the Bible book by that name.—Jude 1.

13:57 they began to stumble because of him: Or “they took offense at him.” In this context, the Greek word *skan-da-li’zo* refers to stumbling in a figurative sense, meaning “to take offense.” It could also be rendered “they refused to believe in him.” In other contexts, the Greek word includes the idea of falling into sin or causing someone to fall into sin.—See study note on Mt 5:29.

13:58 he did not perform many powerful works there: Jesus did not perform many miracles in Nazareth, not because of a lack of power, but because the circumstances did not warrant it. The people of Nazareth lacked faith. (See study note on Mr 6:5.) Divine power was not to be wasted on unreceptive skeptics.—Compare Mt 10:14; Lu 16:29-31.

CHAP. 14

Death of John the Baptist

- a Mr 6:14-16
Lu 9:7-9
Ac 4:27
- b Mt 16:13, 14
- c Mr 6:17, 18
Lu 3:19, 20
- d Le 18:16
Lu 20:21
- e Mr 6:20
Lu 1:67, 76
- f Ge 40:20-22
- g Mr 6:21-29
- h Mr 6:25

14 At that time Herod, the district ruler, heard the report about Jesus^a **2** and said to his servants: “This is John the Baptist. He was raised up from the dead, and this is why these powerful works* are operating in him.”^b **3** Herod had arrested John and had bound him and imprisoned him because of He-ro’di-as, the wife of Philip his brother.^c **4** For John had been saying to him: “It is not lawful for you to have her.”^d **5** However, although he wanted to kill him, he feared the crowd, because they took him for a prophet.^e **6** But when Herod’s birthday^f was being celebrated, the daughter of He-ro’di-as danced for the occasion and pleased Herod so much^g **7** that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. **8** Then she, at her mother’s prompting, said: “Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.”^h **9** Grieved though he was, the king, out of regard for his oaths and for those dining with him,* commanded it to be given. **10** So he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. **11** His head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. **12** Later his disciples came and removed his corpse and buried him;

FOOTNOTES

14:2 *Or “these miracles.” **14:9** *Or “for his dinner guests; for those reclining at the table with him.”

STUDY NOTES

14:1 Herod: That is, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great.—See  Glossary.

district ruler: Lit., “tetrarch” (meaning “ruler over one fourth” of a province), a term applied to a minor district ruler or territorial prince ruling only with the approval of the Roman authorities. The tetrarchy of Herod Antipas consisted of Galilee and Perea.—Compare study note on Mr 6:14.

14:2 John the Baptist: See study note on Mt 3:1.

14:3 Herod: That is, Herod Antipas.—See  Glossary.

arrested John . . . and imprisoned him: The Bible does not mention where this took place. Josephus says that John was imprisoned and killed at Machaerus fortress, which was located on the eastern

side of the Dead Sea. (*Jewish Antiquities*, Book 18, chap. 5, par. 2 [Loeb 18.119]) It is possible that John spent some time in that prison. (Mt 4:12) However, it is likely that at the time of his death, John was held in Tiberias, a city located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. The reasons for this conclusion are as follows: (1) John seems to have been imprisoned near where Jesus was carrying out his ministry in Galilee. John heard of Jesus’ works, and from jail he sent his disciples to speak with Jesus. (Mt 11:1-3) (2) Mark states that “the most prominent men of Galilee” were in attendance at Herod’s birthday party, indicating that it was held at Herod’s residence in Tiberias. John was evidently in captivity close to where the party took place.—Mr 6:21-29; Mt 14:6-11.

Herodias, the wife of Philip his brother: Herod Antipas became infatuated with Herodias, the wife of his half brother Herod Philip. Herodias divorced Philip, Antipas divorced his wife, and Herodias and Antipas were married. John the Baptist was arrested for criticizing this

immoral union, one that was contrary to Jewish law.

See  Gallery, image 56, Coin Made by Herod Antipas.

14:6 birthday . . . celebrated: This event likely occurred at Herod Antipas’ residence in Tiberias. (See study notes on Mt 14:3; Mr 6:21.) The Bible mentions just two birthday celebrations—the one referred to here, at which John was beheaded; the other, that of a Pharaoh, at which the Egyptian monarch’s chief baker was executed. (Ge 40:18-22) These two accounts are similar in that both occasions were marked with great feasting and the granting of favors and both are remembered for executions.

14:9 the king: Herod Antipas’ official Roman title was “tetrarch,” as seen from study note on Mt 14:1. However, he was popularly referred to as “king.”

his oaths: The use of the plural “oaths” (in contrast with the singular at Mt 14:7) may indicate that Herod emphasized or confirmed his promise with repeated oaths.

then they came and reported to Jesus. **13** At hearing this, Jesus departed from there by boat into an isolated place to be alone. But the crowds, getting to hear of it, followed him on foot from the cities.^a

Jesus Feeds About 5,000 Men

14 When he came ashore, he saw a large crowd, and he felt pity for them,^b and he cured their sick ones.^c **15** But when evening fell, his disciples came to him and said: “The place is isolated and the hour is already late; send the crowds away, so that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food.”^d **16** However, Jesus said to them: “They do not have to leave; you give them something to eat.” **17** They said to him: “We have nothing here except five loaves and two fish.” **18** He said: “Bring them here to me.” **19** And he instructed the crowds to recline on the grass. Then he took the five loaves and two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said a blessing,^e and after breaking the loaves, he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. **20** So they all ate and were satisfied, and they took up the leftover fragments, 12 baskets full.^f **21** Now those eating were about 5,000 men, as well as women and young children.^g **22** Then, without delay, he made his disciples board the boat and go ahead of him to the opposite shore, while he sent the crowds away.^h

Jesus Walks on Water

23 After sending the crowds away, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray.ⁱ When evening came, he was there alone. **24** By now the boat was many hundreds of yards away from land, struggling against the waves because the wind was

CHAP. 14

- a Mr 6:31-33
Lu 9:10
- b Mt 9:36
Mt 15:32
Mr 1:41
Mr 6:34
Lu 7:13
Heb 2:17
Heb 5:2
- c Lu 9:11
- d Mr 6:35-44
Lu 9:12-17
Joh 6:5-13
- e Mt 15:36
Mr 6:41
Lu 9:16
- f 2Ki 4:42-44
Mr 6:42, 43
Mr 8:8
Lu 9:17
Joh 6:12, 13
- g Mr 6:44
Lu 9:14
Joh 6:10
- h Mr 6:45-52
Joh 6:16-21
- i Mr 6:46
Lu 6:12
Lu 9:18

STUDY NOTES

14:13 See  Gallery, image 57, Northeast Portion of the Sea of Galilee.

14:14 felt pity: Or “felt compassion.”
—See study note on Mt 9:36.

14:16 you give them something to eat:
This is the only miracle of Jesus that is recorded in all four Gospels.—Mt 14:15-21; Mr 6:35-44; Lu 9:10-17; Joh 6:1-13.

14:17 fish: In Bible times, fish were commonly prepared by broiling or by salting and drying and were often eaten along

with bread. The fish Jesus used were likely salted and dried.

See  Gallery, image 58, Fish and Loaves.

14:19 said a blessing: This expression apparently refers to a prayer offering praise and thanks to God.

after breaking the loaves: Bread was often made in flat loaves that were baked hard. Therefore, breaking the loaves to eat them was customary.—Mt 15:36; 26:26; Mr 6:41; 8:6; Lu 9:16.

14:20 baskets: These may have been small wicker baskets with a cord handle that a traveler could use for carrying them. It is thought that they had a volume of approximately 7.5 L (2 gal).—See study notes on Mt 16:9, 10.

See  Gallery, image 59, Baskets.

14:21 as well as women and young children: Only Matthew mentions the women and the young children when reporting this miracle. It is possible that the total number of those miraculously fed was well over 15,000.

CHAP. 14

- a Mr 6:50
Joh 6:20
- b Mt 6:30
Mt 8:26
Mt 28:16, 17
Jas 1:6
- c Mt 16:16
Joh 6:68, 69
- d Mr 6:53-56
- e Mt 9:20, 21
Mr 3:10
Lu 6:19
Lu 8:43-44

CHAP. 15

- f Mr 7:1, 2
- g Mr 7:3, 4
- h Lu 11:38
Joh 2:6

against them. **25** But in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. **26** When they caught sight of him walking on the sea, the disciples were troubled, saying: “It is an apparition!”* And they cried out in their fear. **27** But at once Jesus spoke to them, saying: “Take courage! It is I; do not be afraid.”^a **28** Peter answered him: “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you over the waters.” **29** He said: “Come!” So Peter got out of the boat and walked over the waters and went toward Jesus. **30** But looking at the windstorm, he became afraid. And when he started to sink, he cried out: “Lord, save me!” **31** Immediately stretching out his hand, Jesus caught hold of him and said to him: “You with little faith, why did you give way to doubt?”^b **32** After they got up into the boat, the windstorm abated. **33** Then those in the boat did obeisance to him, saying: “You really are God’s Son.”^c **34** And they crossed over and came to land in Gen-nes’a-ret.^d

Healings in Gennesaret

35 On recognizing him, the men of that place sent word into all that surrounding country, and people brought him all those who were ill. **36** And they pleaded with him that they might just touch the fringe of his outer garment,^e and all those who touched it were made completely well.

Human Traditions Exposed

15 Then there came to Jesus from Jerusalem Pharisees and scribes,^f saying: **2** “Why do your disciples overstep the tradition of the men of former times? For example, they do not wash their hands^g when about to eat a meal.”^h

FOOTNOTES

14:26 *Or “illusion.”

STUDY NOTES

14:24 **many hundreds of yards:** Lit., “many stadia.” A stadium (Greek, *sta’di-on*) equaled 185 m (606.95 ft), that is, one eighth of a Roman mile.

14:25 **fourth watch:** That is, from about 3:00 a.m. until sunrise at about 6:00 a.m. This division is according to the Greek and Roman system of four night watches. The Hebrews formerly divided the night into three watches of about four hours

each (Ex 14:24; Jg 7:19), but by this time, they had adopted the Roman system.

14:33 **did obeisance to him:** Or “bowed down to him; paid him homage.” These people recognized Jesus as God’s representative. They rendered obeisance to him, not as to a god or a deity, but as to “God’s Son.”—See study notes on Mt 2:2; 8:2; 18:26.

14:34 **Gennesaret:** A small plain measuring about 5 by 2.5 km (3 by 1.5 mi) bordering the NW shore of the Sea of Galilee. At Lu 5:1, the Sea of Galilee is called “the lake of Gennesaret.”

15:2 **wash their hands:** That is, a ceremonial cleansing to adhere to tradition rather than out of concern for hygiene. Later, the Babylonian Talmud (*Sotah 4b*) puts eating with unwashed hands on par with having relations with a harlot, and it states that those who lightly esteem hand washing will be “uprooted from the world.”

3 In reply he said to them: “Why do you overstep the commandment of God because of your tradition?^a **4** For example, God said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’^b and, ‘Let the one who speaks abusively of* his father or mother be put to death.’^{#c} **5** But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother: “Whatever I have that could benefit you is a gift dedicated to God,”^d **6** he need not honor his father at all.’ So you have made the word of God invalid because of your tradition.^e **7** You hypocrites, Isaiah aptly prophesied about you when he said:^f **8** ‘This people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far removed from me. **9** It is in vain that they keep worshipping me, for they teach commands of men as doctrines.’^g **10** With that he called the crowd near and said to them: “Listen and get the sense of it:^h **11** It is not what enters into a man’s mouth that defiles him, but it is what comes out of his mouth that defiles him.”ⁱ

Defilement Comes From the Heart

12 Then the disciples came and said to him: “Do you know that the Pharisees were stumbled at hearing what you said?”^j **13** In reply he said: “Every plant that my heavenly Father did not plant will be uprooted. **14** Let them be. Blind guides is what they are. If, then, a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit.”^{*k} **15** Peter responded: “Make the illustration plain to us.”^l **16** At this he said: “Are you also still without understanding?^m **17** Are you not aware that whatever enters into the mouth passes through the stomach and is discharged into the sewer?^{*n} **18** However, whatever comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and those things defile a man.ⁿ **19** For example, out of the heart come wicked reasonings:^o murders,

CHAP. 15

- a Mt 15:9
Mr 7:8-13
Col 2:8
- b Ex 20:12
De 5:16
Eph 6:2
- c Ex 21:17
Le 20:9
De 27:16
- d Mr 7:11, 12
- e Mr 7:13
- f Mr 7:6
- g Isa 29:13
Mr 7:7
- h Mr 7:14
- i Mr 7:15
Eph 4:29
Jas 3:6
- j Mr 7:17
- k Mt 23:15, 16
Lu 6:39
- l Mt 13:36
Mr 4:10
Lu 8:9
- m Mr 7:18-23
- n Mr 7:20
- o Ge 8:21
Pr 6:12, 14
Jer 17:9
Lu 6:45

FOOTNOTES

15:4 *Or “insults; reviles; speaks evil of.” #Or “certainly die.” **15:14** *Or “ditch.” **15:17** *Or “latrine; privy.”

STUDY NOTES

15:5 a gift dedicated to God: The scribes and Pharisees taught that money, property, or anything that a person dedicated as a gift to God belonged to the temple. According to this tradition, a son could keep the dedicated gift and use it for his own interests, claiming that it was reserved

for the temple. Some evidently evaded the responsibility of caring for their parents by dedicating their assets in this way.—Mt 15:6.

15:7 hypocrites: See study note on Mt 6:2.

15:15 illustration: Or “parable.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

15:19 adulteries: The plural form of the Greek word for “adultery” (*moi-khei’a*) is used here and could be rendered “acts (cases) of adultery.”—See  Glossary, “Adultery.”

sexual immorality: The plural form of the Greek word *por-nei’a* is used here and could be rendered “acts (cases) of sexual immorality.”—See study note on Mt 5:32 and  Glossary.

15:22 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

Phoenician: Or “Canaanite.” Greek, *Kha-na-nai’a*. The early inhabitants of Phoenicia descended from Canaan, Noah’s grandson (Ge 9:18; 10:6), and in time, “Canaan” came to refer primarily to Phoenicia.—See study note on Mr 7:26, where the woman is called a “Syrophoenician.”

CHAP. 15

- a Mr 7:24
 b Mr 7:25-30
 c Isa 53:6
 Mt 10:5, 6
 Ac 3:26
 Ac 13:46
 Ro 15:8
 d Mr 7:28
 e Mr 7:31
 f Isa 35:5
 Mt 19:2
 Mr 3:10
 g Mt 9:33

adulteries, sexual immorality, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. **20** These are the things that defile a man; but to take a meal with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”

Phoenician Woman’s Great Faith

21 Leaving there, Jesus now went into the region of Tyre and Si’don.^a **22** And look! a Phoe-ni’cian woman from that region came and cried out: “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David. My daughter is cruelly demon possessed.”^b **23** But he did not say a word in answer to her. So his disciples came and began to urge him: “Send her away, because she keeps crying out after us.” **24** He answered: “I was not sent to anyone except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”^c **25** But the woman came and did obeisance to him, saying: “Lord, help me!” **26** In answer he said: “It is not right to take the bread of the children and throw it to the little dogs.” **27** She said: “Yes, Lord, but really the little dogs do eat of the crumbs falling from the table of their masters.”^d **28** Then Jesus replied to her: “O woman, great is your faith; let it happen to you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that hour on.

Jesus Heals Many Ailments

29 Departing from there, Jesus next came near the Sea of Gal’i-lee,^e and after going up on the mountain, he was sitting there. **30** Then large crowds approached him, bringing along people who were lame, maimed, blind, speechless, and many others, and they laid them at his feet, and he cured them.^f **31** So the crowd felt amazement as they saw the speechless speaking and the maimed being made sound and the lame walking and the blind seeing, and they glorified the God of Israel.^g

STUDY NOTES

15:22 Son of David: See study notes on Mt 1:1; 15:25.

15:25 did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; paid him homage.” By calling Jesus “Son of David” (Mt 15:22), this non-Jewish woman evidently recognizes him as the promised Messiah. She renders obeisance to him, not as to a god or a deity, but as to a representative of God.—See study notes on Mt 2:2; 8:2; 14:33; 18:26.

15:26 children . . . little dogs: Since dogs were unclean according to the Mosaic Law, the Scriptures often use the term in a derogatory sense. (Le 11:27; Mt 7:6; Php 3:2; Re 22:15) However, in both Mark’s account (7:27) and Matthew’s account of Jesus’ conversation, the diminutive form of the term meaning “little dog” or “house dog” is used, softening the comparison. Perhaps this indicates that Jesus was suggesting an affectionate term for household pets in non-Jewish homes. By likening Israelites to “children”

and non-Jews to “little dogs,” Jesus evidently wanted to indicate an order of priority. In a household that had both children and dogs, the children would be fed first.

15:31 the maimed being made sound: These words are omitted in a few manuscripts, but the majority of early manuscripts and many later manuscripts include them.

Jesus Feeds 4,000 Men

32 But Jesus called his disciples to him and said: “I feel pity for the crowd,^a because they have already stayed with me for three days and they have had nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry,* for they may give out on the road.”^b

33 However, the disciples said to him: “Where in this isolated place are we going to get enough bread to satisfy a crowd of this size?”^c

34 At this Jesus said to them: “How many loaves do you have?” They said: “Seven, and a few small fish.” **35** So after instructing the crowd to recline on the ground, **36** he took the seven loaves and the fish, and after offering thanks, he broke them and began giving them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.^d **37** And all ate and were satisfied, and they took up seven large baskets full of left-over fragments.^e **38** Now those eating were 4,000 men, as well as women and young children. **39** Finally, after sending the crowds away, he got into the boat and came into the region of Mag’a-dan.^f

CHAP. 15

- a Mt 14:14
Mr 6:34
- b Mr 8:1-9
- c 2Ki 4:42-44
- d Mt 14:19
- e Mr 8:8, 9
- f Mr 8:10

CHAP. 16

- g Mt 12:38
Mr 8:11
Lu 11:16
- h Lu 12:54

Request for a Sign

16 Here the Pharisees and Sadducees approached him, and to test him, they asked him to display to them a sign from heaven.^g **2** In reply he said to them: “When evening falls, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is fire-red,’^h **3** and in the morning, ‘It will be wintry, rainy weather today, for the sky

FOOTNOTES

15:32 *Or “without food; fasting.”

STUDY NOTES

15:32 **feel pity:** Or “feel compassion.”
—See study note on Mt 9:36.

15:37 **large baskets:** Or “provision baskets.” The Greek word *sphyris*’ used here seems to denote a type of basket that is larger than the ones used on an earlier occasion when Jesus fed about 5,000 men. (See study note on Mt 14:20.) The same Greek word is used for the “basket” in which Paul was lowered to the ground through an opening in the wall of Damascus.—See study note on Ac 9:25.

15:37; 16:9 See  Gallery, image 59, Baskets.

15:38 **as well as women and young children:** Only Matthew mentions the women and the young children when reporting this miracle. It is possible that the total number of those miraculously fed was over 12,000.

15:39 **Magadan:** While no place called Magadan is known today in the region around the Sea of Galilee, some scholars believe that Magadan is the same locality as Magdala, which is considered to be Khirbet Majdal (Migdal), about 6 km (3.5 mi) NNW of Tiberias. In the parallel account (Mr 8:10), the area is called Dalmanutha.—See  App. B10.

16:2 **said to them:** A few important ancient manuscripts omit the rest of verse 2 as well as all of verse 3. Although there is some uncertainty regarding the authen-

ticity of these words, many authorities favor including them based on the great number of other early and later manuscripts that include them.

16:4 **adulterous:** Refers to spiritual adultery, or unfaithfulness to God.—See study note on Mr 8:38.

sign of Jonah: See study note on Mt 12:39.

16:5 **to the other side:** That is, to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, evidently toward Bethsaida on the northeastern shore of the lake.

16:6 **leaven:** Or “yeast.” Often used figuratively in the Bible to denote corruption and sin, here referring to corrupt teachings.—Mt 16:12; 1Co 5:6-8; compare study note on Mt 13:33.

CHAP. 16

- a Mr 8:12
 b Jon 1:17
 Mt 12:39
 Lu 11:29
 c Mr 8:13-21
 d Mr 8:15
 Lu 12:1
 e Mt 14:17
 f Mt 15:34
 g Lu 12:1
 h Mr 8:27-29
 Lu 9:18-20
 i Mt 14:1, 2
 j Joh 1:25, 26

is fire-red but gloomy.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but the signs of the times you cannot interpret. **4** A wicked and adulterous generation keeps seeking a sign,* but no sign will be given it^a except the sign of Jo’nah.”^b With that he went away, leaving them behind.

Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees

5 Now the disciples crossed to the other side and forgot to take bread along.^c **6** Jesus said to them: “Keep your eyes open and watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”^d **7** So they began to reason among themselves, saying: “We did not take any loaves along.” **8** Knowing this, Jesus said: “Why are you discussing among yourselves that you have no loaves, you with little faith? **9** Do you not yet see the point, or do you not remember the five loaves in the case of the 5,000 and how many baskets you took up?^e **10** Or the seven loaves in the case of the 4,000 and how many large baskets you took up?^f **11** How is it you do not discern that I did not speak to you about bread? But watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”^g **12** Then they grasped that he said to watch out, not for the leaven of bread, but for the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Keys of the Kingdom

13 When he had come into the region of Caes·a·re’·a Phi·lip’·pi, Jesus asked his disciples: “Who are men saying the Son of man is?”^h **14** They said: “Some say John the Baptist,ⁱ others E·li’jah,^j and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

FOOTNOTES

16:4 *Or “miraculous proof.”

STUDY NOTES

16:9 baskets: Reporting on the two occasions when Jesus miraculously fed the crowds (see study notes on Mt 14:20; 15:37; 16:10 and parallel accounts at Mr 6:43; 8:8, 19, 20), the accounts consistently distinguish between the types of baskets used for collecting leftovers. When he fed about 5,000, the Greek term *ko’phi-nos* (rendered “basket”) is used; when he fed the 4,000, the Greek word *sphy-ris* (rendered “large basket”) is used. This indicates that the writers were

present or had received the facts from reliable eyewitnesses.

16:10 large baskets: Or “provision baskets.”—See study notes on Mt 15:37; 16:9.

16:13 Caesarea Philippi: A town situated at the headwaters of the Jordan River at an elevation of 350 m (1,150 ft) above sea level. The town is some 40 km (25 mi) N of the Sea of Galilee and near the SW foot of Mount Hermon. It was named Caesarea by Philip the tetrarch, son of Herod the Great, in honor of the Roman emperor. In order to distinguish it from the seaport city of the same name, it was called Caesarea Philippi, which means “Caesarea of Philip.”—See  App. B10.

Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

16:14 John the Baptist: See study note on Mt 3:1.

Elijah: See study note on Mt 11:14.

15 He said to them: “You, though, who do you say I am?” **16** Simon Peter answered: “You are the Christ,^a the Son of the living God.”^b **17** In response Jesus said to him: “Happy you are, Simon son of Jo’nah, because flesh and blood did not reveal it to you, but my Father in the heavens did.^c **18** Also, I say to you: You are Peter,^d and on this rock^e I will build my congregation, and the gates of the Grave will not overpower it.^f **19** I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you may bind on earth will already be bound in the heavens, and whatever you may loosen on earth will already be loosened in the heavens.”^g **20** Then he sternly instructed the disciples not to tell anybody that he was the Christ.^h

^g Mt 18:18; ^h Mr 8:29, 30; Lu 9:20, 21.

CHAP. 16

- ^a Mr 8:29
Lu 9:20
Joh 1:40, 41
Joh 4:25
Joh 11:27
- ^b Ps 2:7
Mt 14:33
Joh 6:68, 69
Ac 9:20, 22
Heb 1:2
1Jo 4:15
- ^c Mt 11:27
- ^d Joh 1:42
- ^e Ro 9:33
1Co 3:11
1Co 10:4
Eph 2:20
1Pe 2:6-8
- ^f Re 1:17, 18

STUDY NOTES

16:16 Simon Peter: See study note on Mt 10:2.

the Christ: Peter identifies Jesus as “the Christ” (Greek, *ho Khri-stos*), a title equivalent to “the Messiah” (from Hebrew *ma-shi’ach*), both meaning “Anointed One.” Here “Christ” is preceded by the definite article in Greek, evidently as a way of emphasizing Jesus’ office as the Messiah.—See study notes on Mt 1:1; 2:4.

the living God: An expression used to highlight that Jehovah is alive and active in contrast with the lifeless gods of the nations (Ac 14:15), such as the gods worshipped in the region of Caesarea Philippi (Mt 16:13). This term also occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures.—De 5:26; Jer 10:10.

16:17 son of Jonah: Or “Bar-jonah.” Many Hebrew names included the Hebrew word *ben* or the Aramaic word *bar*, both meaning “son,” followed by the name of the father as a surname. The use of the Aramaic loanword *bar* in several proper names, such as Bartholomew, Bartimaeus, Barnabas, and Bar-Jesus, is evidence of the influence of Aramaic on the Hebrew spoken in Jesus’ day.

flesh and blood: Or “a human,” a common Jewish expression. In this context, it evidently refers to fleshly or human thinking.—Ga 1:16, ftn.

16:18 You are Peter, and on this rock: The Greek word *pe’tros* in the masculine gender means “a piece of rock; a stone.”

Here it is used as a proper name (Peter), the Greek form of the name Jesus gave Simon. (Joh 1:42) The feminine form *pe’tra* is rendered “rock,” and it may denote bedrock, a cliff, or a mass of rock. This Greek word also occurs at Mt 7:24, 25; 27:60; Lu 6:48; 8:6; Ro 9:33; 1Co 10:4; 1Pe 2:8. Peter evidently did not view himself as the rock on which Jesus would build his congregation, since he wrote at 1Pe 2:4-8 that Jesus was the long-foretold “foundation cornerstone,” chosen by God himself. Similarly, the apostle Paul referred to Jesus as the “foundation” and “the spiritual rock.” (1Co 3:11; 10:4) So Jesus was evidently using a play on words, saying in effect: ‘You, the one I called Peter, a Piece of Rock, have discerned the true identity of the Christ, “this rock,” the one who will serve as the foundation of the Christian congregation.’

congregation: This is the first occurrence of the Greek term *ek-kle-si’a*. It comes from two Greek words, *ek*, meaning “out,” and *ka-le’o*, meaning “to call.” It refers to a group of people summoned or called together for a particular purpose or activity. (See  Glossary.) In this context, Jesus foretells the formation of the Christian congregation, made up of anointed Christians, who as “living stones” are being “built up into a spiritual house.” (1Pe 2:4, 5) This Greek term is frequently used in the *Septuagint* as an equivalent of the Hebrew term rendered “congregation,” which often refers to the entire nation of

God’s people. (De 23:3; 31:30) At Ac 7:38, the Israelites who were called out of Egypt are referred to as a “congregation.” Similarly, Christians who are “called . . . out of darkness” and “chosen . . . out of the world” make up “the congregation of God.”—1Pe 2:9; Joh 15:19; 1Co 1:2.

the Grave: Or “Hades,” that is, the common grave of mankind. (See  Glossary, “Grave.”) The Bible speaks of the dead as being within “the gates of death” (Ps 107:18) and “the gates of the Grave” (Isa 38:10), that is, subject to the power of death. Jesus promises victory over the Grave, meaning that “the gates” of the Grave will open to release the dead by means of a resurrection. His own resurrection confirmed the truthfulness of his promise. (Mt 16:21) Because the congregation is built on Jesus, the one who can release its members from death, it cannot be overpowered by or permanently restrained by the Grave.—Ac 2:31; Re 1:18; 20:13, 14.

16:19 keys of the Kingdom of the heavens: In the Bible, those who were given certain keys, whether literal or figurative, were entrusted with a degree of authority. (1Ch 9:26, 27; Isa 22:20-22) So the term “key” came to symbolize authority and responsibility. Peter used these “keys” entrusted to him to open up for Jews (Ac 2:22-41), Samaritans (Ac 8:14-17), and Gentiles (Ac 10:34-38) the opportunity to receive God’s spirit with a view to their entering the heavenly Kingdom.

CHAP. 16

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

- a Ps 16:10
Isa 53:12
Mt 17:22, 23
Mt 20:18, 19
Mr 8:31
Lu 9:22
Lu 17:25
Lu 24:6-8
Lu 24:46
1Co 15:3, 4
- b Mr 8:32
- c Mr 8:33
- d Mt 10:38
Mr 8:34
Lu 9:23
Lu 14:27
- e Mt 10:39
Mr 8:35
Lu 9:24
Lu 17:33
Joh 12:25
Re 12:11

21 From that time forward, Jesus began explaining to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed, and on the third day be raised up.^a **22** At this Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying: “Be kind to yourself, Lord; you will not have this happen to you at all.”^b **23** But turning his back,* he said to Peter: “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, because you think, not God’s thoughts, but those of men.”^{#c}

Requirements of Discipleship

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples: “If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake and keep following me.^d **25** For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.^e

FOOTNOTES

16:23 *Or “turning around.” #Or “you have, not God’s mind, but that of humans.”

STUDY NOTES

16:19 **bind . . . loosen:** Or “lock . . . unlock.” Evidently referring to decisions forbidding or allowing certain actions or developments.—Compare study note on Mt 18:18.

will already be bound . . . will already be loosened: The unusual construction of Greek verbs here (future form of “to be” combined with perfect passive participle of “bind” and “loosen”) indicates that whatever decision Peter made (“whatever you may bind”; “whatever you may loosen”) would be made after the corresponding decision was made in heaven; it would not precede it.—Compare study note on Mt 18:18.

16:20 **the Christ:** See study note on Mt 16:16.

16:21 **Jesus:** A few ancient manuscripts read “Jesus Christ.”

elders: Lit., “older men.” In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby’te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. Although the term sometimes refers

to physical age (as at Lu 15:25; Ac 2:17), it is not limited to those who are elderly. Here it refers to the leaders of the Jewish nation who are often mentioned together with chief priests and scribes. The Sanhedrin was made up of men from these three groups.—Mt 21:23; 26:3, 47, 57; 27:1, 41; 28:12; see [L](#) Glossary, “Elder; Older man.”

chief priests: See study note on Mt 2:4 and [L](#) Glossary, “Chief priest.”

scribes: See study note on Mt 2:4 and [L](#) Glossary, “Scribe.”

16:23 **Get behind me:** Jesus here strongly “rebuked” Peter. (Mr 8:33) Jesus refused to allow anything to hinder him from fulfilling his Father’s will. Some lexicons define this idiom as: “Get out of my sight!” and some Bible translations render it: “Get away from me.” His words may also have reminded Peter of his proper place as a supportive follower of his Master; he was not to be a **stumbling block**, that is, an obstacle in Jesus’ path.

Satan: Jesus was not identifying Peter with Satan the Devil but was referring to him as a resister, or opposer, which is the meaning of the Hebrew expression *sa-tan’*. Jesus may have implied that Peter, by his action on this occasion, had allowed himself to be influenced by Satan.

stumbling block: See study note on Mt 18:7.

16:24 **let him disown himself:** Or “let him give up all right to himself.” This indicates a person’s willingness to deny himself utterly or to relinquish ownership of himself to God. The Greek phrase can be rendered “he must say no to himself,” which is fitting because it may involve saying no to personal desires, ambitions, or convenience. (2Co 5:14, 15) The same Greek verb is used by Matthew when describing Peter’s denial that he knew Jesus.—Mt 26:34, 35, 75.

torture stake: Or “execution stake.” In classical Greek, the word *stau-ros’* primarily referred to an upright stake or pole. Used figuratively, this term sometimes stands for the suffering, shame, torture, and even death that a person experienced because of being a follower of Jesus.—See [L](#) Glossary.

16:25 **life:** Or “soul.”—See [L](#) Glossary, “Soul.”

26 Really, what good will it do a man if he gains the whole world but loses his life?^a Or what will a man give in exchange for his life?^b **27** For the Son of man is to come in the glory of his Father with his angels,^c and then he will repay* each one according to his behavior.^d **28** Truly I say to you that there are some of those standing here who will not taste death at all until first they see the Son of man coming in his Kingdom.”^e

CHAP. 16

- a Mr 8:36
Lu 9:25
- b Ps 49:8
- c Mt 24:30
Mt 25:31
Mt 26:64
Mr 8:38
Re 1:7
- d Ps 62:12
Pr 24:12
Lu 9:26
Ro 2:6
1Pe 1:17
- e Mt 17:1, 2
Mr 9:1
Lu 9:27

Jesus’ Transfiguration

17 Six days later Jesus took Peter and James and his brother John along and led them up into a lofty mountain by themselves.^f **2** And he was transfigured before them; his face shone as the sun, and his outer garments became brilliant* as the light.^g **3** And look! there appeared to them Moses and E-li-jah conversing with him. **4** Then Peter said to Jesus: “Lord, it is fine for us to be here. If you wish, I will erect three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for E-li’jah.” **5** While he was still speaking, look! a bright cloud overshadowed them, and look! a voice out of the cloud^h said: “This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.ⁱ Listen to him.”^j **6** At hearing this, the disciples fell facedown and became very much afraid. **7** Then Jesus came near, and touching them, he said: “Get up. Have no fear.” **8** When they looked up, they saw no one but Jesus himself. **9** As they were descending from the mountain, Jesus commanded them: “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of man is raised up from the dead.”^k

CHAP. 17

- f Mr 9:2-8
Lu 9:28-36
- g Mt 16:28
Re 1:13, 16
- h Mt 3:17
Joh 12:28
- i Ps 2:7
Isa 42:1
2Pe 1:17, 18
- j De 18:15
Mr 9:7
Lu 9:35
Ac 3:22, 23
Heb 2:3
- k Mt 16:20
Mr 9:9
- l Mr 9:11
- m Isa 40:3
Mal 4:5, 6
Mt 11:13, 14
Mr 9:12
Lu 1:17

10 However, the disciples put the question to him: “Why, then, do the scribes say that E-li’jah must come first?”^l **11** In reply he said: “E-li’jah is indeed coming and will restore all things.”^m **12** However, I say to you that E-li’jah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did whatever they

FOOTNOTES

16:27 *Or “reward; recompense.” **17:2** *Or “white.”

STUDY NOTES

16:26 **life:** See study note on Mt 16:25 and  Glossary, “Soul.”

16:28; 17:20 **Truly:** See study note on Mt 5:18.

17:1 **a lofty mountain:** Possibly Mount Hermon, which is near Caesarea Philippi. (See study note on Mt 16:13.) It

reaches a height of 2,814 m (9,232 ft) above sea level. The transfiguration may have taken place on one of the spurs of Mount Hermon.—See  App. B10.

See  Gallery, image 60, Mount Hermon.

See  Gallery, image 61, Mount Hermon As Seen From the Hula Valley Nature Reserve.

17:2 **he was transfigured:** Or “he was transformed; his appearance was changed.” The same Greek verb (*me-ta-mor-pho’o*) occurs at Ro 12:2.

17:3 **look!:** See study note on Mt 1:20.

17:5 **a voice:** The second of three instances in the Gospel accounts where Jehovah is reported as speaking audibly to humans.—See study notes on Mt 3:17; Joh 12:28.

whom I have approved: Or “with whom I am well-pleased.”—See study notes on Mt 3:17; 12:18.

17:9 **Son of man:** See study note on Mt 8:20.

CHAP. 17

- a Mr 9:13
 b Mt 16:21
 Lu 23:24, 25
 c Lu 9:37
 d Mr 9:17-29
 Lu 9:38-42
 e De 32:5, 20
 f Mt 8:13
 Mt 9:22
 Mt 15:28
 Joh 4:51, 52
 g Mt 21:21
 Mr 11:23
 Lu 17:6
 h Mt 20:18
 Lu 9:44, 45
 i Mt 16:21
 Mr 9:31
 j Ex 30:13, 14
 2Ch 24:6, 9
 Ne 10:32

wanted with him.^a In this way also, the Son of man is going to suffer at their hands.”^b **13** Then the disciples perceived that he spoke to them about John the Baptist.

Faith the Size of a Mustard Grain

14 When they came toward the crowd,^c a man approached him, knelt down to him, and said: **15** “Lord, have mercy on my son, because he is an epileptic and is ill. He falls often into the fire and often into the water.”^d **16** I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.” **17** In reply Jesus said: “O faithless and twisted* generation,^e how long must I continue with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him here to me.” **18** Then Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was cured from that hour.^f **19** Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said: “Why could we not expel it?” **20** He said to them: “Because of your little faith. For truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard grain, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”^g **21** —

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection a Second Time

22 It was while they were gathered together in Gal'i-lee that Jesus said to them: “The Son of man is going to be betrayed into men's hands,^h **23** and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised up.”ⁱ And they were very much grieved.

Tax Paid With Coin From the Mouth of a Fish

24 After they arrived in Ca-per'na-um, the men collecting the two drachmas tax approached Peter and said: “Does your teacher not pay the two drachmas tax?”^j **25** He said: “Yes.”

FOOTNOTES

17:17 *Or “corrupt; perverse.”

STUDY NOTES

17:14 knelt down: In the ancient Near East, kneeling was a posture that expressed respect, especially when petitioning superiors.

17:15 an epileptic: See study note on Mt 4:24.

17:20 your little faith: The Greek expression is related to the term rendered

“you with little faith” at Mt 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Lu 12:28. Jesus does not imply that his disciples were entirely without faith but, rather, that their faith needed to be stronger.—See study notes on Mt 6:30; 8:26.

the size of a mustard grain: Or “as small as a mustard seed.”—See study notes on Mt 13:31, 32.

17:21 Some ancient manuscripts here read: “However, this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting.” (See study note on Mr 9:29.) But these words

do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and are evidently not part of the inspired Scriptures.—See  App. A3.

17:24 Capernaum: See study note on Mt 4:13.

the two drachmas tax: Lit., “the double drachmas.” (See  App. B14.) Various temple services were maintained through taxation. (Ex 30:12-16) Apparently, by Jesus' day it had become customary for each adult male Jew to contribute a fixed amount as an annual temple tax.

However, when he entered the house, Jesus spoke to him first and said: “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth receive duties or head tax? From their sons or from the strangers?” **26** When he said: “From the strangers,” Jesus said to him: “Really, then, the sons are tax-free. **27** But that we do not cause them to stumble,^a go to the sea, cast a fishhook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth, you will find a silver coin. Take that and give it to them for me and you.”

CHAP. 17

a 1Co 10:32
2Co 6:3

CHAP. 18

b Mr 9:33-37
Lu 9:46-48
Lu 22:24
c Mt 19:14
1Pe 2:2
d Mr 10:15
Lu 18:17
e Pr 15:33
Mt 20:26
Mt 23:12
Lu 9:48
Lu 14:11
Lu 22:26
Jas 4:10
1Pe 5:5
f Mt 10:40
Joh 13:20
g Mr 9:42
Lu 17:1, 2

The Greatest in the Kingdom

18 In that hour the disciples came near to Jesus and said: “Who really is greatest in the Kingdom of the heavens?”^b **2** So calling a young child to him, he stood him in their midst **3** and said: “Truly I say to you, unless you turn around* and become as young children,^c you will by no means enter into the Kingdom of the heavens.^d **4** Therefore, whoever will humble himself like this young child is the one who is the greatest in the Kingdom of the heavens;^e **5** and whoever receives one such young child on the basis of my name receives me also.^f **6** But whoever stumbles one of these little ones who have faith in me, it would be better for him to have hung around his neck a millstone that is turned by a donkey and to be sunk in the open sea.^g

FOOTNOTES

18:3 *Or “change.”

STUDY NOTES

17:26 the sons are tax-free: In Jesus’ day, the family members of monarchs were known to be tax-exempt.

17:27 fishhook: The only occurrence in the Christian Greek Scriptures of the Greek word rendered “fishhook,” likely a baited hook cast into the water on the end of a line. Every other mention of fishing equipment in the Christian Greek Scriptures refers to nets.

silver coin: Lit., “stater.” This coin is considered to be the tetradrachma. (See  App. B14.) It was worth four drachmas, the equivalent of a shekel, which was exactly the amount required to pay the temple tax for two.—Ex 30:13.

18:3 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

18:6 a millstone that is turned by a donkey: Or “a huge millstone.” Lit., “a millstone of a donkey.” Such a millstone, likely 1.2-1.5 m (4-5 ft) in diameter, was so heavy that it had to be turned by a donkey.

See  Gallery, image 62, Millstone.

See  Gallery, image 63, Upper and Lower Millstones.

18:7 stumbling blocks: The original meaning of the Greek word *skan'da-lon*, rendered “stumbling block,” is thought to have referred to a trap; some suggest that it was the stick in a trap to which the bait was attached. By extension, it came to refer to any impediment that would cause one to stumble or fall. In a figurative sense, it refers to an action or a circumstance that leads a person to follow an improper course, to stumble or fall moral-

ly, or to fall into sin. At Mt 18:8, 9, the related verb *skan-da-li'zo*, translated “make stumble,” could also be rendered “become a snare; cause to sin.”

18:8 cut it off: Jesus was using hyperbole. He was saying that a person should be willing to give up something as precious as a hand, a foot, or an eye rather than allow it to cause him to stumble into unfaithfulness and sin. (Mt 18:9) He was obviously not encouraging self-mutilation or implying that a person was somehow subservient to the will of his limbs or eyes. He meant that a person should deaden a body member, or treat it as if it were severed from the body, rather than use it to commit a sin. (Compare Col 3:5.) A person should allow nothing to hinder him from gaining life.

18:9 Gehenna: See study note on Mt 5:22 and  Glossary.

CHAP. 18

Stumbling Blocks

- a Col 3:5
 b Mt 25:41
 Mr 9:43-48
 c Mt 5:22
 Mt 5:29
 Mr 9:47
 Ro 8:13
 d Lu 1:19
 Heb 1:7, 14
 e 1Pe 2:25
 f Lu 15:3-7
 g 2Pe 3:9
 h Le 19:17
 Pr 25:8, 9
 Mt 5:23, 24
 Lu 17:3
 i Jas 5:20

7 “Woe to the world because of the stumbling blocks! Of course, it is inevitable that stumbling blocks will come, but woe to the man through whom the stumbling block comes! **8** If, then, your hand or your foot makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you.^a It is better for you to enter into life maimed or lame than to be thrown with two hands or two feet into the everlasting fire.^b **9** Also, if your eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter one-eyed into life than to be thrown with two eyes into the fiery Ge-hen/na.^c **10** See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my Father who is in heaven.^d **11** —

Illustration of the Lost Sheep

12 “What do you think? If a man has 100 sheep and one of them strays,^e will he not leave the 99 on the mountains and set out on a search for the one that is straying?^f **13** And if he finds it, I certainly tell you, he rejoices more over it than over the 99 that have not strayed. **14** Likewise, it is not a desirable thing to my Father who is in heaven for even one of these little ones to perish.^g

How to Settle Differences and Gain a Brother

15 “Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, go and reveal his fault* between you and him alone.^h If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.ⁱ **16** But if he does not listen, take along

FOOTNOTES

18:15 * Lit., “go reprove him.”

STUDY NOTES

18:9 See  Gallery, image 30, The Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna).

18:10 **their angels:** In both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Greek Scriptures, God’s servants are assured of the protection of Jehovah’s ever-present, invisible army of angels. (2Ki 6:15-17; Ps 34:7; 91:11; Ac 5:19; Heb 1:14) The original-language terms rendered “angel” have the basic meaning of “messenger.” (See study note on Joh 1:51.) Jesus’ statement about **these little ones** (namely, his disciples) and “their angels”

does not necessarily mean that each devoted Christian has a special guardian angel assigned to him. But angels are looking out for the spiritual welfare of true Christians as a whole and take an active interest in each of Christ’s disciples. —See study note on Ac 12:15.

look upon the face of my Father: Or “have access to my Father.” Because they have access to the very presence of God, only spirit creatures can see God’s face. —Ex 33:20.

18:11 Some manuscripts here include the words: “For the Son of man came to save what was lost,” but these words do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts. A similar statement is part of the inspired text at Lu 19:10. Some

are of the opinion that an early copyist borrowed the expression from Luke’s account.—See  App. A3.

18:12 See  Gallery, image 64, The Shepherd and His Sheep.

18:14 **my:** Some ancient manuscripts read “your.”

18:15 **your brother:** See study note on Mt 5:23.

with you one or two more, so that on the testimony* of two or three witnesses every matter# may be established.^{Δa} **17** If he does not listen* to them, speak to the congregation. If he does not listen* even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations^b and as a tax collector.^c

18 “Truly I say to you, whatever things you may bind on earth will be things already bound in heaven, and whatever things you may loosen on earth will be things already loosened in heaven.^d **19** Again I tell you truly, if two of you on earth agree concerning anything of importance that they should request, it will take place for them on account of my Father in heaven.^e **20** For where there are two or three gathered together in my name,^f there I am in their midst.”

CHAP. 18

- a De 19:15
2Co 13:1
1Ti 5:19
- b Joh 18:28
Ac 10:28
Ac 11:2, 3
- c Ro 16:17
1Co 5:11
- d Mt 16:19
- e Mr 11:24
Joh 14:13
Joh 16:23, 24
1Jo 3:22
1Jo 5:14
- f 1Co 5:4, 5
- g Pr 19:11
Mt 6:12
Mr 11:25
Lu 11:4
Lu 17:4
Eph 4:32
Col 3:13

Illustration of the Unforgiving Slave

21 Then Peter came and said to him: “Lord, how many times is my brother to sin against me and am I to forgive him? Up to seven times?” **22** Jesus said to him: “I say to you, not up to seven times, but up to 77 times.^g

23 “That is why the Kingdom of the heavens may be likened to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. **24** When he started to settle them, a man was brought in who owed him 10,000 talents. **25** But because he did not have the

FOOTNOTES

18:16 *Lit., “mouth.” #Or “everything said.” ^ΔLit., “might stand.” **18:17** *Or “he refuses to listen; he does not pay attention.”

STUDY NOTES

18:17 **the congregation:** Under the Mosaic Law, judges and officers represented the congregation of Israel in dealing with judicial matters. (De 16:18) In Jesus’ day, offenders answered to local courts made up of elders of the Jews. (Mt 5:22) Later, responsible men would be appointed by the holy spirit to act as judges in each Christian congregation. (Ac 20:28; 1Co 5:1-5, 12, 13)—For the meaning of the term “congregation,” see study note on Mt 16:18 and  Glossary, “Congregation.”

as a man of the nations and as a tax collector: That is, those with whom Jews had no unnecessary dealings.—Compare Ac 10:28.

18:18 whatever things you may bind . . . you may loosen:

In this context, to “bind” evidently means to “view as guilty; find guilty,” and to “loosen” means to “acquit; find innocent.” The pronoun “you” is plural, indicating that not only Peter but also others would be involved in carrying out such decisions.—Compare study note on Mt 16:19.

will be things already bound . . . will be things already loosened:

The unusual construction of the Greek verbs here (future form of “to be” combined with the perfect passive participle of “bind” and “loosen”) indicates that whatever decision was made by the disciples (“whatever things you may bind”; “whatever things you may loosen”) would be made after the corresponding decision was made in heaven. Any decision made by the disciples would follow heaven’s decision, not precede it, and the disciples would make decisions based on principles

already laid down in heaven. It does not refer to heavenly support or validation of a decision made on earth. Instead, it means that the disciples would receive direction from heaven, highlighting the need for such guidance to ensure that the decisions made on earth harmonize with the decision that has already been made in heaven.—Compare study note on Mt 16:19.

18:19 you . . . you . . . they . . . them:

Although the Greek text uses the pronouns “you” in the first part of the verse and then changes to “they” and “them,” these pronouns evidently refer to the same individuals. For this reason, some Bibles render the last part of the verse: “. . . that you should request, my heavenly Father will do it for you.”

CHAP. 18

- a Ex 21:7
Le 25:39
2Ki 4:1
Ne 5:8
- b 1Jo 1:9
- c Isa 55:7
Mt 6:12
Mt 7:12
Jas 2:13
- d Ro 2:6
- e Job 34:11
Ps 62:12
Pr 19:17
Pr 21:13
Mt 5:7
Mt 6:14
Mr 11:25
Lu 17:3
Eph 4:32

means to pay it back, his master ordered him and his wife and his children and all the things he owned to be sold and payment to be made.^a **26** So the slave fell down and did obeisance to him, saying, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay back everything to you.’ **27** Moved with pity at this, the master of that slave let him off and canceled his debt.^b **28** But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves, who owed him 100 denar*’i*, and grabbed him and began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay back whatever you owe.’ **29** So his fellow slave fell down and began to beg him, saying, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ **30** However, he was not willing, but he went and had him thrown into prison until he could pay back what he owed. **31** When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they became greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all the things that had happened. **32** Then his master summoned him and said to him: ‘Wicked slave, I canceled all that debt for you when you pleaded with me. **33** Should you not also have shown mercy to your fellow slave as I showed mercy to you?’^c **34** With that his master, provoked to wrath, handed him over to the jailers until he repaid all that he owed. **35** My heavenly Father will also deal with you in the same way^d if each of you does not forgive your brother from your heart.”^e

 STUDY NOTES

18:22 77 times: Lit., “seventy times seven.” This Greek expression can be understood to mean either “70 and 7” (77 times) or “70 multiplied by 7” (490 times). The same wording found in the *Septuagint* at Ge 4:24 renders the Hebrew expression “77 times,” which supports the rendering “77 times.” Regardless of how it is understood, the repetition of the number seven was equivalent to “indefinitely” or “without limit.” By turning Peter’s 7 times into 77, Jesus was telling his followers not to set an arbitrary limit on forgiveness. In contrast, the Babylonian Talmud (*Yoma* 86b) says: “If a man commits a transgression the first, second and third time he is forgiven, the fourth time he is not forgiven.”

18:24 10,000 talents: Just one talent would have been the equivalent of about 20 years’ wages for a common laborer, so it would have taken the average worker thousands of lifetimes of work to repay such a debt. Clearly, Jesus was using hy-

perbole to illustrate that the debt was impossible to repay. The 10,000 talents of silver equaled 60,000,000 denarii.—See study note on Mt 18:28;  Glossary, “Talent”; and  App. B14.

18:26 did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; paid him homage.” When the Greek verb *pro-sky-ne’o* is used to refer to worship of a god or of a deity, it is rendered “to worship.” But in this context, it refers to a slave’s showing respect and submission to a person who had authority over him.—See study notes on Mt 2:2; 8:2.

18:27 canceled his debt: Or “forgave him the debt (loan).” In a figurative sense, debts can refer to sins.—See study note on Mt 6:12.

18:28 100 denarii: Although 100 denarii was little compared to 10,000 talents (60,000,000 denarii), it was not insignificant; it represented the wages of 100 days of work for a laborer.—See  App. B14.

18:32 canceled all that debt for you: Or “forgave you all that debt.”—See study note on Mt 6:12.

18:34 jailers: The Greek term *ba-sa-ni-stes’*, rendered “jailers,” has the basic meaning of “tormentors,” likely because jailers often inflicted cruel torture on prisoners. However, the term came to be applied to jailers in a general sense, evidently because confinement with or without torture was considered a form of torment.—See study note on Mt 8:29.

Marriage and Divorce

19 When Jesus had finished speaking these things, he departed from Gal'i-lee and came to the borders* of Ju-de'a across the Jordan.^a **2** Also, large crowds followed him, and he cured them there.

3 And Pharisees came to him intent on testing him, and they asked: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on every sort of grounds?"^b **4** In reply he said: "Have you not read that the one who created them from the beginning made them male and female^c **5** and said: 'For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh'?^d **6** So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together, let no man put apart."^e **7** They said to him: "Why, then, did Moses direct giving a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her?"^f **8** He said to them: "Out of regard for your hard-heartedness, Moses made the concession to you of divorcing your wives,^g but that has not been the case from the beginning.^h **9** I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the grounds of sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery."ⁱ

Gift of Singleness

10 The disciples said to him: "If that is the situation of a man with his wife, it is not advisable to marry." **11** He said to them: "Not all men make room for the saying, but only those who have the gift.^j **12** For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and

CHAP. 19

- a Mr 10:1
- b De 24:1
Mr 10:2-12
- c Ge 1:27
Ge 5:2
- d Ge 2:24
Eph 5:31
- e Mr 10:9
1Co 7:11
- f De 24:1
Mt 5:31
- g Mr 10:5
- h Ge 2:24
- i Mal 2:14
Mt 5:32
Mr 10:11, 12
Lu 16:18
Ro 7:3
1Co 7:10
Heb 13:4
- j 1Co 7:7

FOOTNOTES

19:1 *Or "frontiers; regions."

STUDY NOTES

19:1 the borders of Judea across the Jordan:

This apparently refers to Perea, a region on the E side of the Jordan River, and especially the parts of Perea bordering on Judea. Jesus left Galilee and only returned there after his resurrection.—See  App. A7, Map 5.

See  Gallery, image 65, East of the Jordan—Perea.

19:5 **stick to:** The Greek verb used here literally means "to glue; to join (bind) closely together; to cling to." Here it is

used figuratively to describe the bond that is to unite man and wife as if with glue.

one flesh: This expression is a literal rendering into Greek of the Hebrew term at Ge 2:24 and could also be rendered "one body" or "one person." It describes the closest bond possible between two humans. It not only refers to sexual relations but extends to the whole relationship, making the two individuals faithful and inseparable companions. Such a union cannot be broken up without damage to the partners bound by it.

19:7 **certificate of dismissal:** Or "certificate of divorce." By requiring a man who was considering divorce to prepare a legal

document and likely to consult the elders, the Law gave him time to reconsider such a serious decision. The intent of the Law was evidently to prevent rash divorces and to provide women with a measure of legal protection. (De 24:1) But in Jesus' day, religious leaders had made divorce easy to obtain. The first-century historian Josephus, himself a divorced Pharisee, suggested that divorce was allowable "for any cause whatsoever (and many such causes happen among men)."—See study note on Mt 5:31.

See  Gallery, image 32, Certificate of Divorce.

19:9 **whoever divorces his wife:** See study note on Mr 10:12.

CHAP. 19

a 1Co 7:32, 38
1Co 9:5

b Mr 10:13-16
Lu 18:15-17

c Mt 18:3
Mr 10:14
Lu 18:16

d Mr 10:17-22
Lu 18:18-23

e Mr 10:18

f Le 18:5
Lu 10:25-28

g Ex 20:13
De 5:17

h Ex 20:14
De 5:18

i Ex 20:15
De 5:19

j Ex 20:16
De 5:20

k Ex 20:12
De 5:16

l Le 19:18
Mt 22:39
Mr 12:31
Lu 10:27
Ro 13:9

m Mt 6:20

n Lu 12:33
Lu 18:22
Php 3:7

o Lu 18:23

there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs on account of the Kingdom of the heavens. Let the one who can make room for it make room for it.”^a

Jesus Blesses Young Children

13 Then young children were brought to him for him to place his hands on them and offer prayer, but the disciples reprimanded them.^b **14** Jesus, however, said: “Let the young children alone, and do not try to stop them from coming to me, for the Kingdom of the heavens belongs to such ones.”^c **15** And he placed his hands on them and departed from there.

A Rich Young Man’s Question

16 Now look! someone came up to him and said: “Teacher, what good must I do to gain everlasting life?”^d **17** He said to him: “Why do you ask me about what is good? One there is who is good.^e If, though, you want to enter into life, observe the commandments continually.”^f **18** He said to him: “Which ones?” Jesus said: “You must not murder,^g you must not commit adultery,^h you must not steal,ⁱ you must not bear false witness,^j **19** honor your father and your mother,^k and you must love your neighbor as yourself.”^l **20** The young man said to him: “I have kept all of these; what am I still lacking?” **21** Jesus said to him: “If you want to be perfect, go sell your belongings and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven;^m and come be my follower.”ⁿ **22** When the young man heard this, he went away grieved, for he had many possessions.^o **23** Then Jesus said to his disciples: “Truly I say to you that it will be

STUDY NOTES

19:9 sexual immorality: Greek, *por-nei’ā*.
—See study note on Mt 5:32 and  Glossary.

adultery: See  Glossary.

19:12 eunuchs: In a literal sense, castrated men. In this verse, the term is used in both a literal and a figurative sense.—See  Glossary, “Eunuch.”

have made themselves eunuchs: Or “have chosen to live as eunuchs.” Here “eunuchs” does not refer to males who have physically castrated themselves or have been emasculated. Instead, these voluntarily remain in a state of singleness.—See  Glossary, “Eunuch.”

19:17 One there is who is good: Or “There is only one who is good,” that is, God. Jesus here recognized Jehovah as the ultimate standard of what is good. God has expressed and defined what is good by means of his Word, the Bible.—Mr 10:18; Lu 18:19.

19:19 neighbor: See study note on Mt 22:39.

19:21 Jesus said to him: Jesus saw how earnest the young man was and, according to Mr 10:21, “felt love for him.” So possibly realizing that the man would need to cultivate a greater degree of self-sacrifice in order to become a disciple, Jesus told him: **sell your belongings and**

give to the poor. Unlike Peter and others who said that they had left everything to follow Jesus, this young man could not part with his possessions to become a disciple.—Mt 4:20, 22; Lu 18:23, 28.

perfect: The Greek term used here can mean “complete” or “faultless” according to standards set by an authority. (See study note on Mt 5:48.) In this context, material possessions were preventing this man from being perfect, or complete, in his service to God.—Lu 8:14.

19:23 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of the heavens.^a
24 Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to get through a needle’s eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.”^b

25 When the disciples heard that, they were greatly astounded, saying: “Who really can be saved?”^c **26** Looking at them intently, Jesus said to them: “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”^d

Sacrifices for the Kingdom

27 Then Peter said in reply: “Look! We have left all things and followed you; what, then, will there be for us?”^e **28** Jesus said to them: “Truly I say to you, in the re-creation, when the Son of man sits down on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will sit on 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel.^f **29** And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit everlasting life.^g

30 “But many who are first will be last and the last first.”^h

Vineyard Workers and Equal Payment

20 “For the Kingdom of the heavens is like the master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard.ⁱ **2** After he had agreed with the workers for a de-nar’i-us a day, he sent them into his vineyard. **3** Going out also about the third hour, he saw others standing unemployed in the marketplace; **4** and to those he said, ‘You

CHAP. 19

- a Mr 10:23
Lu 18:24
1Ti 6:10
- b Mr 10:25
Lu 18:25
- c Mr 10:26, 27
Lu 18:26, 27
- d Ge 18:14
Job 42:2
Zec 8:6
- e Mr 10:28
Lu 5:11
Lu 18:28
Php 3:8
- f Da 7:14
Mt 20:21
Lu 22:28-30
1Co 6:2
Re 3:21
Re 20:4
- g Mt 10:37
Mr 10:29, 30
Lu 14:26
Lu 18:29, 30
Heb 10:34
- h Mt 20:16
Mr 10:31
Lu 13:30

CHAP. 20

- i Mt 21:33

 **STUDY NOTES**

19:24 easier for a camel to get through a needle’s eye: Jesus is using hyperbole to illustrate a point. Just as a literal camel cannot go through the eye of an actual sewing needle, it is impossible for a rich man to enter the Kingdom if he continues to put his riches ahead of his relationship with Jehovah. Jesus did not mean that no wealthy person would inherit the Kingdom, for he went on to say: “With God all things are possible.”—Mt 19:26.

See  Gallery, image 66, Camel.

19:28 re-creation: Or “regeneration; renewal.” The Greek word *pa·lin·ge·ne·si’a* is composed of elements that mean “again; anew; once more” and “birth; origin.” The ancient Jewish writer Philo used

the term with reference to the renewal of the world after the Flood; Jewish historian Josephus used it regarding the reestablishment of Israel after the exile. Here in Matthew’s account, it refers to the time when the rule of Christ and his corulers will bring to the earth a renewal of the perfect conditions enjoyed by the first humans before they sinned.

19:28; 20:18 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

19:28 judging: This harmonizes with other verses that indicate that Christ’s corulers will share with him in judgment. (1Co 6:2; Re 20:4) The combination of ruling and judging is in harmony with Biblical usage, which at times uses the term “judge” with the more general meaning of

“ruling over” or “governing.”—Jg 2:18; 10:2; Ob 21.

19:29 a hundred times: Although a few manuscripts read “many times,” the current reading has stronger manuscript support.—Compare Mr 10:30; Lu 18:30.

inherit: See study note on Mt 25:34.

20:1 to hire workers: Some workers would be employed for the entire harvest period; others, for a day at a time as the need arose.

20:2 denarius: A Roman silver coin that weighed about 3.85 g (0.124 oz t) and bore an image of Caesar on one side. As this verse shows, agricultural laborers in Jesus’ day commonly received a denarius for a 12-hour workday.—See  Glossary and  App. B14.

CHAP. 20

- a Le 19:13
De 24:14, 15
- b Mt 20:2
- c Mt 6:23
- d Mt 19:30
Mr 10:31
Lu 13:30
- e Mr 10:32
Lu 18:31

too go into the vineyard, and I will give you whatever is fair.’
5 So off they went. Again he went out about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did likewise. **6** Finally, about the 11th hour, he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day unemployed?’
7 They replied, ‘Because nobody has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You too go into the vineyard.’

8 “When evening came, the master of the vineyard said to his man in charge, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages,^a starting with the last and ending with the first.’ **9** When the 11th-hour men came, they each received a de-nar’i-us. **10** So when the first came, they assumed that they would receive more, but they too were paid at the rate of a de-nar’i-us. **11** On receiving it, they began to complain against the master of the house **12** and said, ‘These last men put in one hour’s work; still you made them equal to us who bore the burden of the day and the burning heat!’ **13** But he said in reply to one of them, ‘Fellow, I do you no wrong. You agreed with me for a de-nar’i-us, did you not?’^b **14** Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last one the same as to you. **15** Do I not have the right to do what I want with my own things? Or is your eye envious because I am good?’^c **16** In this way, the last ones will be first, and the first ones last.”^d

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection a Third Time

17 While going up to Jerusalem, Jesus took the 12 disciples aside privately and said to them on the road:^e **18** “Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be handed

STUDY NOTES

20:3 about the third hour: That is, about 9:00 a.m. In the first century C.E., the Jews used the count of 12 hours to the day, starting with sunrise at about 6:00 a.m. (Joh 11:9) Therefore, the third hour would be about 9:00 a.m., the sixth hour about noon, and the ninth hour about 3:00 p.m. Since people did not have precise timepieces, only the approximate time of an event was usually given.—Joh 1:39; 4:6; 19:14; Ac 10:3, 9.

See  Gallery, image 46, The Marketplace.

20:5 about the sixth hour: That is, about 12:00 noon.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

the ninth hour: That is, about 3:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

20:6 about the 11th hour: That is, about 5:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

20:15 is your eye envious: The Greek word here rendered “envious” literally means “bad; wicked.” (See study note on Mt 6:23.) The term “eye” is here used figuratively of a person’s intent, disposition, or emotions.—Compare the expression “envious eye” at Mr 7:22.

good: Or “generous.” In this context, goodness is directly linked with an act of generosity.

20:17 While going up: Although a few manuscripts convey the idea “being about to go up,” the current reading has stronger manuscript support.

going up to Jerusalem: The city was about 750 m (2,500 ft) above sea level, so the Scriptures often speak of worshippers “going up to Jerusalem.” (Mr 10:32; Lu 2:22; Joh 2:13; Ac 11:2) Jesus and his disciples were about to ascend from the Jordan Valley (see study note on Mt 19:1), which at its lowest point is about 400 m (1,300 ft) below sea level. They would have to climb some 1,000 m (3,330 ft) to reach Jerusalem.

over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death^a **19** and hand him over to men of the nations to be mocked and scourged and executed on a stake;^b and on the third day he will be raised up.”^c

Request for Positions in Kingdom

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zeb’ee-dee^d approached him with her sons, doing obeisance and asking for something from him.^e **21** He said to her: “What do you want?” She replied to him: “Give the word that these two sons of mine may sit down, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your Kingdom.”^f **22** Jesus answered: “You do not know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?”^g They said to him: “We can.” **23** He said to them: “You will indeed drink my cup,^h but to sit down at my right hand and at my left is not mine to give, but it belongs to those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”ⁱ

24 When the ten others heard about it, they became indignant at the two brothers.^j **25** But Jesus called them to him and said: “You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them and the great men wield authority over them.^k **26** This must not be the way among you;^l but whoever wants to become great

CHAP. 20

- a Mt 16:21
Mr 10:33, 34
Lu 9:22
Lu 18:32, 33
- b Mt 27:26, 31
Joh 19:1
- c Mt 17:22, 23
Mt 28:6
Ac 10:40
1Co 15:4
- d Mt 4:21
Mt 27:55, 56
- e Mr 10:35-40
- f Mt 19:28
- g Mt 26:39
Mr 10:38
Mr 14:36
Joh 18:11
- h Ac 12:2
Ro 8:17
2Co 1:7
Re 1:9
- i Mr 10:39, 40
- j Mr 10:41-45
Lu 22:24
- k Mr 10:42
- l 2Co 1:24
1Pe 5:3

STUDY NOTES

20:19 executed on a stake: Or “to be fastened on a stake (pole).” This is the first of over 40 occurrences of the Greek verb *stau-ro’o* in the Christian Greek Scriptures. This is the verb for the Greek noun *stau-ros*, rendered “torture stake.” (See study notes on Mt 10:38; 16:24; 27:32 and  Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”) The verb form is used in the *Sep-tuagint* at Es 7:9, where the order was given to hang Haman on a stake that was over 20 m (65 ft) tall. In classical Greek, it meant “to fence with pales, to form a stockade, or palisade.”

See  Gallery, image 41, Whip for Scourging.

20:20 mother of the sons of Zebedee: That is, the mother of the apostles James and John. According to Mark’s account, James and John are the ones who approach Jesus. (Mr 10:35) They are evidently the source of the request, but they make the request through their mother,

Salome, who may have been Jesus’ aunt.—Mt 27:55, 56; Mr 15:40, 41; Joh 19:25.

doing obeisance: Or “bowing down; kneeling respectfully.”—See study notes on Mt 8:2; 18:26.

20:21 one at your right hand and one at your left: See study note on Mr 10:37.

20:22 You do not know what you are asking for: The plural Greek verbs used and the context indicate that Jesus is now addressing, not the woman, but her two sons.—Mr 10:35-38.

drink the cup: In the Bible, “cup” is often used figuratively of God’s will, or the “assigned portion,” for a person. (Ps 11:6; 16:5; 23:5) To “drink the cup” here means to submit to God’s will. In this case, the “cup” involved not only Jesus’ suffering and death under the false charge of blasphemy but also his being resurrected to immortal life in heaven.

20:25 lord it over them: See study note on Mr 10:42.

20:26 minister: Or “servant.” The Bible often uses the Greek word *di-a’ko-nos* to refer to one who does not let up in humbly rendering service in behalf of others. The term is used to describe Christ (Ro 15:8), ministers or servants of Christ (1Co 3:5-7; Col 1:23), ministerial servants (Php 1:1; 1Ti 3:8), as well as household servants (Joh 2:5, 9) and government officials (Ro 13:4).

20:28 not to be ministered to, but to minister: Or “not to be served, but to serve.”—See study note on Mt 20:26.

life: The Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally rendered “soul,” is here used in the sense of “life.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

ransom: The Greek word *ly’tron* (from the verb *ly’o*, meaning “to let loose; to release”) was used by non-Biblical Greek writers to refer to a price paid to release those under bond or in slavery or to ransom prisoners of war. It occurs twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures, here and at Mr 10:45. The related word *an-ti’ly-tro-n*

CHAP. 20

a Mt 18:4
Mt 23:11
Mr 10:43, 44
Lu 9:48
Lu 22:26

b Mr 9:35

c Lu 22:27
Joh 13:14
Php 2:7

d Isa 53:11
Mr 10:45
Ro 5:18, 19
1Ti 2:5, 6
Tit 2:13, 14
Heb 9:28
1Jo 2:1, 2

e Mt 9:27
Mr 10:46–52
Lu 18:35–43

f Mt 9:36

g Mt 9:29

among you must be your minister,^a **27** and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave.^b **28** Just as the Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister^c and to give his life as a ransom in exchange for many.”^d

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

29 As they were going out of Jer'i-cho, a large crowd followed him. **30** And look! two blind men sitting beside the road heard that Jesus was passing by and cried out: “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!”^e **31** But the crowd rebuked them, telling them to keep silent; yet they cried all the louder, saying: “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” **32** So Jesus stopped, called them, and said: “What do you want me to do for you?” **33** They said to him: “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” **34** Moved with pity,^f Jesus touched their eyes,^g and immediately they recovered their sight, and they followed him.

CHAP. 21

h Ac 1:12

i Mr 11:1–3
Lu 19:28–31

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

21 When they got close to Jerusalem and arrived at Beth'-pha-ge on the Mount of Olives,^h then Jesus sent two disciples,ⁱ **2** saying to them: “Go into the village that is within sight, and you will at once find a donkey tied and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. **3** If someone says anything to you, you must say, ‘The Lord needs them.’ At that he will immediately send them.”

STUDY NOTES

appears at 1Ti 2:6 and is rendered “corresponding ransom.” Other related words are *ly-tro'o-mai*, meaning “to set free; to ransom” (Tit 2:14; 1Pe 1:18; also ftns.), and *a-po-ly'tro-sis*, often rendered “release by ransom” (Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; Heb 9:15; 11:35; Ro 3:24; 8:23).—See  Glossary.

20:29 Jericho: The first Canaanite city W of the Jordan River to be conquered by the Israelites. (Nu 22:1; Jos 6:1, 24, 25) By Jesus' time, a new city had been built about 2 km (a little over a mile) S of the old city. This may explain why Lu 18:35 says of the same incident that “Jesus was getting near to Jericho.” Perhaps Jesus performs the miracle while leaving, or **going out of**, the Jewish city and approaching the Roman city, or vice versa.—See  App. B4 and B10.

20:30 two blind men: Mark and Luke mention one blind man, evidently focusing on Bartimaeus, who is named in Mark's account. (Mr 10:46; Lu 18:35) Matthew is more specific as to the number of blind men present.

Son of David: Addressing Jesus as “Son of David,” the two blind men openly acknowledge him as the Messiah.—See study notes on Mt 1:1, 6; 15:25.

20:34 pity: Or “compassion.”—See study note on Mt 9:36.

21:1 Bethphage: The name of this village on the Mount of Olives comes from Hebrew, probably meaning “House of the Early Figs.” Tradition locates it between Jerusalem and Bethany on the SE slope of the Mount of Olives, near the peak, about 1 km (less than 1 mi) from Jerusalem.—Mr 11:1; Lu 19:29; see  App. A7, Map 6.

See  Gallery, image 67, Bethphage, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem.

21:2 a donkey tied and a colt with her: Only Matthew's account mentions both the donkey and its colt. (Mr 11:2–7; Lu 19:30–35; Joh 12:14, 15) Evidently, since Jesus rode only on the colt, Mark, Luke, and John mention only one animal.—See study note on Mt 21:5.

4 This actually took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet, who said: **5** “Tell the daughter of Zion: ‘Look! Your king is coming to you,^a mild-tempered^b and mounted on a donkey, yes, on a colt, the offspring of a beast of burden.’”^c

6 So the disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them.^d **7** They brought the donkey and its colt, and they put their outer garments on them, and he sat on them.^e **8** Most of the crowd spread their outer garments on the road,^f while others were cutting down branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. **9** Moreover, the crowds going ahead of him and those following him kept shouting: “Save, we pray, the Son of David!^g Blessed is the one who comes in Jehovah’s name!^h Save him, we pray, in the heights above!”^{*i}

10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in an uproar, saying: “Who is this?” **11** The crowds kept saying: “This is the prophet Jesus,^j from Naz’a-reth of Gal’i-lee!”

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

12 Jesus entered the temple and threw out all those selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.^k

13 And he said to them: “It is written, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’^l but you are making it a cave of robbers.”^m

14 Also, blind and lame people came to him in the temple, and he cured them.

CHAP. 21

- a Isa 62:11
Joh 12:15
- b Mt 11:29
2Co 10:1
- c Zec 9:9
- d Mr 11:4-6
Lu 19:32-35
- e 1Ki 1:38, 40
Mr 11:7-11
Joh 12:14, 15
- f 2 Ki 9:13
Lu 19:36-38
- g Mt 9:27
Mt 21:15
- h Ps 118:25, 26
Joh 12:13
- i Mr 11:9, 10
- j Mt 21:46
Lu 7:16
Lu 24:19
- k Ps 69:9
Mr 11:15, 16
Lu 19:45
Joh 2:15
- l 2Ch 6:32, 33
Isa 56:7
- m Jer 7:11
Mr 11:17
Lu 19:46
Joh 2:16

FOOTNOTES
21:9 *Or “in the highest places.”

STUDY NOTES
21:4 to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: The first part of the quote at Mt 21:5 is evidently taken from Isa 62: 11 and the second part, from Zec 9:9. —See study note on Mt 1:22.
21:5 the daughter of Zion: Or “daughter Zion,” as some Bible translations say. In the Bible, cities are often personified as women or figuratively referred to using feminine terms. In this expression, “daughter” may refer to the city itself or to the people of the city. The name Zion was closely connected with the city of Jerusalem.
mild-tempered: Or “humble.”—See study note on Mt 5:5.

on a donkey, yes, on a colt: Although two animals are mentioned at Mt 21:2, 7, the prophecy at Zec 9:9 refers to the king as riding only one animal.—See study note on Mt 21:2.
 See  Gallery, image 68, Colt, or Young Donkey.
21:7 the donkey and its colt: See study notes on Mt 21:2, 5.
sat on them: That is, on the outer garments.
21:9 Save, we pray: Lit., “Hosanna.” That Greek term comes from a Hebrew expression that means “save, we pray” or “save, please.” Here the term is used as a plea to God for salvation or victory; it could be rendered “please, grant salvation to.” In time, it became an expression of both prayer and praise. The Hebrew expression is found at Ps 118:25, which was

part of the Hallel Psalms sung regularly during Passover season. Therefore, these words readily came to mind on this occasion. One way God answered this prayer to save the Son of David was by resurrecting him from the dead. At Mt 21:42, Jesus himself quotes Ps 118:22, 23 and applies it to the Messiah.
Son of David: An expression here showing recognition of Jesus’ line of descent and his role as the promised Messiah. —See study notes on Mt 1:1, 6; 15:25; 20:30.
Jehovah’s: In this quote from Ps 118:25, 26, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.
21:10 was in an uproar: Or “was shaken (stirred up).” The agitation felt by the residents of the city is indicated by a

CHAP. 21

- a Mt 21:9
 b Mr 11:18
 Lu 19:39, 40
 c Ps 8:2
 d Mr 11:11
 Lu 21:37
 Joh 11:1
 Joh 12:1
 e Mr 11:12
 f Lu 13:6
 g Mt 3:10
 Mr 11:13, 14
 h Mr 11:20, 21
 i Mt 17:20
 Mr 11:22, 23
 Lu 17:6
 j Mr 11:24
 Lu 11:9
 Joh 14:13
 Jas 1:5
 1Jo 3:22

15 When the chief priests and the scribes saw the marvelous things he did and the boys who were shouting in the temple, “Save, we pray, the Son of David!”^a they became indignant^b **16** and said to him: “Do you hear what these are saying?” Jesus said to them: “Yes. Did you never read this, ‘Out of the mouth of children and infants, you have brought forth praise?’”^c **17** And leaving them behind, he went out of the city to Beth’a-ny and spent the night there.^d

Fig Tree Cursed

18 While returning to the city early in the morning, he felt hungry.^e **19** He caught sight of a fig tree by the road and went to it, but he found nothing on it except leaves,^f and he said to it: “Let no fruit come from you ever again.”^g And the fig tree withered instantly. **20** When the disciples saw this, they were amazed and said: “How is it that the fig tree withered instantly?”^h **21** In answer Jesus said to them: “Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what I did to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ it will happen.ⁱ **22** And all the things you ask in prayer, having faith, you will receive.”^j

STUDY NOTES

Greek verb that in its literal sense is used to describe the effects of an earthquake or a storm. (Mt 27:51; Re 6:13) The related Greek noun *sei-smos* is translated “storm” or “earthquake.”—Mt 8:24; 24:7; 27:54; 28:2.

21:12 temple: Probably referring to the part of the temple area known as the Court of the Gentiles.—See [☞](#) App. B11.

threw out all those selling: See study note on Lu 19:45.

money changers: Many different types of coins were in use, but apparently only a certain type of coin could be used to pay the annual temple tax or to buy sacrificial animals. Therefore, Jews traveling to Jerusalem would have to exchange their currency for money that would be accepted at the temple. Jesus evidently felt that the fees charged by the money changers were exorbitant and that their actions amounted to extortion.

21:13 cave of robbers: Or “den of thieves.” Jesus here alludes to Jer 7:11.

He likely called the merchants and money changers “robbers” because they made unjust profit from selling animals for sacrifice and charged exorbitant fees for exchanging currencies. Jesus was also indignant that Jehovah’s **house of prayer**, or place of worship, had been wrongly turned into a center for commercial activity.

21:14 temple: Probably referring to the Court of the Gentiles. (Compare study note on Mt 21:12.) Only Matthew’s account mentions that **blind and lame people** came to him in the temple and that he cured them, just as he had done on an earlier occasion. (Mt 15:30) Some claim that according to Jewish tradition, the blind and the lame were barred from access to certain parts of the temple, although the Hebrew Scriptures do not specifically mention such a prohibition. Either way, Matthew’s account may indicate that Jesus’ zeal during the last days of his earthly ministry was not limited to cleansing the temple but also involved curing the blind and the lame who approached him there.—See [☞](#) App. A7.

21:15 Save, we pray, the Son of David: See study note on Mt 21:9.

21:17 Bethany: A village on the ESE slope of the Mount of Olives at a distance of about 3 km (2 mi) from Jerusalem. (Joh 11:18) The home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, located in this village, appears to have been Jesus’ base in Judea. (Joh 11:1) Today the site is marked by a small village with an Arabic name meaning “The Place of Lazarus.”

21:19 he found nothing on it except leaves: Although it was unusual for a fig tree to bear fruit at that time of year, the tree had leaves—normally a sign that it had produced an early crop of figs. Because the tree had borne only leaves, Jesus knew that it was not going to produce any crop and was therefore deceptive in its appearance. So he cursed it as unproductive, causing it to wither.

21:21 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

Jesus' Authority Challenged

23 After he went into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him while he was teaching and said: “By what authority do you do these things? And who gave you this authority?”^a **24** In reply Jesus said to them: “I will also ask you one thing. If you tell me, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things: **25** The baptism by John, from what source was it? From heaven or from men?”^{*} But they began to reason among themselves, saying: “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’^b **26** But if we say, ‘From men,’ we have the crowd to fear, for they all regard John as a prophet.”^c **27** So they answered Jesus: “We do not know.” He, in turn, said to them: “Neither am I telling you by what authority I do these things.

CHAP. 21

- a Mr 11:27-33
Lu 20:1-8
- b Mt 21:32
Mr 11:30, 31
Lu 7:29, 30
- c Mt 11:7-10
Mt 14:3-5
Lu 1:67, 76
- d Lu 18:10-14
- e Lu 3:12
Lu 7:29, 30

Illustration of the Two Sons

28 “What do you think? A man had two children. Going up to the first, he said, ‘Child, go work today in the vineyard.’ **29** In answer this one said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward, he felt regret and went out. **30** Approaching the second, he said the same. This one replied, ‘I will, Sir,’ but did not go out. **31** Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said: “The first.” Jesus said to them: “Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going ahead of you into the Kingdom of God.^d **32** For John came to you in a way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. However, the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him,^e and even when you saw this, you did not feel regret afterward so as to believe him.

FOOTNOTES

21:25 ^{*}Or “of human origin.”

STUDY NOTES

21:23 **chief priests:** See study note on Mt 2:4.

elders: See study note on Mt 16:21.

21:29 **this one said, ‘I will not’:** In this parable (Mt 21:28-31), some Greek manuscripts present the two sons and their answers and actions in a different order. (See the rendering in previous editions of the *New World Translation*.) The overall idea is the same, but the manuscript support for the current reading is stronger.

21:31 **tax collectors:** See study note on Mt 5:46.

21:33 **illustration:** Or “parable.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

tower: Used as a vantage point to guard vineyards against thieves and animals.—Isa 5:2.

leased: A common practice in first-century Israel. In this case, the owner did much preliminary work, making his expectation of a return all the more reasonable.

See  Gallery, image 69, Winepress.

21:41 **a terrible destruction:** Or “an evil destruction.” Using a play on words, the Greek text repeats different forms of

the same root word to intensify the judgment message: “Because they are *evil*, he will bring an *evil* destruction on them.”

21:42 **in the Scriptures:** Often used to refer to the inspired Hebrew writings as a whole.

CHAP. 21

Illustration of Murderous Cultivators

- a Isa 5:7
 b Isa 5:2
 c Mr 12:1-9
 Lu 20:9-16
 d Ne 9:26
 e 2Ch 36:15
 Ac 7:52
 Heb 11:32, 37
 f Heb 1:2
 g Ac 2:23
 Ac 3:15
 h Isa 28:16
 Lu 20:17
 Ac 4:11
 Ro 9:33
 Eph 2:20
 1Pe 2:7
 i Ps 118:22, 23
 Mr 12:10, 11
 j Isa 8:14
 1Pe 2:7, 8
 k Lu 20:18
 l Mr 12:12
 Lu 20:19
 m Mt 21:11
 Joh 7:40

33 “Hear another illustration: There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard^a and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and erected a tower;^b then he leased it to cultivators and traveled abroad.^c **34** When the fruit season came around, he sent his slaves to the cultivators to collect his fruit. **35** However, the cultivators took his slaves, and they beat one up, another they killed, another they stoned.^d **36** Again he sent other slaves, more than the first group, but they did the same to these.^e **37** Lastly he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ **38** On seeing the son, the cultivators said among themselves, ‘This is the heir.^f Come, let us kill him and get his inheritance!’ **39** So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.^g **40** Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those cultivators?” **41** They said to him: “Because they are evil, he will bring a terrible destruction on them and will lease the vineyard to other cultivators, who will give him the fruits when they become due.”

42 Jesus said to them: “Did you never read in the Scriptures, ‘The stone that the builders rejected, this has become the chief cornerstone.^h This has come from Jehovah, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?ⁱ **43** This is why I say to you, the Kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits. **44** Also, the person falling on this stone will be shattered.^j As for anyone on whom it falls, it will crush him.”^k

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his illustrations, they knew that he was speaking about them.^l **46** Although they wanted to seize* him, they feared the crowds, because these regarded him as a prophet.^m

FOOTNOTES

21:46 *Or “arrest.”

STUDY NOTES

21:42 **the chief cornerstone:** Or “the most important stone.” The Hebrew expression at Ps 118:22 and the Greek expression used here literally mean “the head of the corner.” Although it has been understood in different ways, it apparently refers to the stone that was installed atop the junction of two walls to hold them firmly together. Jesus quoted and

applied this prophecy to himself as “the chief cornerstone.” Just as the topmost stone of a building is conspicuous, so Jesus Christ is the crowning stone of the Christian congregation of anointed ones, which is likened to a spiritual temple.

Jehovah: In this quote from Ps 118:22, 23, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

Illustration of the Marriage Feast

CHAP. 22

22 Once more Jesus spoke to them with illustrations, saying: **2** “The Kingdom of the heavens may be likened to a king who made a marriage feast^a for his son. **3** And he sent his slaves to call those invited to the marriage feast, but they were unwilling to come.^b **4** Again he sent other slaves, saying, “Tell those invited: “Look! I have prepared my dinner, my bulls and fattened animals are slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the marriage feast.”” **5** But unconcerned they went off, one to his own field, another to his business;^c **6** but the rest, seizing his slaves, treated them insolently and killed them.

a Lu 14:16
Re 19:9
b Lu 14:17, 18
c Lu 14:18, 19
d Da 9:26
e Ac 13:45, 46
f Mt 21:43
Lu 14:23

7 “The king grew wrathful and sent his armies and killed those murderers and burned their city.^d **8** Then he said to his slaves, “The marriage feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy.^e **9** Therefore, go to the roads leading out of the city, and invite anyone* you find to the marriage feast.”^f **10** Accordingly, those slaves went out to the roads and gathered all they found, both wicked and good; and the room for the wedding ceremonies was filled with those dining.*

11 “When the king came in to inspect the guests, he caught sight of a man not wearing a marriage garment. **12** So he said to him, ‘Fellow, how did you get in here without a marriage garment?’ He was speechless. **13** Then the king said to his servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and throw him into the darkness outside. There is where his weeping and the gnashing of his teeth will be.’

14 “For there are many invited, but few chosen.”

FOOTNOTES

22:9 *Or “as many as.” **22:10** *Or “dinner guests; those reclining at the table.”

STUDY NOTES

22:1 **illustrations:** Or “parables.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

22:11 **marriage garment:** Since this was a royal wedding, it may be that a special garment was provided by the royal host for his guests. If so, failure to wear it would show great disrespect.

22:13 **gnashing of his teeth:** See study note on Mt 8:12.

22:15 **to trap him:** Lit., “to ensnare him,” like a bird in a net. (Compare Ec 9:12, where the *Septuagint* uses the same Greek hunting term to render a Hebrew word with the meaning “to catch with a snare; to ensnare.”) The Pharisees used flattery and insincere questions (Mt 22: 16, 17) solely designed to elicit an answer they could use against Jesus.

22:16 **party followers of Herod:** See  Glossary.

22:17 **head tax:** An annual tax, probably amounting to a denarius, or one day’s wages, which the Romans levied on all those who had been registered by census.—Lu 2:1-3.

Caesar: Or “the Emperor.” The Roman emperor during Jesus’ earthly ministry was Tiberius, but the term was not restricted to the ruling emperor. “Caesar” could refer to the Roman civil authority, or the State, and its duly appointed representatives, who are called “the superior authorities” by Paul, and “the king” and his “governors” by Peter.—Ro 13:1-7; 1Pe 2:13-17; Tit 3:1; see  Glossary.

CHAP. 22

God and Caesar

- a Mr 12:13-17
Lu 20:20-26
- b Mr 3:6
- c Da 3:17, 18
Mal 3:8
Mr 12:17
Lu 20:25
Lu 23:2
Ro 13:7
Tit 3:1
1Pe 2:13, 14
- d Ac 4:1, 2
Ac 23:8
- e Mr 12:18-23
Lu 20:27-33
- f Ge 38:7, 8
De 25:5, 6
Ru 1:11
Ru 3:13

15 Then the Pharisees went and conspired together in order to trap him in his speech.^a **16** So they sent their disciples to him, together with party followers of Herod,^b saying: “Teacher, we know you are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and you do not seek anyone’s favor, for you do not look at the outward appearance of people. **17** Tell us, then, what do you think? Is it lawful* to pay head tax to Caesar or not?” **18** But Jesus, knowing their wickedness, said: “Why do you put me to the test, hypocrites? **19** Show me the tax coin.” They brought him a de-nar’i-us. **20** He said to them: “Whose image and inscription is this?” **21** They said: “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them: “Pay back, therefore, Caesar’s things to Caesar, but God’s things to God.”^c **22** When they heard that, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

Question About the Resurrection

23 On that day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection,^d came and asked him:^e **24** “Teacher, Moses said: ‘If any man dies without having children, his brother must marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.’^f **25** Now there were seven brothers with us. The first married and died, and having no offspring, he left his wife for his brother. **26** The

FOOTNOTES

22:17 *Or “right.”

STUDY NOTES

22:18 hypocrites: See study note on Mt 6:2.

22:19 denarius: This Roman silver coin with an inscription of Caesar was the “head tax” coin that the Romans exacted from the Jews. (Mt 22:17) In Jesus’ day, agricultural laborers commonly received a denarius for a 12-hour workday, and the Christian Greek Scriptures often use the denarius as a basis for calculating other monetary values. (Mt 20:2; Mr 6:37; 14:5; Re 6:6) A variety of copper and silver coins were used in Israel, including silver coins minted in Tyre that were used for the temple tax. Yet, for paying taxes to Rome, people evidently used the silver denarius bearing the image of Caesar.—See  Glossary and  App. B14.

22:20 image and inscription: On the front side of a common denarius of this time, there was an image of the laurel-crowned head of Roman Emperor Tiberius, who reigned from 14 to 37 C.E., and the inscription in Latin, “Tiberius Caesar Augustus, son of the deified Augustus.”—See also  App. B14.

22:21 Pay back: Lit., “Give back.” Caesar minted the coins, so he had a right to ask for some of them back. But Caesar did not have the right to ask a person to dedicate or devote his life to him. God gave humans “life and breath and all things.” (Ac 17:25) So a person can “give back” his life and devotion only to God, the one who has the right to require exclusive devotion.

Caesar’s things to Caesar: Jesus’ reply here, and in the parallel accounts at Mr 12:17 and Lu 20:25, is his only recorded reference to the Roman emperor. “Caesar’s things” include payment for services

rendered by the secular government as well as the honor and relative subjection that is to be shown to such authorities.—Ro 13:1-7.

God’s things to God: This includes a person’s wholehearted worship, whole-souled love, and complete, loyal obedience.—Mt 4:10; 22:37, 38; Ac 5:29; Ro 14:8.

See  Gallery, image 70, Tiberius Caesar.

22:23 resurrection: The Greek word *a-na’sta-sis* literally means “raising up; standing up.” It is used about 40 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures with reference to the resurrection of the dead. (Mt 22:31; Ac 4:2; 24:15; 1Co 15:12, 13) In the *Septuagint* at Isa 26:19, the verb form of *a-na’sta-sis* is used to render the Hebrew verb “to live” in the expression “Your dead *will live*.”—See  Glossary.

22:25 he left his wife for his brother: See study note on Mr 12:21.

same thing happened with the second and the third, through all seven. **27** Last of all, the woman died. **28** So in the resurrection, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her as a wife.”

29 In reply Jesus said to them: “You are mistaken, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God;^a **30** for in the resurrection neither do men marry nor are women given in marriage, but they are as angels in heaven.^b **31** Regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, who said: **32** ‘I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob’?^c He is the God, not of the dead, but of the living.”^d **33** On hearing that, the crowds were astounded at his teaching.^e

CHAP. 22

a Mr 12:24-27

b Lu 20:35, 36

c Ex 3:6

d Lu 20:37, 38

Ro 4:17

e Mt 7:28

Mr 11:18

Two Greatest Commandments

34 After the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they came together in one group. **35** And one of them, versed in the Law, tested him by asking: **36** “Teacher, which

STUDY NOTES

22:29 the Scriptures: An expression often used to refer to the inspired Hebrew writings as a whole.

22:31 resurrection: See study note on Mt 22:23.

God, who said: Jesus here refers to a conversation between Moses and Jehovah that took place about 1514 B.C.E. (Ex 3:2, 6) At that time, Abraham had been dead for 329 years, Isaac for 224, and Jacob for 197. Yet, Jehovah did not say: ‘I was their God.’ He said: ‘I am their God.’—Mt 22:32.

22:32 He is the God, not of the dead: The earliest and most reliable manuscripts support this reading, but some manuscripts repeat the word “God” and could be rendered: “God is not the God of the dead.” This reading is reflected in some Bible translations. One translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁸ in  App. C) uses the Tetragrammaton here and could be rendered: “Jehovah is not the God of the dead.”—Compare Ex 3:6, 15.

but of the living: See study note on Mr 12:27.

22:34 silenced: The Greek verb could also be rendered “to make speechless” (lit., “to muzzle”). This was a fitting expression in view of the hypocritical question. Jesus’ answer was so effective that the Sadducees were unable to respond.—1Pe 2:15, fn.

22:37 You must love: The Greek word here rendered “love” is *a-ga·pa’o*. This verb and the related noun *a-ga’pe* (love) occur more than 250 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. At 1Jo 4:8, the noun *a-ga’pe* is used in the phrase “God is love,” and the Scriptures use God as the paramount example of unselfish love guided by principle. God’s love is expressed thoughtfully and actively. It involves commitment and actions, not just emotions and feelings. Humans who show such love do so as a deliberate choice in imitation of God. (Eph 5:1) That is why humans can be commanded to show love, as in the two greatest commandments, referred to in this context. Jesus is here quoting from De 6:5. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the Hebrew verb ‘*a-hev’* or ‘*a-hav’* (to love) and the noun ‘*a-havah’* (love) are the words primarily used to denote love. They convey a range of meanings similar to that of the Greek

words mentioned above. In connection with loving Jehovah, these words express a person’s desire to be completely devoted to God and to serve him exclusively. Jesus perfectly demonstrated this kind of love. He showed that love of God requires more than feeling affection for Jehovah. It governs a person’s whole life, influencing all his thoughts, words, and actions.—See study note on Joh 3:16.

Jehovah: In this quote from De 6:5, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

heart: When used in a figurative sense, this term generally refers to the total inner person. When mentioned together with “soul” and “mind,” however, it evidently takes on a more specific meaning and refers mainly to a person’s emotions, desires, and feelings. The three terms used here (heart, soul, and mind) are not mutually exclusive; they are used in an overlapping sense, emphasizing in the strongest possible way the need for complete and total love for God.

CHAP. 22

a Mr 12:28

b De 6:5
De 10:12
Jos 22:5
Mr 12:30
Lu 10:27c Le 19:18
Mr 12:31
Lu 10:27
Col 3:14
Jas 2:8
1Pe 1:22d Ro 13:10
Ga 5:14e Mr 12:35-37
Lu 20:41-44

f Joh 7:42

g 2Sa 23:2

h Ps 110:1
Ac 2:34, 35
1Co 15:25
Heb 1:13
Heb 10:12, 13

i Mr 12:37

is the greatest commandment in the Law?"^a **37** He said to him: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind."^b **38** This is the greatest and first commandment. **39** The second, like it, is this: 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.'^c **40** On these two commandments the whole Law hangs, and the Prophets."^d

Is the Christ the Son of David?

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them:^e **42** "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" They said to him: "David's."^f **43** He asked them: "How is it, then, that David under inspiration^g calls him Lord, saying, **44** 'Jehovah said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies beneath your feet"'?"^h **45** If, then, David calls him Lord, how is he his son?"ⁱ **46** And nobody was able to say a word in reply to him, and from that day on, no one dared to question him any further.

STUDY NOTES

22:37 soul: Or "whole being."—See
 Glossary.

mind: That is, intellectual faculties. A person must use his mental faculties to come to know God and grow in love for him. (Joh 17:3; Ro 12:1) In this quote from De 6:5, the original Hebrew text uses three terms, 'heart, soul, and strength.' However, according to Matthew's account as it appears in Greek, the term for "mind" is used instead of "strength." There may be several reasons for this use of different terms. First, although ancient Hebrew did not have a specific word for "mind," this concept was often included in the Hebrew word for "heart." This term when used figuratively refers to the whole inner person, including a person's thinking, feelings, attitudes, and motivations. (De 29:4; Ps 26:2; 64:6; see study note on **heart** in this verse.) For this reason, where the Hebrew text uses the word "heart," the Greek *Septuagint* often uses the Greek equivalent for "mind." (Ge 8:21; 17:17; Pr 2:10; Isa 14:13) Another reason why Matthew may have used the Greek word for "mind" instead of "strength" when quoting De 6:5 is that the Hebrew word rendered "strength [or, "vital force," *ftn.*]" could include both physical strength and mental

or intellectual ability. Whatever the case, this overlapping of ideas between the Hebrew and Greek terms may help to explain why when quoting Deuteronomy the Gospel writers do not use the same exact wording.—See study notes on Mr 12:30; Lu 10:27.

22:39 The second: At Mt 22:37, Jesus' direct answer to the Pharisee is recorded, but Jesus now goes beyond the original question and quotes a second commandment (Le 19:18), teaching that the two commandments are inextricably linked and that the whole Law and the Prophets are summed up by them.—Mt 22:40.

neighbor: This Greek word for "neighbor" (lit., "the one near") can include more than just those who live nearby. It can refer to anyone with whom a person interacts.—Lu 10:29-37; Ro 13:8-10; see study note on Mt 5:43.

22:40 hangs: The Greek verb with the literal meaning "to hang on" is here used in the figurative sense "to be dependent on; be based on." Jesus thus indicated that not just the Law with the Ten Commandments but the entire Hebrew Scriptures are based on love.—Ro 13:9.

the whole Law . . . and the Prophets:

See study note on Mt 5:17.

22:42 the Christ: Or "the Messiah."—See study notes on Mt 1:1; 2:4.

22:43 under inspiration: Lit., "in spirit." That is, inspired by, or under the influence of, God's spirit.—See  Glossary, "Spirit."

22:44 Jehovah: In this quote from Ps 110:1, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

beneath your feet: That is, under your authority.

Do Not Imitate Scribes and Pharisees

CHAP. 23

23 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying: **2** “The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the seat of Moses. **3** Therefore, all the things they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds, for they say but they do not practice what they say.^a **4** They bind up heavy loads and put them on the shoulders of men,^b but they themselves are not willing to budge them with their finger.^c **5** All the works they do, they do to be seen by men,^d for they broaden the scripture-containing cases that they wear as safeguards^e and lengthen the fringes of their garments.^f **6** They like the most prominent place at evening meals and the front seats in the synagogues^g **7** and the greetings in the marketplaces and to be called Rabbi by men. **8** But you, do not you be called Rabbi, for one is your Teacher,^h and all of you are brothers. **9** Moreover, do not call anyone your father on earth, for one is your Father,ⁱ the heavenly One. **10** Neither be called leaders, for your Leader is one, the Christ.^j **11** But the greatest one among you must be your minister.^k **12** Whoever exalts himself will be humbled,^l and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.^m

a Mal 2:7, 8
Mt 15:3, 6
b Mt 11:28
c Lu 11:46
d Mt 6:1, 2
e De 6:6, 8
f Nu 15:38, 39
g Mr 12:38, 39
Lu 11:43
Lu 14:7, 10
Lu 20:46
h Joh 13:13
i Mt 6:9
j 1Pe 5:2, 3
k Mt 20:26
Mr 9:35
Mr 10:43, 44
Lu 9:48
Lu 22:26
l Pr 16:18
m Pr 15:33
Pr 29:23
Mt 18:4
Lu 14:11
Lu 18:13, 14
Ro 12:3
Eph 4:1, 2
1Pe 5:5

STUDY NOTES

23:2 seated themselves in the seat of Moses: Or “appointed themselves to Moses’ place,” by presumptuously claiming his authority as interpreters of divine law.

23:4 heavy loads: Evidently referring to rules and oral traditions that were burdensome for people to keep.

budge them with their finger: This expression may refer to the unwillingness of the religious leaders to lift even one small regulation to make things easier for those on whom they imposed heavy loads.

23:5 the scripture-containing cases that they wear as safeguards: Or “their phylacteries.” These small leather cases containing four portions of the Law (Ex 13:1-10, 11-16; De 6:4-9; 11:13-21) were worn by Jewish men on their forehead and left arm. This practice had its origin in a literal interpretation of God’s direction to the Israelites at Ex 13:9, 16; De 6:8; 11:18. Jesus criticized the religious leaders because they enlarged their scripture-

containing cases in order to impress others and because they wrongly considered them to be charms, or amulets, that would protect them.

lengthen the fringes: At Nu 15:38-40, the Israelites were commanded to make fringes on their garments, but for show, the scribes and Pharisees make theirs longer than anyone else does.

See  Gallery, image 71, Scripture-Containing Case, or Phylactery.

23:6 front seats: Or “best seats.” Evidently, the presiding officers of the synagogue and distinguished guests sat near the Scripture rolls, in full view of the congregation. These seats of honor were likely reserved for such prominent individuals.

See  Gallery, image 26, First-Century Synagogue.

See  Gallery, image 72, The Front Seats in the Synagogue.

See  Gallery, image 73, Prominent Places at Evening Meals.

23:7 marketplaces: Or “places of assembly.” The Greek word *a-go-ra'* is here used to refer to an open area that served as a center for buying and selling and as a place of public assembly in cities and towns of the ancient Near East and the Greek and Roman world.

Rabbi: Literally meaning “my great one,” from the Hebrew word *rav*, meaning “great.” In common usage, “Rabbi” meant “Teacher” (Joh 1:38), but it came to be used as an honorary title. Some learned men, scribes and teachers of the Law, demanded to be addressed by this title.

23:9 father: Jesus here prohibits the use of the term “father” as a formalistic or religious title of honor applied to men.

23:10 leaders: The Greek word is a synonym for “Teacher,” found in verse 8, and here it conveys the idea of those who provide guidance and instruction, spiritual leaders. It was likely used as a religious title.

CHAP. 23

Woes to Scribes and Pharisees

a Lu 11:52

b Mt 6:2
Lu 12:56

c Mt 15:14

d Mt 5:34, 35

e Mt 5:23, 24

f 1Ki 8:13
Ps 11:4
Ps 26:8
Ps 132:13, 14

g Mt 5:34, 35

13 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut up the Kingdom of the heavens before men; for you yourselves do not go in, neither do you permit those on their way in to go in.^a **14** —

15 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!^b because you travel over sea and dry land to make one proselyte, and when he becomes one, you make him a subject for Ge-hen’na twice as much so as yourselves.

16 “Woe to you, blind guides,^c who say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is under obligation.’^d **17** Fools and blind ones! Which, in fact, is greater, the gold or the temple that has sanctified the gold? **18** Moreover, ‘If anyone swears by the altar,^e it is nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is under obligation.’ **19** Blind ones! Which, in fact, is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? **20** Therefore, whoever swears by the altar is swearing by it and by all the things on it; **21** and whoever swears by the temple is swearing by it and by the One inhabiting it;^f **22** and whoever swears by heaven is swearing by the throne of God and by the One sitting on it.^g

STUDY NOTES

23:10 Leader: Since no imperfect human can be the spiritual Leader of true Christians, Jesus is the only one rightly bearing this title.—See preceding study note on **leaders** in this verse.

the Christ: Here the title “Christ,” meaning “Anointed One,” is preceded by the definite article in Greek. This is a way of indicating that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the one who had been anointed in a special sense.—See study notes on Mt 1:1 and 2:4.

23:11 minister: Or “servant.”—See study note on Mt 20:26.

23:13 Woe to you: This is the first in a series of seven woes pronounced on the religious leaders of Jesus’ day, in which Jesus identifies them as hypocrites and blind guides.

hypocrites: See study note on Mt 6:2.

shut up: Or “shut the door to,” that is, prevent people from entering.

23:14 A few manuscripts add the words: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you devour widows’ houses and for a pretense offer long prayers; on this account you will receive judgment more abundantly.” However, the earliest and most important manuscripts do not include this verse. Similar words, though, can be found at Mr 12:40 and Lu 20:47 as part of the inspired text.—See  App. A3.

23:15 proselyte: Or “convert.” The Greek word *pro-se’ly-tos* denotes a Gentile who has converted to Judaism, which included circumcision for male proselytes.

a subject for Gehenna: Lit., “a son of Gehenna,” that is, someone who is deserving of eternal destruction.—See  Glossary, “Gehenna.”

See  Gallery, image 30, The Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna).

See  Gallery, image 31, Modern-Day Valley of Hinnom.

23:17 Fools and blind ones! Or “You blind fools!” In Biblical usage, the term “fool” generally refers to an individual who spurns reason and follows a morally insensible course that is out of harmony with God’s righteous standards.

23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you give the tenth of the mint and the dill and the cumin,^a but you have disregarded the weightier* matters of the Law, namely, justice^b and mercy^c and faithfulness.[#] These things it was necessary to do, yet not to disregard the other things.^d

24 Blind guides,^e who strain out the gnat^f but gulp down the camel!^g

25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish,^h but inside they are full of greediness*ⁱ and self-indulgence.^j **26** Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may also become clean.

27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!^k because you resemble whitewashed graves,^l which outwardly indeed appear beautiful but inside are full of dead men’s bones and of every sort of uncleanness. **28** In the same way, on the outside you appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.^m

CHAP. 23

- a Le 27:30
- b Mic 6:8
Joh 7:24
- c Mt 9:13
Mt 12:7
- d Lu 11:42
- e Mt 15:14
- f Le 11:23
- g Le 11:4
- h Mr 7:3, 4
- i Mr 12:38, 40
- j Lu 11:39
- k Lu 12:56
- l Lu 11:44
Ac 23:3
- m Lu 16:15

FOOTNOTES

23:23 *Or “more important.” #Or “faith.” **23:25** *Or “plunder; robbery.”

STUDY NOTES

23:23 tenth of the mint and the dill and the cumin: Under the Mosaic Law, the Israelites were to pay the tithe, or a tenth, of their crops. (Le 27:30; De 14:22) Although the Law did not explicitly command that they give a tenth of herbs like mint, dill, and cumin, Jesus did not contradict the tradition. Rather, he reproved the scribes and Pharisees for focusing on minor details of the Law while failing to promote its underlying principles, such as justice and mercy and faithfulness.

See  Gallery, image 74, Mint, Dill, and Cumin.

23:24 who strain out the gnat but gulp down the camel: The gnat and the camel were among the smallest and the largest unclean creatures known to the Israelites. (Le 11:4, 21-24) Jesus uses hyperbole, combined with a degree of irony, in saying that the religious leaders filter their beverages so as not to be ceremonially defiled by a gnat, while they completely disregard

the weightier matters of the Law, an action comparable to swallowing a camel.

See  Gallery, image 66, Camel.

23:27 whitewashed graves: It was a custom in Israel to whitewash graves as a warning so that those passing by would not accidentally become ceremonially defiled through contact with a burial place. (Nu 19:16) The Jewish Mishnah (*Shekalim* 1:1) says that this whitewashing was done annually, one month prior to the Passover. Jesus used this expression as a metaphor for hypocrisy.

23:28 lawlessness: See study note on Mt 24:12.

23:29 tombs: Or “memorial tombs.”—See  Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

23:32 fill up the measure of your forefathers: Or “finish off the works that your forefathers started.” The literal meaning of this idiomatic expression is “to fill up a measure that someone else has started to fill.” Jesus is not commanding the Jewish leaders to finish what their ancestors started. Rather, he is using irony in foretelling that they would kill him, as their ancestors killed God’s prophets of former times.

23:33 Serpents, offspring of vipers: Satan, “the original serpent” (Re 12:9), is in a spiritual sense the progenitor of opposers to true worship. Jesus, therefore, justly classified these religious leaders as “serpents, offspring of vipers.” (Joh 8:44; 1Jo 3:12) They caused deadly spiritual harm to those who were influenced by their wickedness. John the Baptist also used the expression “offspring of vipers.”—Mt 3:7.

Gehenna: See study note on Mt 5:22 and  Glossary.

See  Gallery, image 14, Horned Viper.

23:34 public instructors: Or “learned persons.” The Greek word *gram-ma-teus*’ is rendered “scribe” when referring to Jewish teachers of the Law, but Jesus is here speaking about his disciples who are to be sent out to teach others.

synagogues: See  Glossary, “Synagogue.”

See  Gallery, image 41, Whip for Scourging.

CHAP. 23

- a Mt 6:2
 b Lu 11:47
 c Lu 11:48
 Ac 7:52
 Heb 11:32, 37
 d Mt 3:7
 Mt 12:34
 Lu 3:7
 e Mt 10:28
 Lu 12:5
 f Lu 11:49-51
 g Mt 13:52
 h Joh 16:2
 Ac 7:59
 i Mt 10:17
 Ac 5:40
 2Co 11:24
 j Lu 21:12
 k Ge 4:8, 10
 Heb 11:4
 l 2Ch 24:20-22
 m Joh 8:59
 1Th 2:14-16
 Heb 11:32, 37

29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!^a because you build the graves of the prophets and decorate the tombs of the righteous ones,^b **30** and you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have shared with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ **31** Therefore, you are testifying against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.^c **32** Well, then, fill up the measure of your forefathers.

33 “Serpents, offspring of vipers,^d how will you flee from the judgment of Ge-hen’na?^e **34** For this reason, I am sending to you prophets^f and wise men and public instructors.^g Some of them you will kill^h and execute on stakes, and some of them you will scourgeⁱ in your synagogues and persecute^j from city to city, **35** so that there may come upon you all the righteous blood spilled on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel^k to the blood of Zech-a-ri’ah son of Bar-a-chi’ah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.^l **36** Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Jesus Laments What Will Happen to Jerusalem

37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent to her^m—how often I wanted to gather your

STUDY NOTES

23:35 from the blood of righteous

Abel to the blood of Zechariah: Jesus’ statement embraced all the murdered witnesses of Jehovah mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, from Abel, listed in the first book (Ge 4:8), to Zechariah, mentioned at 2Ch 24:20, Chronicles being the last book in the traditional Jewish canon. So when Jesus said from “Abel to . . . Zechariah,” he was saying “from the very first case to the last.”

son of Barachiah: According to 2Ch 24:20, this Zechariah was “the son of Jehoiada the priest.” It has been suggested that Jehoiada may have had two names, as is the case with others in the Bible (compare Mt 9:9 with Mr 2:14), or that Barachiah was Zechariah’s grandfather or an earlier ancestor.

whom you murdered: While these Jewish religious leaders did not actually kill Zechariah, Jesus held them accountable

because they had the same murderous disposition as their ancestors.—Re 18:24.

between the sanctuary and the altar:

According to 2Ch 24:21, Zechariah was murdered “in the courtyard of Jehovah’s house.” The altar of burnt offering was in the inner courtyard, outside of and in front of the entrance to the sanctuary. (See  App. B8.) This would correspond with the location Jesus mentioned for the incident.

23:36 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

23:37 Jerusalem, Jerusalem: According to Lu 13:34, Jesus made a very similar statement when he was in Perea some time earlier. Here, however, Jesus makes this statement on Nisan 11 during the last week of his earthly ministry.—See  App. A7.

children together the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings! But you did not want it.^a **38** Look! Your house is abandoned to you.^b **39** For I say to you, you will by no means see me from now until you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in Jehovah’s name!’”^c

CHAP. 23

a Lu 13:34
Lu 19:41, 42

b 1Ki 9:7, 8
Jer 12:7
Jer 22:5
Mt 21:43
Lu 21:20

c Ps 118:26

Question About the Sign of Christ’s Presence

24 Now as Jesus was departing from the temple, his disciples approached to show him the buildings of the temple. **2** In response he said to them: “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, by no means will a stone be left here upon a stone and not be thrown down.”^d

CHAP. 24

d Mr 13:1, 2
Lu 19:44
Lu 21:5, 6

e Ac 1:12

f Mt 24:27
Mt 24:37-39

g Mt 13:39
Mt 28:20
Mr 13:3, 4
Lu 21:7

3 While he was sitting on the Mount of Olives,^e the disciples approached him privately, saying: “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence^f and of the conclusion of the system of things?”^g

STUDY NOTES

23:37 See  Gallery, image 75, A Hen Gathering Her Chicks.

23:38 Look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.
house: That is, the temple.

is abandoned to you: Some ancient manuscripts add the word “desolate.”

23:39 Jehovah’s: In this quote from Ps 118:26, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

24:2 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

by no means will a stone be left here upon a stone: Jesus’ prophecy was remarkably fulfilled in 70 C.E. when the Romans demolished Jerusalem and its temple. Apart from a few sections of the wall, the city was completely leveled.

See  Gallery, image 76, Stones From the Temple Mount.

24:3 Mount of Olives: Located E of Jerusalem and separated from the city by the Kidron Valley. From this vantage point, Jesus and his disciples “Peter, James, John, and Andrew” (Mr 13:3, 4) could view the city and its temple.

presence: The Greek word *pa·rou·si’a* (in many translations rendered “coming”)

literally means “being alongside.” It refers to a presence covering a period of time rather than simply a coming or an arrival. This meaning of *pa·rou·si’a* is indicated at Mt 24:37-39, where “the days of Noah . . . before the Flood” are compared to “the presence of the Son of man.” At Php 2:12, Paul used this Greek word to describe his “presence” in contrast to his “absence.”

conclusion: Rendered from the Greek word *syn·te·lei·a*, meaning “joint end; combination end; ending together.” (Mt 13:39, 40, 49; 28:20; Heb 9:26) This refers to a time period during which a combination of events would lead to the complete “end” mentioned at Mt 24:6, 14, where a different Greek word, *te’los*, is used.—See study notes on Mt 24:6, 14 and  Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things.”

the system of things: Or “the age.” Here the Greek word *ai·on’* refers to the current state of affairs or features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age.—See  Glossary, “System(s) of things.”

See  Gallery, image 77, Mount of Olives.

24:5 the Christ: Greek, *ho Khri·stos*’. The title “the Christ” is equivalent to “the Messiah” (from Hebrew *ma·shi’ach*), both meaning “Anointed One.” Jewish historian

Josephus indicates that in the first century C.E., some who claimed to be prophets or liberators arose, promising relief from Roman oppression. These may have been viewed by their followers as political Messiahs.

24:6 end: Or “complete end.” The Greek word used here (*te’los*) is different from the Greek word rendered “conclusion” (*syn·te·lei·a*) at Mt 24:3.—See study note on Mt 24:3 and  Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things.”

24:7 nation: The Greek word *e’thnos* has a broad meaning and can refer to people living within certain political or geographical boundaries, such as a country, but can also refer to an ethnic group.—See study note on Mt 24:14.

rise: Or “be stirred up; be roused up.” Here the Greek word conveys the idea “to move against in hostility” and could also be rendered “rise up in arms” or “go to war.”

24:8 pangs of distress: The Greek word literally refers to the intense pain experienced during childbirth. While it is used here to refer to distress, pain, and suffering in a general sense, it may suggest that like birth pains the foretold troubles and suffering will increase in frequency, intensity, and duration in the time period

CHAP. 24

- a Mr 13:5, 6
Lu 21:8
Col 2:8
2Th 2:3
- b Mt 24:24
- c Mr 13:7
Lu 21:9
- d Re 6:4
- e Ac 11:28
Re 6:5, 6, 8
- f Mr 13:8
Lu 21:10, 11
- g Joh 15:20
Ac 11:19
Re 2:10
- h Joh 16:2
Ac 7:59
Ac 12:1, 2
Re 6:11
- i Mt 10:17, 22
Mr 13:9, 13
Lu 21:12, 17
Joh 15:21
Ac 9:15, 16
2Ti 3:12
- j Mt 7:15
1Ti 4:1
2Pe 2:1
- k 2Ti 3:1-3

Features of the Composite Sign; Great Tribulation

4 In answer Jesus said to them: “Look out that nobody misleads you,^a **5** for many will come on the basis of my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will mislead many.^b **6** You are going to hear of wars and reports of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for these things must take place, but the end is not yet.^c

7 “For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom,^d and there will be food shortages^e and earthquakes in one place after another.^f **8** All these things are a beginning of pangs of distress.

9 “Then people will hand you over to tribulation^g and will kill you,^h and you will be hated by all the nations on account of my name.ⁱ **10** Then, too, many will be stumbled and will betray one another and will hate one another. **11** Many false prophets will arise and mislead many;^j **12** and because of the increasing of lawlessness, the love of the greater number will grow cold.^k **13** But the one who has endured to the end will be saved.^l

^l/Mt 10:22; Mr 13:13; Lu 21:19; Heb 10:36; Re 2:10.

STUDY NOTES

before the great tribulation mentioned at Mt 24:21.

24:9 on account of my name: In the Bible, the term “name” at times stands for the person who bears the name, his reputation, and all that he represents. (See study note on Mt 6:9.) In the case of Jesus’ name, it also stands for the authority and position that his Father has given him. (Mt 28:18; Php 2:9, 10; Heb 1:3, 4) Jesus here explains that people would hate his followers because of what his name represents, that is, his position as God’s appointed Ruler, the King of kings, the one to whom all people should bow in submission in order to gain life.—See study note on Joh 15:21.

24:10 will be stumbled: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *skan-da-li’zo* refers to stumbling in a figurative sense, which may include falling into sin or causing someone to fall into sin. As the term is used in the Bible, the sin may involve breaking one of God’s laws on morals or losing faith or accept-

ing false teachings. In this context, the term could also be rendered “will be led into sin; will fall away from the faith.” The Greek word can also be used in the sense of “to take offense.”—See study notes on Mt 13:57; 18:7.

24:12 lawlessness: The Greek word rendered “lawlessness” includes the idea of violation of and contempt for laws, people acting as if there were no laws. As used in the Bible, it suggests disregard for God’s laws.—Mt 7:23; 2Co 6:14; 2Th 2:3-7; 1Jo 3:4.

the greater number: Referring not just to “many” in a general sense as some Bibles render this but to “the majority” of those who have been influenced by “false prophets” and “lawlessness,” as mentioned at Mt 24:11, 12.

24:13 has endured: Or “endures.” The Greek verb rendered “to endure” (*hy-po-me’no*) literally means “to remain (stay) under.” It is often used in the sense of “remaining instead of fleeing; standing one’s ground; persevering; remaining steadfast.” (Mt 10:22; Ro 12:12; Heb 10:

32; Jas 5:11) In this context, it refers to maintaining a course of action as Christ’s disciples despite opposition and trials.—Mt 24:9-12.

end: See study notes on Mt 24:6, 14.

14 And this good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations,^a and then the end will come.

15 “Therefore, when you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation, as spoken about by Daniel the prophet, standing in a holy place^b (let the reader use discernment), **16** then let those in Ju-de’a begin fleeing to the mountains.^c **17** Let the man on the housetop not come down to take the goods out of his house, **18** and let the man in the field not return to pick up his outer garment.^d **19** Woe to the pregnant women and those nursing a baby in those days!^e **20** Keep praying that your flight may not occur in wintertime nor on the Sabbath day; **21** for then there will be great tribulation^f such as has not occurred since the world’s beginning until now, no, nor will occur again.^g **22** In fact, unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved; but on account of the chosen ones those days will be cut short.^h

CHAP. 24

- a Mt 9:35
Mt 28:19, 20
Mr 13:10
1Co 9:16
Col 1:23
1Pe 1:12
Re 14:6
- b Da 9:27
Da 11:31
Da 12:11
Mr 13:14-18
Lu 21:20
- c Lu 21:21-23
- d Lu 17:31
- e Lu 23:28, 29
- f Lu 21:23
Re 7:14
- g Da 12:1
Mr 13:19
- h Mr 13:20

STUDY NOTES

24:14 this good news: The Greek word *eu-ag-ge’li-on* is derived from the words *eu*, meaning “good; well” and *ag’ge-los*, “one who brings news; one who proclaims (announces).” (See  Glossary.) It is rendered “gospel” in some English Bibles. The related expression rendered “evangelizer” (Greek, *eu-ag-ge-li-stes*) means “a proclaimer of good news.”—Ac 21:8; Eph 4:11, fn.; 2Ti 4:5, fn.

the Kingdom: That is, God’s Kingdom. Throughout the Christian Greek Scriptures, the “good news” (see preceding study note on **this good news** in this verse) is closely linked with God’s Kingdom, the theme of Jesus’ preaching and teaching work.—See study notes on Mt 3:2; 4:23; Lu 4:43.

preached: Or “publicly proclaimed.”—See study note on Mt 3:1.

for a witness: Or “for a testimony,” that is, an assurance that **all the nations** would hear the good news. The Greek word *mar-ty’ri-on* (witness; testimony) and related Greek words often refer to a recounting of the facts and events related to a subject. (See study note on Ac 1:8.) In this case, Jesus says that there

would be a worldwide testimony of what God’s Kingdom would accomplish and a recounting of events related to that Kingdom. Jesus indicates that the global Kingdom-preaching work itself would be an important feature of “the sign of [his] presence.” (Mt 24:3) The fact that all the nations would receive this witness does not mean that all the nations would convert to true Christianity—only that they would hear the testimony.

all the inhabited earth . . . all the nations: Both expressions emphasize the scope of the preaching work. In a broad sense, the Greek word for “inhabited earth” (*oi-kou-me’ne*) refers to the earth as the dwelling place of mankind. (Lu 4:5; Ac 17:31; Ro 10:18; Re 12:9; 16:14) In the first century, this term was also used in reference to the vast Roman Empire, where the Jews had been dispersed. (Lu 2:1; Ac 24:5) In its general sense, the Greek word for “nation” (*e’thnos*) refers to a group of people who are more or less related to one another by blood and who have a common language. Such a national or ethnic group often occupies a defined geographic territory.

end: Or “complete end; final end.”—See study notes on Mt 24:3, 6.

24:15 the disgusting thing that causes

desolation: Daniel foretold that “disgusting thing(s)” would be associated with desolation. (Da 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) Jesus here indicates that “the disgusting thing that causes desolation” had not yet appeared; it was to come in the future. And 33 years after Jesus’ death, Christians witnessed the initial fulfillment of this prophecy when they did **catch sight** of a disgusting thing **standing in a holy place**. The parallel account at Lu 21:20 reads: “When you see Jerusalem surrounded by *encamped armies*, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near.” In 66 C.E., pagan Roman armies surrounded “the holy city,” Jerusalem, a place that the Jews viewed as holy and that was the center of the Jewish revolt against Rome. (Mt 4:5; 27:53) Discerning Christians, who recognized that the Roman army with its idolatrous banners was “the disgusting thing,” took it as the final signal to “begin fleeing to the mountains.” (Mt 24:15, 16; Lu 19:43, 44; 21:20-22) After the Christians fled, the Romans desolated both the city and the nation. Jerusalem was destroyed in the year 70 C.E., and the last Jewish stronghold, Masada, fell to the Romans in 73 C.E. (Compare Da 9:25-27.) The detailed initial

CHAP. 24

Dangers of False Christs

- a Mt 24:5
 b Mr 13:21-23
 c Mt 7:15
 2Pe 2:1
 d Mt 7:22, 23
 2Th 2:9
 e Lu 17:23
 f Lu 17:24
 g Lu 17:37

23 “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look! Here is the Christ,’^a or, ‘There!’ do not believe it.^b **24** For false Christs and false prophets^c will arise and will perform great signs and wonders so as to mislead,^d if possible, even the chosen ones. **25** Look! I have forewarned you. **26** Therefore, if people say to you, ‘Look! He is in the wilderness,’ do not go out; ‘Look! He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it.^e **27** For just as the lightning comes out of the east and shines over to the west, so the presence of the Son of man will be.^f **28** Wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.^g

STUDY NOTES

fulfillment of this prophecy provides a solid basis for trusting that the greater fulfillment will also take place, culminating with Jesus’ “coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” (Mt 24:30) Many ignore Jesus’ statement that Daniel’s prophecy would be fulfilled after Jesus’ day, and they follow Jewish tradition in applying Daniel’s prophecy to an event in 168 B.C.E. when Syrian King Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) profaned Jehovah’s temple in Jerusalem. Antiochus attempted to stamp out the worship of Jehovah, even building an altar over the great altar of Jehovah and sacrificing pigs as an offering to the pagan god Zeus of Olympus. (See study note on Joh 10:22.) The apocryphal book of 1 Maccabees (1:54) uses an expression similar to the one found in the book of Daniel (associating disgusting things with desolation) and applies it to the event in 168 B.C.E. However, Jewish tradition and the account in 1 Maccabees are human interpretations, not inspired revelations. Certainly, Antiochus provoked feelings of disgust by desecrating the temple, but his attack did not result in the desolation of Jerusalem, the temple, or the Jewish nation.

holy place: Referring in the initial fulfillment of this prophecy to Jerusalem with its temple.—See study note on Mt 4:5.

(let the reader use discernment): Readers should always use discernment when studying God’s Word, but there is apparently a special need to be alert to the application of this portion of Daniel’s

prophecy. Jesus was cautioning his hearers that the fulfillment of this prophecy was not in the past but was yet future.—See the study note on **the disgusting thing that causes desolation** in this verse.

24:16 Judea: That is, the Roman province of Judea.

to the mountains: According to fourth-century historian Eusebius, Christians in Judea and Jerusalem fled across the Jordan River to Pella, a city in a mountainous region of the Decapolis.

24:17 on the housetop: The roofs of houses were flat and were used for many purposes, including storage (Jos 2:6), rest (2Sa 11:2), sleep (1Sa 9:26), and festivals for worship (Ne 8:16-18). That is why a parapet was required. (De 22:8) Generally, an external stairway or ladder allowed a householder to leave the rooftop without having to enter the house, which emphasizes the urgency of Jesus’ warning to flee.

24:18 See  Gallery, image 78, Outer Garments.

24:20 in wintertime: Heavy rains, flooding, and cold weather during this season would make it difficult to travel and difficult to find food and shelter.—Ezr 10:9, 13.

on the Sabbath day: In territories like Judea, restrictions associated with Sabbath law would make it difficult for a person to journey great distances and to carry loads; also, city gates remained closed

during the Sabbath day.—See Ac 1:12 and  App. B12.

24:24 false Christs: Or “false Messiahs.” The Greek word *pseu-do’khri-stos* occurs only here and in the parallel account at Mr 13:22. It refers to anyone who wrongly assumes the role of the Christ, or the Messiah (lit., “Anointed One”).—See study note on Mt 24:5.

24:25 Look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

24:27 presence: See study note on Mt 24:3.

Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

Coming of the Son of Man

29 “Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened,^a and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.^b **30** Then the sign of the Son of man will appear in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief,^c and they will see the Son of man^d coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.^{*e} **31** And he will send out his angels with a great trumpet sound, and they will gather his chosen ones together from the four winds, from one extremity of the heavens to their other extremity.^f

CHAP. 24

- a Joe 2:31
- b Mr 13:24, 25
Lu 21:25, 26
- c Re 1:7
- d Da 7:13
- e Mt 16:27
Mt 26:64
Mr 13:26
Mr 14:62
Lu 21:27
- f De 30:4
Mr 13:27
- g Mr 13:28-31
Lu 21:29-33
- h Jas 5:8, 9
- i Lu 21:33

The Fig Tree; “This Generation”

32 “Now learn this illustration from the fig tree: Just as soon as its young branch grows tender and sprouts its leaves, you know that summer is near.^g **33** Likewise also you, when you see all these things, know that he is near at the doors.^h **34** Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things happen. **35** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away.ⁱ

FOOTNOTES

24:30 *Or possibly, “with great power and glory.”

STUDY NOTES

24:30 the sign of the Son of man: This sign is not the same as “the sign of [Jesus’] presence” mentioned at Mt 24:3. The sign mentioned here is connected with the “coming” of the Son of man as Judge to pronounce and execute judgment during the great tribulation.—See study note on **coming** in this verse.

beat themselves in grief: Or “mourn.” A person repeatedly beat his hands against his chest to express extreme grief or feelings of guilt and remorse.—Isa 32:12; Na 2:7; Lu 23:48.

see: The Greek verb rendered “see” can literally mean to “see an object; look at; behold,” but it can also be used metaphorically, of mental sight, meaning “to discern; perceive.”—Eph 1:18.

coming: The first of eight references in Matthew chapters 24 and 25 to Jesus’

coming. (Mt 24:42, 44, 46; 25:10, 19, 27, 31) In each of these occurrences, a form of the Greek verb *er'kho-mai*, “to come,” is used. The term is here used in the sense of turning one’s attention to mankind, particularly to Jesus’ coming as Judge to pronounce and execute judgment during the great tribulation.

the clouds of heaven: Clouds tend to obstruct vision rather than facilitate it, but observers can “see” with eyes of understanding.—Ac 1:9.

24:31 the four winds: An idiom referring to the four directions of the compass—E, W, N, and S—thus indicating “all directions; everywhere.”—Jer 49:36; Eze 37:9; Da 8:8.

24:32 illustration: Or “parable; lesson.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

See  Gallery, image 79, Fig Tree.

24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away: Other scriptures show that heaven and earth will endure forever. (Ge 9:16; Ps 104:5; Ec 1:4) So Jesus’ words here could be understood as hyperbole, meaning that even if the impossible happened and

heaven and earth *did* pass away, Jesus’ words would still be fulfilled. (Compare Mt 5:18.) However, the heaven and earth here may well refer to the figurative heavens and earth that are called “the former heaven and the former earth” at Re 21:1.

my words will by no means pass away: Or “my words will certainly not pass away.” The use of two Greek negatives with the verb emphatically expresses rejection of an idea, vividly emphasizing the permanence of Jesus’ words.

24:37 the days of Noah: In the Bible, the term “day(s) of” is sometimes used with reference to the time period of a particular person. (Isa 1:1; Jer 1:2, 3; Lu 17:28) Here “the days of Noah” are compared to **the presence of the Son of man**. In a similar statement recorded at Lu 17:26, the expression “the days of the Son of man” is used. Jesus does not limit the comparison to the specific day when the Flood came as a final climax during Noah’s days. “The days of Noah” actually covered a period of years, so there is basis for the understanding that the foretold “presence [or “days”] of the Son of man”

CHAP. 24

Jesus' Presence Like the Days of Noah; "Keep on the Watch"

a 1Th 5:1, 2

b Mr 13:32

Ac 1:7

c Ge 6:11-13

d Lu 17:26, 27

e Ge 7:7

Heb 11:7

1Pe 3:19, 20

2Pe 2:5

f Ge 7:23

2Pe 3:6

g Lu 17:35

h Mt 25:13

Mr 13:33

Lu 21:36

i 1Th 5:2

2Pe 3:10

j Lu 12:39, 40

k Mr 13:35

36 "Concerning that day and hour nobody knows,^a neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father.^b

37 For just as the days of Noah were,^c so the presence of the

Son of man will be.^d **38** For as they were in those days before the Flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark,^e **39** and they took no note until the Flood came and swept them all away,^f so the presence of the Son of man

will be. **40** Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken along and the other abandoned. **41** Two women will be grinding at the hand mill; one will be taken along and the other abandoned.^g **42** Keep on the watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.^h

43 "But know one thing: If the householder had known in what watch* the thief was coming,ⁱ he would have kept awake and not allowed his house to be broken into.^j **44** On this account, you too prove yourselves ready,^k because the Son of man is coming at an hour that you do not think to be it.

FOOTNOTES

24:43 *Or "at what time of night."

STUDY NOTES

would likewise cover a period of years. Like Noah's days, which climaxed with the Flood, "the presence of the Son of man" would culminate in the destruction of those who do not seek deliverance.—See study note on Mt 24:3.

presence: See study note on Mt 24:3.

24:38 Flood: Or "deluge; cataclysm."

The Greek word *ka-ta-kly-smos* denotes a large flood with destructive force, and the Bible uses the word with reference to the Deluge of Noah's day.—Mt 24:39; Lu 17:27; 2Pe 2:5.

ark: The Greek term can also be rendered "chest; box," perhaps to denote that it was a large boxlike structure. In the *Vulgate*, this Greek word is rendered *arca*, meaning "box; chest," from which the English term "ark" is derived.

24:40 be taken along . . . abandoned:

See study note on Lu 17:34.

24:41 See  Gallery, image 80, Hand Mill.

24:42 Keep on the watch: The Greek term has the basic meaning "stay (keep) awake," but in many contexts it means "be on guard; be watchful." Matthew uses this term at Mt 24:43; 25:13; 26:38, 40, 41. At Mt 24:44, he connects it with the need to be "ready."—See study note on Mt 26:38.

The Faithful and Discreet Slave

45 “Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time?^a **46** Happy is that slave if his master on coming finds him doing so!^b **47** Truly I say to you, he will appoint him over all his belongings.

Characteristics of an Evil Slave

48 “But if ever that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying,’^c **49** and he starts to beat his fellow slaves and to eat and drink with the confirmed drunkards, **50** the master of that slave will come on a day that he does not expect and in an hour that he does not know,^d **51** and he will punish him with the greatest severity and will assign him his place with the hypocrites. There is where his weeping and the gnashing of his teeth will be.^e

Illustration of the Ten Virgins

25 “Then the Kingdom of the heavens may be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps^f and went out to meet the bridegroom.^g **2** Five of them were foolish, and five were discreet.^h **3** For the foolish took their lamps but took no oil with them, **4** whereas the discreet took oil in their flasks along with their lamps. **5** While the bridegroom was delaying, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. **6** Right in the middle of the night there was a shout: ‘Here is the bridegroom! Go out to meet him.’ **7** Then all those virgins got up and put their lamps in order.ⁱ

CHAP. 24

- a Lu 12:42-44
- b Re 16:15
- c Lu 12:45, 46
- d Mt 25:13
- e Mt 13:42

CHAP. 25

- f Lu 12:35
- Php 2:15
- g Lu 5:34, 35
- Joh 3:28, 29
- Re 19:7
- h Mt 7:24, 26
- i Lu 12:35

STUDY NOTES

24:45 discreet: The Greek word used here conveys the idea of understanding associated with insight, forethought, discernment, prudence, and wisdom in a practical sense. The same Greek word is used at Mt 7:24 and 25:2, 4, 8, 9. The *Septuagint* uses this word at Ge 41:33, 39 regarding Joseph.

slave: The use of the singular form “slave” in Jesus’ illustration does not necessarily mean that the slave represented only one particular person. The Scriptures contain examples of a singular noun referring to a collective group, such as when Jehovah addressed the Israelite nation and told them: “You are my witnesses

[plural], . . . yes, my servant [singular] whom I have chosen.” (Isa 43:10) In the parallel illustration at Lu 12:42, this slave is called “the faithful steward, the discreet one.”—See study note on Lu 12:42.

his domestics: Or “his household servants.” The term applies to all individuals who work in the master’s household.

24:46 coming: See study note on Mt 24:30.

24:48 that evil slave: Jesus’ words here are actually a warning directed to the faithful and discreet slave, mentioned at Mt 24:45. Jesus is neither foretelling nor appointing an “evil slave” but is warning the faithful slave about what would happen if he were to start displaying the

characteristics of an evil slave. Such a disloyal slave would be punished “with the greatest severity.”—Mt 24:51; see study note on Lu 12:45.

24:51 punish him with the greatest severity: Lit., “cut him in two.” This graphic expression is evidently not to be understood literally; rather, it conveys the idea of severe punishment.

hypocrites: See study note on Mt 6:2.

gnashing of his teeth: See study note on Mt 8:12.

25:1 ten virgins . . . to meet the bridegroom: In Bible times, an important feature of the marriage ceremony was the solemn procession to bring the bride from her father’s home to the home of her

CHAP. 25

- a Re 19:9
 b Lu 13:25, 27
 c Mt 26:41
 Eph 5:15
 1Th 5:6
 1Pe 5:8
 d Mt 24:42, 50
 Mr 13:33
 Lu 21:34
 e Lu 19:12, 13
 f Mt 22:37
 Col 3:23

8 The foolish said to the discreet, ‘Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are about to go out.’ **9** The discreet answered, saying: ‘Perhaps there may not be enough for both us and you. Go instead to those who sell it, and buy some for yourselves.’ **10** While they were going off to buy it, the bridegroom came. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast,^a and the door was shut. **11** Afterward, the rest of the virgins also came, saying, ‘Sir, Sir, open to us!’^b **12** In answer he said, ‘I tell you the truth, I do not know you.’

13 “Keep on the watch,^c therefore, because you know neither the day nor the hour.^d

Illustration of the Talents

14 “For it is just like a man about to travel abroad who summoned his slaves and entrusted his belongings to them.^e **15** He gave five talents to one, two to another, and one to still another, to each according to his own ability,^f and he went abroad. **16** Immediately the one who received the five talents went and did business with them and gained five more. **17** Likewise, the one who received the two gained two more. **18** But the slave who received just one went off and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money.

STUDY NOTES

bridegroom or the bridegroom’s father. The bridegroom, wearing his best clothing and escorted by his friends, would leave his house in the evening for the home of the bride’s parents. From there, accompanied by musicians and singers and usually by people carrying lamps, the couple made their way toward the bridegroom’s home. The people along the route would take great interest in the procession. (Isa 62:5; Jer 7:34; 16:9) Young women carrying lamps were apparently among those joining the procession. As there was no particular haste, the procession might be delayed, so that some waiting along the way would get drowsy and fall asleep. The long waiting period might require refilling with oil the lamps carried in the procession. Singing and exultation would be heard quite a distance away. Then, after the bridegroom and his entourage entered the house and closed the door, it was too late for tardy guests to enter.—Mt 25:5-12; see study note on Mt 1:20.

25:2 discreet: Or “wise.”—See study note on Mt 24:45.

25:7 put their lamps in order: Evidently referring to what needed to be done, including trimming the wicks and adding oil so that the lamps would burn brightly.

25:13 Keep on the watch: Lit., “Stay awake.” This exhortation to stay awake spiritually is the basic message of the parable of the ten virgins.—See study notes on Mt 24:42; 26:38.

25:15 talents: A Greek talent was, not a coin, but a unit of weight and money. One Greek silver talent equaled 20.4 kg (654 oz t) and was worth approximately 6,000 drachmas or Roman denarii. It was the equivalent of about 20 years’ wages for a common laborer.—See  App. B14.

25:18 money: Lit., “silver,” that is, silver used as money.

19 “After a long time, the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.^a **20** So the one who had received the five talents came forward and brought five additional talents, saying, ‘Master, you entrusted five talents to me; see, I gained five talents more.’^b **21** His master said to him: ‘Well done, good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things. I will appoint you over many things.’^c Enter into the joy of your master.’^{*d} **22** Next the one who had received the two talents came forward and said, ‘Master, you entrusted two talents to me; see, I gained two talents more.’^e **23** His master said to him: ‘Well done, good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things. I will appoint you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.’

24 “Finally the slave who had received the one talent came forward and said: ‘Master, I knew you to be a demanding* man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not winnow.’^f **25** So I grew afraid and went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ **26** In reply his master said to him: ‘Wicked and sluggish* slave, you knew, did you, that I reaped where I did not sow and gathered where I did not winnow? **27** Well, then, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my coming I would have received it back with interest.’

CHAP. 25

- a Lu 19:15
 b Lu 19:16, 17
 c Lu 16:10
 d Heb 12:2
 e Lu 19:18, 19
 f Lu 19:20-23

FOOTNOTES

25:21 *Or “Rejoice with your master; Come and share your master’s happiness.” **25:24** *Or “hard; harsh.” **25:26** *Or “lazy; reluctant; idle.”

STUDY NOTES

25:24 See  Gallery, image 16, Winnowing Grain.

25:25 hid your talent in the ground: Evidence of this practice is seen in the large quantities of valuables and coins unearthed by both archaeologists and farmers in Bible lands.

25:27 bankers . . . interest: During the first century C.E., moneylenders, or bankers, were prominent in Israel and surrounding nations. The Law forbade the Israelites from charging interest on loans to needy fellow Jews (Ex 22:25), but interest was specifically allowed on loans to foreigners, likely for business ventures

(De 23:20). In Jesus’ day, it was evidently common to receive interest on funds deposited with moneylenders.

25:30 gnashing of his teeth: See study note on Mt 8:12.

25:31 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

comes: See study note on Mt 24:30.

25:32 just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats: Jesus here refers to a scene familiar to his listeners. In Bible times, shepherds cared for mixed flocks. (Ge 30:32, 33; 31:38) Sheep and goats commonly grazed together in the Middle East, and the shepherd could easily identify the two kinds of animals when he wanted to separate them. This separation may have been done for a variety of reasons. For example, it may have been for pasturing, breeding, milking, shearing, slaughtering, or even helping the animals to group together to stay warm at night.

Whatever the case, this illustration well describes the clear separation that will take place when “the Son of man comes in his glory.”—Mt 25:31.

25:33 the goats: Although Jesus is referring to people who do not support his spiritual brothers, he is not necessarily using “goats” in this illustration because of some negative characteristic that these animals demonstrate. While it is true that goats display a more independent and, at times, more stubborn nature than sheep do, they were nevertheless clean animals for the Jews and could be used in place of sheep for the Passover meal. (Ex 12:5; De 14:4) Additionally, the Mosaic Law required that on the annual Day of Atonement, the blood of a goat be used to make atonement for the sins of Israel. (Le 16:7-27) Jesus seems merely to be using the goats to represent one class of people and the sheep to represent another class.—Mt 25:32.

CHAP. 25

- a Lu 19:24-26
 b Mt 13:12
 Mr 4:25
 Lu 8:18
 Joh 15:2
 c Da 7:13
 d Mt 16:27
 e Joh 10:14
 f Mt 25:41
 g Heb 13:2
 3Jo 5
 h Jas 2:15, 16
 i 2Ti 1:16
 j Mt 10:42

28 “Therefore, take the talent away from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents.^a **29** For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance. But the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.^b **30** And throw the good-for-nothing slave out into the darkness outside. There is where his weeping and the gnashing of his teeth will be.’

Illustration of the Sheep and the Goats

31 “When the Son of man^c comes in his glory, and all the angels with him,^d then he will sit down on his glorious throne. **32** All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33** And he will put the sheep^e on his right hand, but the goats on his left.^f

34 “Then the King will say to those on his right: ‘Come, you who have been blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world. **35** For I became hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you received me hospitably;^g **36** naked and you clothed me.^h I fell sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you visited me.’ⁱ **37** Then the righteous ones will answer him with the words: ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?’^j **38** When did we see

STUDY NOTES

25:33 on his right hand . . . on his

left: In some contexts, both positions indicate honor and authority (Mt 20:21, 23), but the place of greatest honor is always on the right (Ps 110:1; Ac 7:55, 56; Ro 8:34). However, here and at Mt 25:34, 41, there is a clear contrast between the place of favor at the King’s right hand and that of disfavor at his left.—Compare Ec 10:2, ftns.

25:34 inherit: The basic meaning of the Greek verb is for an heir to receive something as a right, often because of relationship, such as a son receiving an inheritance from his father. (Ga 4:30) But here, as in most occurrences in the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term is used in the broader sense of receiving something as a reward from God.—Mt 19:29; 1Co 6:9.

the Kingdom: In the Bible, the term “kingdom” is used in several different ways, including “the region or country governed by a king,” “kingly power,” “a realm,” and “being ruled by a king.” Here it is evidently used in the sense of receiving the benefits or blessings of being ruled by God’s Kingdom and enjoying life within its realm.

founding of the world: The Greek word for “founding” is rendered “to conceive” at Heb 11:11, where it is used with “offspring.” Here used in the expression “founding of the world,” it apparently refers to the conception and birth of children born to Adam and Eve. Jesus associates “the founding of the world” with Abel, evidently the first redeemable human of the world of mankind whose name was written in the scroll of life from “the founding of the world.”—Lu 11:50, 51; Re 17:8.

25:36 naked: Or “not sufficiently dressed.” The Greek word *gy-mnos*’ can have the meaning “lightly clad; in the undergarment only.”—Jas 2:15, ftn.

you a stranger and receive you hospitably, or naked and clothe you? **39** When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ **40** In reply the King will say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’^a

41 “Then he will say to those on his left: ‘Go away from me,^b you who have been cursed, into the everlasting fire^c prepared for the Devil and his angels.’^d **42** For I became hungry, but you gave me nothing to eat; and I was thirsty, but you gave me nothing to drink. **43** I was a stranger, but you did not receive me hospitably; naked, but you did not clothe me; sick and in prison, but you did not look after me.’ **44** Then they too will answer with the words: ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister to you?’ **45** Then he will answer them, saying: ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of these least ones, you did not do it to me.’^e **46** These will depart into everlasting cutting-off,^f but the righteous ones into everlasting life.”^g

CHAP. 25

- a Pr 19:17
Mt 10:40
Mr 9:41
Heb 6:10
- b Mt 7:23
- c Mt 18:8, 9
- d Jude 6
Re 12:9
Re 20:10
- e Zec 2:8
Ac 9:4, 5
- f 2Pe 2:9
- g Ro 2:6, 7

STUDY NOTES

25:40; 26:13 **Truly:** See study note on Mt 5:18.

25:40 **brothers:** The plural form of the Greek word for “brother” can refer to both men and women.

25:46 **cutting-off:** That is, from life. The Greek word *ko’la-sis* is used of “pruning” or “lopping off” needless branches from trees. This “cutting-off” would be “everlasting,” since the person would be cut off from life with no hope of a resurrection.

26:1 **Now when:** What is described at Mt 26:1-5 happened on Nisan 12, because verse 2 states that “two days from now the Passover [on Nisan 14] takes place.”—See **☞** App. A7, B12, and study note on Mt 26:6.

26:2 **Passover:** This festival (Greek *pa’skha* from Hebrew *pe’sach* from the verb *pa-sach’*, meaning “to pass over; to pass by”) was instituted the evening preceding the Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt. It commemorates the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt and the ‘passing over’ of their firstborn when Jehovah destroyed the firstborn of Egypt.—Ex 12:14, 24-47; see **📖** Glossary.

Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

to be executed on the stake: Or “to be fastened on a stake (pole).”—See study note on Mt 20:19 and **📖** Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

26:3 **chief priests:** See study note on Mt 2:4 and **📖** Glossary, “Chief priest.”

elders: See study note on Mt 16:21.

high priest: When Israel functioned as an independent nation, the high priest held his office for life. (Nu 35:25) However, during the Roman occupation of Israel, the rulers assigned by Rome had authority to appoint and to depose the high priest.—See **📖** Glossary.

Caiaphas: This high priest, appointed by the Romans, was a skillful diplomat who held his office longer than any of his immediate predecessors. He was appointed about 18 C.E. and remained in office until about 36 C.E.—See **☞** App. B12 for the possible location of Caiaphas’ house.

26:6 **While Jesus was in Bethany:** The events described at Mt 26:6-13 evidently took place after sunset when Nisan 9 began. That timing is indicated by the parallel account in John, where Jesus is said to *arrive* at Bethany “six days be-

fore the Passover.” (Joh 12:1) He must have arrived about the beginning (at sunset) of the Sabbath on Nisan 8, which was the day before the meal at Simon’s place.—Joh 12:2-11; see **☞** App. A7 and B12.

Simon the leper: This Simon is mentioned only here and in the parallel account at Mr 14:3. He may have been a former leper whom Jesus had healed.—See study note on Mt 8:2 and **📖** Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

26:7 **a woman:** According to Joh 12:3, this woman is Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus.

alabaster jar: See **📖** Glossary, “Alabaster.”

costly perfumed oil: Mark and John’s accounts specify that it was a pound of “genuine nard,” worth 300 denarii. That sum represented about a year’s wages for an ordinary laborer. (Mr 14:3-5; Joh 12:3-5) The source of such perfumed oil is generally thought to be an aromatic plant (*Nardostachys jatamansi*) found in the Himalayas. Nard was often adulterated, even counterfeited, but both Mark and John say that this oil was “genuine.”

CHAP. 26

Priests Plot to Kill Jesus

- a Ex 12:14, 18
Mr 14:1, 2
Lu 22:1, 2
Joh 13:1
- b Mt 16:21
Mt 20:18, 19
Mt 27:26
Mr 15:15
Joh 19:16
- c Mt 26:57
Lu 3:2
Joh 11:49
Joh 18:13, 24
- d Ps 2:2
- e Mr 14:3-9
Joh 12:2-8
- f De 15:11
- g Mr 14:7
- h 2Ch 16:13, 14
Mr 14:8
Joh 12:7
- i Mr 14:9

26 Now when Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples: **2** “You know that two days from now the Passover takes place,^a and the Son of man will be handed over to be executed on the stake.”^b

3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the courtyard of the high priest, who was named Ca’ia-phas,^c **4** and they conspired together^d to seize* Jesus by cunning[#] and to kill him. **5** However, they were saying: “Not at the festival, so that there may not be an uproar among the people.”

Woman Pours Perfumed Oil on Jesus

6 While Jesus was in Beth’a-ny in the house of Simon the leper,^e **7** a woman with an alabaster jar of costly perfumed oil approached him, and she began pouring it on his head as he was dining.* **8** On seeing this, the disciples became indignant and said: “Why this waste? **9** For this could have been sold for a great deal of money and given to the poor.” **10** Aware of this, Jesus said to them: “Why do you try to make trouble for the woman? She did a fine deed toward me. **11** For you always have the poor with you,^f but you will not always have me.^g **12** When she put this perfumed oil on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial.^h **13** Truly I say to you, wherever this good news is preached in all the world, what this woman did will also be told in memory of her.”ⁱ

FOOTNOTES

26:4 *Or “arrest.” #Or “deceit; craftiness.” **26:7** *Or “reclining at the table.”

STUDY NOTES

26:7 pouring it on his head: According to Matthew and Mark, the woman poured the oil on Jesus’ head. (Mr 14:3) John, who wrote years later, supplied the added detail that she also poured it on his feet. (Joh 12:3) Jesus explains that this loving act was figuratively to prepare him for burial.—See study note on Mt 26:12.

See  Gallery, image 81, Alabaster Jar.

26:8 the disciples: Only in John’s account is Judas Iscariot identified as the one objecting to Mary’s use of expensive oil. (Joh 12:4-7) Evidently, other apostles

merely agreed to what seemed to be a valid point.

26:9 a great deal of money: See study note on Mr 14:5.

26:12 she put this perfumed oil on my body: The woman (see study note on Mt 26:7) performed this generous act out of love and appreciation for Jesus. He explained that she was unknowingly preparing his body for **burial**, since such perfumed oil and ointments were often applied to dead bodies.—2Ch 16:14.

26:13 is preached in all the world: Similar to his prophecy at Mt 24:14, Jesus here foretells that the good news would be proclaimed in all the world and would include this woman’s act of devotion. God inspired three Gospel writers to mention what she did.—Mr 14:8, 9; Joh 12:7; see study note on Mt 24:14.

Jesus' Last Passover and Judas' Betrayal

CHAP. 26

14 Then one of the Twelve, the one called Judas Is-car'i-ot,^a went to the chief priests^b **15** and said: "What will you give me to betray him to you?"^c They stipulated to him 30 silver pieces.^d **16** So from then on, he kept looking for a good opportunity to betray him.

17 On the first day of the Unleavened Bread,^e the disciples came to Jesus, saying: "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?"^f **18** He said: "Go into the city to So-and-so and say to him, 'The Teacher says: "My appointed time is near; I will celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your home."'" **19** So the disciples did as Jesus instructed them and prepared for the Passover.

20 When evening came,^g he was reclining at the table with the 12 disciples.^h **21** While they were eating, he said: "Truly I say to you, one of you will betray me."ⁱ **22** Being very much grieved at this, each and every one began to say to him: "Lord, it is not I, is it?" **23** In reply he said: "The one who dips his hand with me into the bowl is the one who will betray me.^j **24** True, the Son of man is going away, just as it is written about him, but woe^k to that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."^m **25** Judas, who was about to betray him, replied: "It is not I, is it, Rabbi?" Jesus said to him: "You yourself said it."

a Mt 10:2, 4
Joh 13:2
b Mr 14:10, 11
Lu 22:3-6
c Joh 11:57
d Ex 21:32
Zec 11:12
Mt 27:3
e Ex 12:18
Ex 23:15
Lu 22:1
f Mr 14:12-16
Lu 22:7-13
g De 16:6
h Mr 14:17-21
Lu 22:14
i Lu 22:21-23
Joh 6:70
Joh 13:21, 22
j Ps 41:9
Mr 14:20
Lu 22:21
Joh 13:18
Joh 13:26
k De 27:25
l Lu 22:22
Joh 17:12
m Mr 14:21

STUDY NOTES

26:14 Then: That is, on Nisan 12, the same day as the events described at Mt 26:1-5 took place.—See [☞](#) App. A7, B12, and study notes on Mt 26:1, 6.

Judas Iscariot: See study note on Mt 10:4.

26:15 30 silver pieces: Matthew is the only Gospel writer to mention the amount for which Jesus was betrayed. These were possibly 30 silver shekels minted in Tyre. This sum appears to show the chief priests' contempt for Jesus, since under the Law, it was the price of a slave. (Ex 21:32) Likewise, when Zechariah asked for his wages from unfaithful Israelites for his prophetic work among God's people, they weighed out to him "30 pieces of silver," suggesting that they considered him

to be worth no more than a slave.—Zec 11:12, 13.

26:17 On the first day of the Unleavened Bread: The Festival of Unleavened Bread began on Nisan 15, the day after the Passover (Nisan 14), and lasted for seven days. (See [☞](#) App. B15.) In Jesus' time, however, the Passover had become so closely connected to this festival that all eight days, including Nisan 14, sometimes were referred to as "the Festival of the Unleavened Bread." (Lu 22:1) In this context, the phrase "On the first day of" could be rendered "On the day before." (Compare Joh 1:15, 30, where the Greek word for "first" [*pro'tos*] is rendered "before" in a similar construction, namely, "he existed before [*pro'tos*] me.") So the original Greek, as well as Jewish custom, allows for the disciples' question to

have been asked of Jesus on Nisan 13. During the daytime of Nisan 13, the disciples made preparations for the Passover, which was later celebrated "after evening had fallen" at the beginning of Nisan 14.—Mr 14:16, 17.

26:18 See [☞](#) Gallery, image 82, The Passover Meal.

26:20 When evening came: That is, the evening marking the start of Nisan 14.—See [☞](#) App. A7 and B12.

26:23 dips his hand with me: People usually ate food with their fingers, or they used a piece of bread somewhat like a spoon. This expression could also be an idiom meaning "to share food together." Eating with a person signified close fellowship. To turn against such an intimate companion was considered the vilest form of treachery.—Ps 41:9; Joh 13:18.

CHAP. 26

Instituting the Lord's Evening Meal

- a 1Co 10:16
 b Mr 14:22
 Lu 22:19
 1Co 11:23-26
 c Mr 14:23
 Lu 22:20
 d 1Co 10:16
 e Ex 24:8
 Jer 31:31
 Heb 7:22
 f Mt 20:28
 Mr 14:24
 g Eph 1:7
 Heb 9:20, 22
 h Mr 14:25
 Lu 22:18
 i Mr 14:26
 Lu 22:39
 Joh 18:1
 j Zec 13:7
 Mr 14:27, 28
 Joh 16:32
 k Mt 28:7
 Mt 28:16

26 As they continued eating, Jesus took a loaf, and after saying a blessing, he broke it,^a and giving it to the disciples, he said: "Take, eat. This means my body."^b **27** And taking a cup, he offered thanks and gave it to them, saying: "Drink out of it, all of you,^c **28** for this means my 'blood^d of the covenant,'^e which is to be poured out in behalf of many^f for forgiveness of sins.^g **29** But I say to you: I will by no means drink again any of this product of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of my Father."^h **30** Finally, after singing praises, they went out to the Mount of Olives.ⁱ

Peter's Denial Foretold

31 Then Jesus said to them: "All of you will be stumbled in connection with me on this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered about.'^j **32** But after I have been raised up, I will go ahead of you into Gal'i-lee."^k **33** But Peter, in response, said to him: "Although all the others are stumbled in connection with you, I

STUDY NOTES

26:23 bowl: The Greek word denotes a relatively deep bowl from which a meal was eaten.

26:25 You yourself said it: A Jewish idiom here used to affirm the truth of a statement made by a questioner. Jesus was, in effect, saying: "You have said so, and what you say is true." Jesus' reply evidently pointed out that Judas' own words were an admission of responsibility for Jesus' betrayal. At some point after this, **Judas** must have left the room before Jesus instituted the observance of the Lord's Evening Meal, as shown by a comparison with the account at Joh 13:21-30. Here in Matthew's account, Judas is next mentioned at Mt 26:47, together with the crowd in the garden of Gethsemane.

26:26 saying a blessing: This expression evidently refers to a prayer offering praise and thanks to God.

took a loaf . . . broke it: The loaves common in the ancient Near East were thin and, if unleavened, brittle. There was no spiritual significance to Jesus' breaking the bread; this was the normal way to di-

vide that type of loaf.—See study note on Mt 14:19.

means: The Greek word *e-stin'* (literally meaning "is") here has the sense of "signifies; symbolizes; stands for; represents." This meaning was evident to the apostles, since on this occasion Jesus' perfect body was there in front of them and so was the unleavened bread that they were about to eat. Therefore, the bread could not have been his literal body. It is worth noting that the same Greek word is used at Mt 12:7, and many Bible translations render it "means."

26:28 blood of the covenant: The new covenant, between Jehovah and anointed Christians, was made operative by Jesus' sacrifice. (Heb 8:10) Jesus here uses the same expression Moses used when acting as mediator and inaugurating the Law covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. (Ex 24:8; Heb 9:19-21) Just as the blood of bulls and goats validated the Law covenant between God and the nation of Israel, Jesus' blood made valid the new covenant that Jehovah would make with spiritual Israel. That covenant went into effect at Pentecost 33 C.E.—Heb 9:14, 15.

26:29 drink it new: That is, the vine's new product. In the Scriptures, wine sometimes symbolizes joy.—Ps 104:15; Ec 10:19.

26:30 after singing praises: Or "after singing hymns (psalms)." According to one Jewish tradition, the first Hallel Psalms (113, 114) were sung, or recited, during the Passover meal; the last four (115-118) at its conclusion. The latter contain some of the prophecies that apply to the Messiah. Ps 118 begins and ends with the words: "Give thanks to Jehovah, for he is good; his loyal love endures forever." (Ps 118:1, 29) These may well have been the last words of praise that Jesus sang with his faithful apostles on the night before his death.

will never be stumbled!”^a **34** Jesus said to him: “Truly I say to you, on this night, before a rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”^b **35** Peter said to him: “Even if I should have to die with you, I will by no means disown you.”^c All the other disciples also said the same thing.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

36 Then Jesus came with them to the spot called Geth-sem'-a-ne,^d and he said to the disciples: “Sit down here while I go over there and pray.”^e **37** And taking along Peter and the two sons of Zeb'e-dee,^f he began to feel grieved and to be greatly troubled.^g **38** Then he said to them: “I am deeply grieved, even to death. Stay here and keep on the watch with me.”^h **39** And going a little way forward, he fell facedown, praying:ⁱ “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup^j pass away from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will.”^k

40 He returned to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter: “Could you not so much as keep on the watch for one hour with me?”^l **41** Keep on the watch^m and pray continually,ⁿ so that you may not enter into temptation.^o The spirit, of course, is eager,^{*} but the flesh is weak.”^p **42** Again, a second time, he went off and prayed: “My Father, if it is not possible for this to pass away unless I drink it, let your will take place.”^q **43** And he came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes

CHAP. 26

- a Mr 14:29-31
- b Mr 14:30
Lu 22:34
Joh 13:38
- c Lu 22:33
- d Joh 18:1
- e Mr 14:32-36
Lu 22:40
- f Mt 4:21
- g Isa 53:3
- h Mr 14:34
- i Heb 5:7
- j Mt 20:22
Joh 18:11
- k Mr 14:36
Lu 22:42
Joh 5:30
Joh 6:38
Heb 10:9
- l Mr 14:37-42
Lu 22:45
- m Mt 25:13
Mr 13:33
1Pe 5:8
Re 16:15
- n Lu 18:1
Ro 12:12
Eph 6:18
1Pe 4:7
- o Mt 6:13
Lu 22:46
- p Mr 14:38
Ro 7:23
- q Mt 6:10
Joh 12:27

FOOTNOTES

26:41 *Or “willing.”

STUDY NOTES

26:34 before a rooster crows: All four Gospels mention this statement, but only Mark’s account adds the detail that the rooster would crow twice. (Mt 26:74, 75; Mr 14:30, 72; Lu 22:34, 60, 61; Joh 13:38; 18:27) The Mishnah indicates that roosters were bred in Jerusalem in Jesus’ day, lending support to the Bible account. This crowing likely occurred very early in the morning.

26:36 Gethsemane: This garden was evidently located on the Mount of Olives across the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem. It was probably equipped with an olive press, since its name is derived from a Hebrew or Aramaic expression (*gath shema-neh*) meaning “oil press.” Al-

though the exact location cannot be determined, one tradition identifies Gethsemane with a garden located at the foot of the Mount of Olives, at the fork of the road on its W slope.—See  App. B12.

26:37 two sons of Zebedee: That is, the apostles James and John.—Mt 4:21; 10:2.

26:38 I am: Or “My soul is.” The Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to a person’s entire being. So “my soul” can be rendered “my whole being” or simply “I.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

keep on the watch: Lit., “stay awake.” Jesus had emphasized the need for his disciples to stay awake spiritually because of not knowing the day and hour of his coming. (See study notes on Mt 24:42; 25:13.) He repeats that exhortation here and again at Mt 26:41, where he links staying awake spiritually with persevering

in prayer. Similar exhortations are found throughout the Christian Greek Scriptures, showing that spiritual alertness is vital for true Christians.—1Co 16:13; Col 4:2; 1Th 5:6; 1Pe 5:8; Re 16:15.

26:39 fell facedown: Or “threw himself down with his face to the ground,” perhaps resting on his hands or elbows. In the Bible, several postures for prayer are mentioned, including standing and kneeling. However, a person in fervent prayer might actually lie facedown with his body outstretched.

let this cup pass away: In the Bible, “cup” is often used figuratively of God’s will, or the “assigned portion,” for a person. (See study note on Mt 20:22.) Jesus no doubt felt great concern over the reproach that his death as one charged with blasphemy and sedition could bring on God, moving him to pray that this “cup” pass away from him.

CHAP. 26

- a Mr 14:43-47
Lu 22:47-51
Joh 18:3
- b Ps 41:9
- c Mr 14:47
Lu 22:50
Joh 18:10
- d Joh 18:11
- e Ge 9:6
- f 2Ki 6:17
Da 7:10
Mt 4:11
- g Lu 19:47
Joh 18:20

were heavy. **44** So leaving them, he again went off and prayed for a third time, saying once more the same thing. **45** Then he returned to the disciples and said to them: “At such a time as this, you are sleeping and resting! Look! The hour has drawn near for the Son of man to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. **46** Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer has drawn near.” **47** While he was still speaking, look! Judas, one of the Twelve, came and with him a large crowd with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.^a

Jesus Arrested and Brought Before Sanhedrin

48 Now his betrayer had given them a sign, saying: “Whoever it is I kiss, he is the one; take him into custody.” **49** And going straight up to Jesus, he said: “Greetings, Rabbi!” and gave him a tender kiss. **50** But Jesus said to him: “Fellow, for what purpose are you present?”^b Then they came forward and seized Jesus and took him into custody. **51** But look! one of those with Jesus reached out his hand and drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, taking off his ear.^c **52** Then Jesus said to him: “Return your sword to its place,^d for all those who take up the sword will perish by the sword.^e **53** Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than 12 legions of angels?^f **54** In that case, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must take place this way?” **55** In that hour Jesus said to the crowds: “Did you come out to arrest me with swords and clubs as against a robber? Day after day I used to sit in the temple teaching,^g and yet you did

STUDY NOTES

26:40 you: Here the Greek text uses the second person plural pronoun, indicating that Jesus is addressing not only Peter but also other disciples.

26:41 spirit: Here referring to the impelling force that issues from a person's figurative heart and causes him to say and do things in a certain way.—See  Glossary.

flesh: In the Bible, the term is often used to represent man in his imperfect sinful state.

26:45 Look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

26:49 gave him a tender kiss: The Greek verb rendered “to give a tender kiss” is an

intensive form of the verb for “kiss,” used at Mt 26:48. By greeting Jesus in such a warm, friendly manner, Judas showed the depth of his deceitfulness and hypocrisy.

26:51 one of those with Jesus: The parallel account at Joh 18:10 shows that it was Simon Peter who **drew his sword** and that the name of **the slave of the high priest** was Malchus. The accounts at Lu 22:50 and Joh 18:10 also add the detail that it was his “right ear” that was cut off.—See study note on Joh 18:10.

struck the slave of the high priest: See study note on Joh 18:10.

26:53 legions: Principal units of the Roman army. In the first century C.E., one legion usually consisted of some 6,000

soldiers. Here “12 legions” apparently denotes an indefinite, large number. Jesus is saying that if he asked, his Father would send more than enough angels to protect him.

26:54 the Scriptures: An expression often used to refer to the inspired Hebrew writings as a whole.

not take me into custody.^a **56** But all of this has taken place for the writings* of the prophets to be fulfilled.^b Then all the disciples abandoned him and fled.^c

57 Those who took Jesus into custody led him away to Caiaphas^d the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together.^e **58** But Peter kept following him from a good distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and after going inside, he sat with the house attendants to see the outcome.^f

59 Now the chief priests and the entire San'he-drin were looking for false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death.^g **60** But they found none, although many false witnesses came forward.^h Later two came forward **61** and said: "This man said, 'I am able to throw down the temple of God and build it up in three days.'ⁱ **62** With that the high priest stood up and said to him: "Do you say nothing in reply? What is it these men are testifying against you?"^j **63** But Jesus kept silent.^k So the high priest said to him: "I put you under oath by the living God to tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God!"^l **64** Jesus said to him: "You yourself said it. But I say to you: From now on you will see the Son of man^m sitting at the right hand of powerⁿ and coming on the clouds of heaven."^o **65** Then the high priest ripped his outer garments, saying: "He

CHAP. 26

- a Mr 14:48, 49
Lu 22:52, 53
- b Ps 22:16-18
Isa 53
Da 9:26
- c Zec 13:7
Mr 14:50
Joh 16:32
- d Joh 18:13
- e Mr 14:53, 54
Lu 22:54, 55
- f Joh 18:16
- g Mr 14:55-59
- h Ps 27:12
Ps 35:11
- i Mt 27:39, 40
Joh 2:19
Ac 6:14
- j Mr 14:60-65
- k Isa 53:7
Ac 8:32
- l Lu 22:67-71
- m Da 7:13
Joh 1:51
- n Ps 110:1
Lu 22:69
- o Mr 14:62
Re 1:7

FOOTNOTES

26:56 *Or "scriptures."

STUDY NOTES

26:56 for the writings of the prophets to be fulfilled: See study note on Mt 1:22.

26:57 Caiaphas the high priest: See study note on Mt 26:3.

26:59 chief priests: This term refers to principal men of the priesthood.—See study note on Mt 2:4 and  Glossary, "Chief priest."

Sanhedrin: That is, the Jewish high court in Jerusalem. The Greek word rendered "Sanhedrin" (*sy-ne'dri-on*) literally means a "sitting down with." Although it was a general term for an assembly or a meeting, in Israel it could refer to a religious judicial body or court.—See study note on Mt 5:22 and  Glossary; see also  App.

B12 for the possible location of the Sanhedrin Hall.

26:63 the Christ: See study note on Mt 11:2.

26:64 You yourself said it: Jesus did not sidestep Caiaphas' question, since he recognized the high priest's authority to put him under oath to state the facts. (Mt 26: 63) This expression was apparently a Jewish idiom affirming that a statement was true. This is supported by Mark's parallel account, which renders Jesus' reply "I am."—Mr 14:62; see study notes on Mt 26:25; 27:11.

right hand of power: To be on a ruler's right hand meant being second in importance to the ruler himself. (Ps 110:1; Ac 7: 55, 56) The Greek word for "power" in this context may be understood to refer to God himself, and it could be rendered "the Power" or "the Powerful One." The Greek expression for "right hand of pow-

er" also occurs in the parallel account at Lu 22:69, but with the addition of the word for "God." It is rendered "the powerful right hand of God." The phrase "right hand of power" may also imply that Jesus would be infused with power, or authority, because of being at the right hand of the Powerful One, God.

the Son of man . . . coming on the clouds of heaven: Jesus here alludes to the Messianic prophecy at Da 7:13, 14, affirming that he would be the one who would gain access to God's presence and be given rulership in heaven.—See  Glossary, "Son of man."

26:65 ripped his outer garments: Here a gesture expressing indignation. Caiaphas likely tore open the part of his garment that covered his chest to dramatize his sanctimonious outrage at Jesus' words.

CHAP. 26

- a Mt 9:3
 b Le 24:16
 Joh 19:7
 c Isa 50:6
 d Lu 22:63, 64
 e Isa 53:3
 Mic 5:1
 f Mr 14:66-72
 Lu 22:55-62
 Joh 18:15-17
 g Joh 18:25-27
 h Mt 26:34
 Mr 14:30
 Joh 13:38

has blasphemed!^a What further need do we have of witnesses? See! Now you have heard the blasphemy. **66** What is your opinion?" They answered: "He deserves to die."^b **67** Then they spat in his face^c and hit him with their fists.^d Others slapped him on the face,^e **68** saying: "Prophecy to us, you Christ. Who struck you?"

Peter Denies Jesus

69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant girl came up to him and said: "You too were with Jesus the Gal-i-le'an!"^f **70** But he denied it before them all, saying: "I do not know what you are talking about." **71** When he went out to the gatehouse, another girl noticed him and said to those there: "This man was with Jesus the Naz-a-rene'."^g **72** Again he denied it, with an oath: "I do not know the man!" **73** After a little while, those standing around came up and said to Peter: "Certainly you are also one of them, for in fact, your dialect gives you away." **74** Then he started to curse and swear: "I do not know the man!" And immediately a rooster crowed. **75** And Peter called to mind what Jesus had said, namely: "Before a rooster crows, you will disown me three times."^h And he went outside and wept bitterly.

STUDY NOTES

26:68 Prophecy . . . Who struck you?:

Here "prophecy" does not mean to make a prediction but to identify by divine revelation who had hit him. The parallel accounts at Mr 14:65 and Lu 22:64 show that Jesus' persecutors had covered his face, evidently explaining their taunt to identify who had hit him.

26:71 gatehouse: Lit., "gate." Mark's account uses a term that can mean "entryway" or "vestibule," indicating that this was more than a simple gate. (Mr 14:68) It was evidently a structure, perhaps a passageway or a hall, leading from the courtyard to the exterior doors that opened to the street.

26:73 your dialect: Or "your accent; the way you speak." Peter's Galilean dialect or accent may have reflected regional vocabulary or pronunciation that differed from the Hebrew spoken in Judea. Some suggest that the distinct Galilean accent or vocabulary was due to foreign influence.

26:74 curse: Most likely, Peter is invoking a curse on himself, saying, in effect, that he 'wishes to be cursed if he is lying and actually knows the man.'

swear: Or "swear with an oath." Motivated by fear, Peter is trying to convince those around him that his denials are truthful. By swearing to the matter, he is taking an oath that his words are true and that a calamity might befall him if they are not.

a rooster crowed: See study note on Mr 14:72.

Jesus Handed Over to Pilate

27 When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people consulted together against Jesus to put him to death.^a **2** After binding him, they led him off and handed him over to Pilate, the governor.^b

Judas Feels Remorse and Hangs Himself

3 Then Judas, his betrayer, seeing that Jesus had been condemned, felt remorse and brought the 30 pieces of silver back to the chief priests and elders,^c **4** saying: “I sinned when I betrayed innocent blood.” They said: “What is that to us? You must see to it!”* **5** So he threw the silver pieces into the temple and departed. Then he went off and hanged himself.^d **6** But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said: “It is not lawful to put them into the sacred treasury, because they are the price of blood.” **7** After consulting together, they used the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for strangers. **8** Therefore, that field has been called Field of Blood^e to this very day. **9** Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: “And they took the 30 silver pieces,^f the price that was set on the man, the one on whom a price was set by some of the sons of Israel, **10** and they gave them for the potter’s field, according to what Jehovah had commanded me.”^g

CHAP. 27

- a Mr 15:1
Lu 22:66
- b Ps 2:1, 2
Mt 20:18, 19
Lu 3:1
Lu 23:1
Joh 18:28
Ac 3:13
- c Mt 26:14, 15
Mr 14:10, 11
- d Ac 1:16, 18
- e Ac 1:19
- f Mt 26:15
- g Zec 11:12, 13

FOOTNOTES

27:4 *Or “That is your problem!”

STUDY NOTES

27:1 elders: See study note on Mt 16:21.

27:2 Pilate, the governor: The Roman governor (prefect) of Judea appointed by Emperor Tiberius in 26 C.E. His rule lasted about ten years. Pilate is mentioned by non-Biblical writers, including Roman historian Tacitus, who wrote that Pilate ordered the execution of Christ during the reign of Tiberius. A Latin inscription with the words “Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea” was found in the ancient Roman theater in Caesarea, Israel.—See  App. B10 for the domain ruled by Pontius Pilate.

See  Gallery, image 83, Inscription Bearing the Name Pontius Pilate.

27:3 felt remorse: While the Greek word *me-ta-me'lo-mai* used here can have positive connotations (rendered “feel regret” or “regret” at Mt 21:29, 32; 2Co 7:8), there is no indication that Judas was truly repentant. When referring to repentance before God, the Bible uses a different term, *me-ta-no-e'ō* (rendered “repent” at Mt 3:2; 4:17; Lu 15:7; Ac 3:19), which signifies a strong change in thinking, attitude, or purpose. Judas’ actions of returning to the very men he had conspired with and then committing suicide show that his thinking remained distorted, not changed for the better.

27:4 innocent: Some ancient manuscripts read “righteous.”—Compare Mt 23:35.

27:5 temple: The Greek word *na-os'* used here can refer to the entire complex, including its courtyards, and not only to the inner sanctuary of the temple itself.

hanged himself: Luke’s account of Judas’ death, recorded at Ac 1:18, reports that Judas fell and his body burst open. Matthew seems to deal with *how* he committed suicide, while Luke describes the *result*. Combining the two accounts, it appears that Judas hanged himself over a cliff, but at some point the rope or tree limb broke so that he plunged down and burst open on the rocks below. The topography around Jerusalem allows for such a conclusion.

27:6 sacred treasury: This term may refer to the portion of the temple called “the treasury” at Joh 8:20, apparently located in the area called the Court of the Women, where there were 13 treasury chests. (See  App. B11.) It is believed that the temple also contained a major treasury where the money from the treasury chests was brought.

price of blood: Or “blood money,” that is, money received for shedding blood.

CHAP. 27

Jesus Stands Before Pilate

- a Mr 15:2-5
Lu 23:3
Joh 18:33, 37
- b Isa 53:7
Mt 26:63
Joh 19:9
- c Mr 15:6-10
Joh 18:39
- d Lu 23:18, 19

11 Jesus now stood before the governor, and the governor put the question to him: “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus replied: “You yourself say it.”^a **12** But while he was being accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer.^b **13** Then Pilate said to him: “Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?” **14** But he did not answer him, no, not a word, so that the governor was very surprised.

15 Now from festival to festival,^{*} it was the custom of the governor to release a prisoner to the crowd, whomever they wanted.^c **16** Just at that time they were holding a notorious prisoner called Bar·ab·bas.^d **17** So when they were gathered together, Pilate said to them: “Which one do you want me to release to you, Bar·ab·bas or Jesus the so-called Christ?” **18** For Pilate was aware that out of envy they had handed him over.

FOOTNOTES

27:15 *Or “at each festival.”

STUDY NOTES

27:7 they used the money: Matthew alone specifies that the chief priests used the 30 silver pieces to purchase a piece of property. Ac 1:18, 19 attributes the purchase to Judas, but this is evidently because the chief priests purchased the field with the money Judas provided.

potter’s field: Since the fourth century C.E., this field has been identified with a location on the S slope of the Hinnom Valley, just before it joins the Kidron Valley. This seems to have been an area where potters pursued their craft. As shown at Mt 27:8 and Ac 1:19, the field came to be known as “Field of Blood,” or *Akeldama*.—See **☞** App. B12.

strangers: That is, Jews visiting from other lands or Gentiles.

27:8 to this very day: This expression indicates a lapse of some time between the events considered and the time of writing. Matthew’s Gospel was probably written about 41 C.E.

27:9 what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: The quotation following these words appears to be drawn principally from Zec 11:12,

13 but is paraphrased by Matthew, who under inspiration applied it to the circumstances fulfilling it. In Matthew’s time, Jeremiah was placed first among the prophetic books, and his name may have applied to the whole collection of these books, including Zechariah.—See study note on Mt 1:22.

27:10 Jehovah: In this quote from the Hebrew Scriptures (see study note on Mt 27:9), the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See **☞** App. C.

27:11 Are you the King of the Jews?: No king in the Roman Empire could rule without Caesar’s consent. So Pilate apparently concentrated his interrogation on the issue of Jesus’ kingship.

You yourself say it: This reply is evidently an affirmation of the truth of Pilate’s statement. (Compare study notes on Mt 26:25, 64.) Though Jesus confesses to Pilate that he really is a king, it is in a sense that differs from what Pilate imagines, since Jesus’ Kingdom is “no part of this world” and thus no threat to Rome.—Joh 18:33-37.

27:15 custom . . . to release a prisoner: This incident is mentioned by all four Gospel writers. (Mr 15:6-15; Lu 23:16-25; Joh 18:39, 40) There is no basis or precedent

for this custom in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, it seems that by Jesus’ day, the Jews had developed this tradition. The practice would not have seemed strange to the Romans, since there is evidence that they released prisoners to please the crowds.

19 Moreover, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent a message to him, saying: “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I suffered a lot today in a dream because of him.” **20** But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Bar·ab·bas,^a but to have Jesus put to death.^b **21** In response the governor said to them: “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” They said: “Bar·ab·bas.” **22** Pilate said to them: “What, then, should I do with Jesus the so-called Christ?” They all said: “To the stake with him!”^{*c} **23** He said: “Why? What bad thing did he do?” Still they kept shouting out all the more: “To the stake with him!”^d

CHAP. 27
 a Lu 23:18
 Joh 18:40
 Ac 3:14
 b Mr 15:11-14
 c Lu 23:20, 21
 d Lu 23:22, 23
 Ac 3:13
 e Da 9:26
 Ac 5:27, 28
 1Th 2:14, 15
 f Lu 18:33
 Joh 19:1
 g Mr 15:15
 Lu 23:25

24 Seeing that it did no good but, rather, an uproar was arising, Pilate took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying: “I am innocent of the blood of this man. * You yourselves must see to it.”[#] **25** At that all the people said in answer: “Let his blood come upon us and upon our children.”^e **26** Then he released Bar·ab·bas to them, but he had Jesus whipped^f and handed him over to be executed on the stake.^g

FOOTNOTES

27:22 *Or “Execute him on the stake!”
27:24 *Or “innocent of this blood.”
 #Or “This is your responsibility.”

STUDY NOTES

27:19 judgment seat: Usually a raised outdoor platform from which seated officials could address crowds and announce their judicial decisions.

a dream: Evidently of divine origin. Matthew is the only Gospel writer to include this incident in the inspired account.

27:24 washed his hands: A symbolic gesture used to claim innocence and freedom from responsibility in a matter. This Jewish custom is mentioned at De 21:6, 7 and Ps 26:6.

27:25 Let his blood come upon us and upon our children: That is, “We and our descendants take responsibility for his death.”

27:26 whipped: The Romans flogged victims using a terrible instrument known in Latin as a *flagellum*, from which the Greek verb used here (*phra-gel-lo’o*, “to whip”) is derived. This instrument consisted of a

handle into which several cords or knotted leather thongs were fixed. Sometimes the thongs were weighted with jagged pieces of bone or metal to make the blows more painful. Such floggings caused deep contusions, tore the flesh to ribbons, and could even lead to death.

27:27 governor’s residence: The Greek term *prai-to’ri-on* (derived from the Latin *praetorium*) designates the official residence of the Roman governors. In Jerusalem, the residence was probably the palace built by Herod the Great, situated in the NW corner of the upper city, that is, of the southern part of Jerusalem. (See  App. B12 for the location.) Pilate stayed in Jerusalem only on certain occasions, such as festivals, since there was a potential for unrest. His usual residence was in Caesarea.

27:28 scarlet cloak: The type of cloak or robe worn by kings, magistrates, or military officers. Mr 15:17 and Joh 19:2 say that it was a purple garment, but in ancient times, “purple” was used to describe any color that had a mixture of red and blue. Also, angle, light reflection, and background could have influenced the observer’s perception of the exact color. This

variation in describing the color shows that the Gospel writers did not simply copy one another’s accounts.

27:29 crown . . . reed: Along with the scarlet cloak (mentioned at Mt 27:28), Jesus was given mock attributes of royalty—thorns for a crown and a reed for a scepter.

kneeling before him: Kneeling, normally a gesture of respect toward a superior, was another way that the soldiers mocked Jesus.—See study note on Mt 17:14.

Greetings: Or “Hail.” Lit., “Be rejoicing.” They hailed him as they would have hailed Caesar, evidently to ridicule the claim that he was a king.

27:32 Cyrene: A city located near the North African coast, SSW of the island of Crete.—See  App. B13.

compelled into service: See study note on Mt 5:41.

torture stake: Or “execution stake.”—See  Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake”; see also study notes on Mt 10:38 and 16:24, where the term is used in a figurative sense.

CHAP. 27

Soldiers Mock Jesus

- a Mr 15:16-20
 b Joh 19:2, 3
 c Isa 50:6
 Mt 26:67
 d Isa 53:7
 Mt 20:18, 19
 e Mr 15:21
 Lu 23:26
 f Mr 15:22-24
 Lu 23:33
 Joh 19:17
 g Ps 69:21
 h Ps 22:18
 Mr 15:24
 Lu 23:34
 Joh 19:23, 24
 i Mr 15:26
 Lu 23:38
 Joh 19:19

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's residence and gathered the whole body of troops together around him.^a **28** And disrobing him, they draped him with a scarlet cloak,^b **29** and they braided a crown out of thorns and put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying: "Greetings, you King of the Jews!" **30** And they spat on him^c and took the reed and began hitting him on his head. **31** Finally, after they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak and put his outer garments on him and led him off to be nailed to the stake.^d

Nailed to a Stake at Golgotha

32 As they were going out, they found a man of Cy-re'ne named Simon. This man they compelled into service to carry* his torture stake.^e **33** And when they came to a place called *Gol'go'tha*, that is, Skull Place,^f **34** they gave him wine mixed with gall to drink;^g but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. **35** When they had nailed him to the stake, they distributed his outer garments by casting lots,^h **36** and they sat there keeping watch over him. **37** They also posted above his head the charge against him, in writing: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews."ⁱ

FOOTNOTES

27:32 *Or "lift up."

STUDY NOTES

27:33 Golgotha: From a Hebrew word meaning "skull." (See Joh 19:17; compare Jg 9:53, where the Hebrew word *gul-go'leth* is rendered "skull.") In Jesus' day, the site was outside the city walls of Jerusalem. However, the location remains uncertain. (See  App. B12.) The Bible record does not state that Golgotha was on a hill, though it does mention that some observed the execution from a distance.—Mr 15:40; Lu 23:49.

Skull Place: See study note on Mr 15:22.

27:34 gall: The Greek word *kho-le'* here refers to a bitter liquid made from plants or a bitter substance in general. Showing that this event was a fulfillment of prophecy, Matthew quotes Ps 69:21, where the

Septuagint uses this Greek word to render the Hebrew word for "poison." Apparently, women of Jerusalem had prepared the mixture of wine and gall to dull the pain of those being executed, and the Romans did not object to its use. The parallel account at Mr 15:23 says that the wine was "drugged with myrrh," so the drink evidently contained both myrrh and bitter gall.

he refused to drink it: Jesus evidently wanted to have full possession of all his faculties during this test of his faith.

27:35 they distributed his outer garments: The account at Joh 19:23, 24 adds complementary details not mentioned by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Combining the four Gospel accounts would give the following picture: Roman soldiers apparently cast lots over both the outer garment and the inner one; the soldiers divided the outer garments "into four parts, one for each soldier"; they

did not want to divide the inner garment, so they cast lots over it; and the casting of lots for the Messiah's apparel fulfilled Ps 22:18. It was evidently customary for the executioners to keep their victims' clothes, so criminals were stripped of their clothing and possessions before being executed, making the ordeal all the more humiliating.

by casting lots: See  Glossary, "Lots."

See  Gallery, image 84, Nail in a Heel Bone.

38 Then two robbers were put on stakes alongside him, one on his right and one on his left.^a **39** And those passing by spoke abusively of him,^b shaking their heads^c **40** and saying: “You who would throw down the temple and build it in three days,^d save yourself! If you are a son of God, come down off the torture stake!”^e **41** In the same way also, the chief priests with the scribes and the elders began mocking him, saying:^f **42** “Others he saved; himself he cannot save! He is King of Israel;^g let him now come down off the torture stake, and we will believe in him. **43** He has put his trust in God; let Him now rescue him if He wants him,^h for he said, ‘I am God’s Son.’”ⁱ **44** In the same way, even the robbers who were on stakes alongside him were reproaching him.^j

CHAP. 27

- a Isa 53:12
Mr 15:27
Lu 23:33
Joh 19:18
- b Lu 18:32
Heb 12:3
- c Ps 22:7
Ps 109:25
- d Mt 26:60, 61
Joh 2:19
- e Mr 15:29-32
- f Lu 23:35
- g Joh 1:49
Joh 12:13
- h Ps 22:8
- i Mr 14:62
Joh 5:18
Joh 10:36
- j Lu 23:39
- k Mr 15:33
Lu 23:44

Death of Jesus

45 From the sixth hour on, a darkness fell over all the land* until the ninth hour.^k **46** About the ninth hour, Jesus called out with a loud voice, saying: “*E’li, E’li, la’ma sa-bach-tha’ni?*”

FOOTNOTES

27:45 *Lit., “earth.”

STUDY NOTES

27:38 robbers: Or “bandits.” The Greek word *lei-stes* may include robbing by using violence and at times could refer to revolutionaries. The same word is used of Barabbas (Joh 18:40), who according to Lu 23:19 was in prison for “sedition” and “murder.” The parallel account at Lu 23:32, 33, 39 describes the men as “criminals” from a Greek word (*ka-kour’gos*), which literally means “one who engages in doing bad or evil.”

27:39 shaking their heads: Generally accompanied by words, this gesture expressed derision, contempt, or mockery. The passersby inadvertently fulfilled the prophecy recorded at Ps 22:7.

27:40, 42 torture stake: Or “execution stake.”—See study note on Mt 27:32 and  Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

27:45 the sixth hour: That is, about 12:00 noon.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

a darkness: See study note on Mr 15:33.

the ninth hour: That is, about 3:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

27:46 Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?:

Though some consider these words to be Aramaic, they were likely contemporary Hebrew, somewhat influenced by Aramaic. The Greek transliteration of these words recorded by Matthew and Mark does not allow for a positive identification of the original language.

My God, my God: In calling out to his heavenly Father, acknowledging him as his God, Jesus fulfilled Ps 22:1. Jesus’ cry of agony may have brought to his listeners’ minds the many things prophesied about him in the rest of Ps 22—that he would be mocked, derided, and attacked in his hands and feet and that his garments would be divided by lot.—Ps 22:6-8, 16, 18.

27:47 Elijah: From the Hebrew name meaning “My God Is Jehovah.”

27:48 sour wine: Or “wine vinegar.” Likely referring to a thin, tart, or sour wine known in Latin as *acetum* (vinegar) or as *posca* when diluted with water. This was a cheap drink that poor people, including Roman soldiers, commonly drank to quench their thirst. The Greek word *o’xos*

is also used at Ps 69:21 in the *Septuagint*, where it was prophesied that Messiah would be given “vinegar” to drink.

reed: Or “stick; staff.” In John’s account, it is called “a hyssop stalk.”—Joh 19:29; see  Glossary, “Hyssop.”

27:49 to save him: Some ancient manuscripts add: “Another man took a spear and pierced his side, and blood and water came out.” Other important manuscripts do not contain those words. A similar statement is found at Joh 19:34, but according to Joh 19:33, Jesus was already dead when this occurred. Most authorities, including the editors of the Nestle-Aland and United Bible Society Greek texts, believe that the words of John’s account were later added to Matthew’s account by copyists. Even Westcott and Hort, who included these words in their Greek text in double brackets, stated that the sentence “must lie under a strong presumption of having been introduced by scribes.” Considering that there are different manuscript readings for Matthew’s account and that there is no uncertainty regarding the reading in John’s Gospel, the account at Joh 19:33, 34 evidently presents the events in correct order, namely, that Jesus was already

CHAP. 27

- a Ps 22:1
Isa 53:10
Mr 15:34
- b Mr 15:35, 36
- c Ps 69:21
Lu 23:36
Joh 19:29
- d Mr 15:37
Lu 23:46
Joh 19:30
- e Ex 26:31-33
Heb 9:3
- f Heb 10:19, 20
- g Mr 15:38
Lu 23:45

that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”^a **47** At hearing this, some of those standing there began to say: “This man is calling E-li’jah.”^b **48** And immediately one of them ran and took a sponge and soaked it in sour wine and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink.^c **49** But the rest of them said: “Let him be! Let us see whether E-li’jah comes to save him.” **50** Again Jesus called out with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.^d

51 And look! the curtain of the sanctuary^e was torn in two,^f from top to bottom,^g and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split. **52** And the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the holy ones who had fallen asleep* were raised up **53** (and people coming out from among the tombs after his being raised up entered into the holy city), and they became visible to many

FOOTNOTES

27:52 *Or “had fallen asleep in death; had died.”

STUDY NOTES

dead when the Roman soldier pierced him with the spear. Therefore, these words are omitted in this translation at Mr 27:49.

27:50 yielded up his spirit: Or “expired; ceased to breathe.” The term “spirit” (Greek, *pneúma*) may here be understood to refer to “breath” or “life force,” which is supported by the use of the Greek verb *ek-pne'o* (lit., “to breathe out”) in the parallel account at Mr 15:37 (where it is rendered “expired” or, as in the study note, “breathed his last”). Some suggest that the use of the Greek term rendered “yielded up” means that Jesus voluntarily stopped struggling to stay alive, since all things had been accomplished. (Joh 19:30) He willingly “poured out his life even to death.”—Isa 53:12; Joh 10:11.

27:51 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

curtain: This beautifully ornamented drape separated the Most Holy from the Holy in the temple. Jewish tradition indicates that this heavy curtain was some 18 m (60 ft) long, 9 m (30 ft) wide, and 7.4 cm (2.9 in.) thick. By tearing the curtain in two, Jehovah not only manifests his wrath against his Son’s killers but also signifies that entry into heaven it-

self is now possible.—Heb 10:19, 20; see  Glossary.

sanctuary: The Greek word *na-os'* here refers to the central edifice with its Holy and Most Holy compartments.

27:52 tombs: Or “memorial tombs.”—See  Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

were raised up: The Greek verb *e-gei'ro*, meaning “to raise up,” can refer to a resurrection, but it is often used in other contexts. For example, it can mean to “lift out” of a pit or to “get up” from the ground. (Mt 12:11; 17:7; Lu 1:69) Matthew does not say that “the holy ones” are “raised up.” He says that their “bodies” are. Evidently, the earthquake was so powerful that the tombs were broken open and corpses were thrown out of them.

See  Gallery, image 85, Tomb Chamber.

27:53 people coming out: Or “they who came out.” The Greek verb indicates a plural masculine subject referring to people, not to the bodies (neuter in Greek) mentioned in verse 52. This evidently refers to passersby, who saw the dead bodies exposed by the earthquake (vs. 51) and who entered the city and reported what they had seen.

after his being raised up: That is, Jesus’ resurrection. The information within parentheses refers to events taking place at a later time.

holy city: That is, Jerusalem.—See study note on Mt 4:5.

they became visible: Evidently referring to the dead bodies mentioned in verse 52.—See study note on Mt 27:52.

people. **54** But when the army officer and those with him keeping watch over Jesus saw the earthquake and the things happening, they grew very much afraid and said: “Certainly this was God’s Son.”*^a

55 And many women were there watching from a distance, who had accompanied Jesus from Gal’i-lee to minister to him;^b **56** among them were Mary Mag’da-lene and Mary the mother of James and Jo’ses and the mother of the sons of Zeb’e-dee.^c

Burial of Jesus

57 Now as it was late in the afternoon, a rich man of Ar-i-ma-the’a came, named Joseph, who had also become a disciple of Jesus.^d **58** This man approached Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.^e Then Pilate commanded that it be given to him.^f **59** Joseph took the body, wrapped it up in clean, fine linen,^g **60** and laid it in his new tomb,^h which he had quarried in the rock. And after rolling a big stone to the entrance of the tomb, he left. **61** But Mary Mag’da-lene and the other Mary continued there, sitting before the grave.ⁱ

Tomb Securely Guarded

62 The next day, which was after the Preparation,^j the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together before Pilate, **63** saying: “Sir, we recall what that impostor said while he was

CHAP. 27

- a Mr 15:39
Lu 23:47
- b Mr 15:40, 41
Lu 8:2, 3
- c Mt 4:21
Mt 20:20
Joh 19:25
- d Mr 15:42, 43
Lu 23:50-53
- e De 21:22, 23
- f Mr 15:45-47
Joh 19:38
- g Joh 19:40, 41
- h Isa 53:9
- i Lu 23:55
- j Mr 15:42
Lu 23:54
Joh 19:14

FOOTNOTES

27:54 *Or possibly, “a son of God; a son of a god.”

STUDY NOTES

27:54 army officer: Or “centurion,” that is, one in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army. This high-ranking officer may have been at Jesus’ trial before Pilate and may have heard the Jews say that Jesus claimed to be God’s Son.—Mt 27:27; Joh 19:7.

27:56 Mary Magdalene: Her distinguishing name Magdalene (meaning “Of, or Belonging to, Magdala”) likely stems from the town of Magdala on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee about halfway between Capernaum and Tiberias. It has been suggested that Magdala was Mary’s hometown or place of residence.—See study notes on Mt 15:39; Lu 8:2.

James: Also called “James the Less.”—Mr 15:40.

Joses: Some ancient manuscripts read “Joseph” instead of “Joses.” In the parallel account at Mr 15:40, most ancient manuscripts read “Joses.”

mother of the sons of Zebedee: That is, the mother of the apostles James and John.—See study notes on Mt 4:21; 20:20.

27:57 Arimathea: The name of this city comes from a Hebrew word meaning “height.” At Lu 23:51, it is called “a city of the Judeans.”—See [☞](#) App. B10.

Joseph: The individuality of the Gospel writers is evident in the varying details they provide about Joseph. Tax collector Matthew notes that he is rich; Mark, writing for the Romans, says that he was “a reputable member of the Council” who was waiting for God’s Kingdom; Luke,

the sympathetic physician, says that he “was a good and righteous man” who did not vote in support of the Council’s action against Jesus; John alone reports that he was “a secret [disciple] because of his fear of the Jews.”—Mr 15:43-46; Lu 23:50-53; Joh 19:38-42.

27:60 tomb: Or “memorial tomb.” A vault, or chamber, cut into the soft limestone rock, rather than a natural cave. Such tombs often contained benchlike shelves or niches where bodies could be laid.—See [📖](#) Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

a big stone: Apparently a circular stone, since this verse says that it was rolled into place and Mr 16:4 says that it “had been rolled away” when Jesus was resurrected. It might have weighed a ton or more.

CHAP. 27

- a Mt 12:40
Joh 2:19
b Mt 28:12, 13

CHAP. 28

- c Mt 27:56, 61
d Mr 16:1
Lu 24:1
Lu 24:10
Joh 20:1
e Mr 16:4, 5
Lu 24:2, 4
f Ac 1:10

still alive, ‘After three days I am to be raised up.’^a **64** Therefore, command that the grave be made secure until the third day, so that his disciples may not come and steal him^b and say to the people, ‘He was raised up from the dead!’ Then this last deception will be worse than the first.” **65** Pilate said to them: “You may have a guard. Go make it as secure as you know how.” **66** So they went and made the grave secure by sealing the stone and posting a guard.

Jesus Is Resurrected

28 After the Sabbath, when it was growing light on the first day of the week, Mary Mag’da-lene and the other Mary^c came to view the grave.^d

2 And look! a great earthquake had taken place, for Jehovah’s angel had descended from heaven and had come and rolled away the stone, and he was sitting on it.^e **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow.^f **4** Yes, out of their fear of him, the watchmen trembled and became as dead men.

STUDY NOTES

27:61 the other Mary: That is, “Mary the mother of James and Joses,” mentioned at Mt 27:56. She is also mentioned at Mt 28:1; Mr 15:40, 47; 16:1; Lu 24:10; Joh 19:25.—See study notes on Mr 3:18; Joh 19:25.

27:62 next day: That is, Nisan 15. The day after Nisan 14 was always observed as a Sabbath, or holy day of rest, no matter what day of the week it fell on. Additionally, in 33 C.E., Nisan 15 fell on the regular weekly Sabbath, making the day a “great,” or double, Sabbath.—Joh 19:31; see  App. B12.

Preparation: A name applied to the day preceding the weekly Sabbath. During this day, the Jews got ready for the Sabbath by preparing extra meals and finishing any work that could not wait until after the Sabbath. In this case, the day of Preparation fell on Nisan 14.—Mr 15:42; see  Glossary.

27:63 three days: This expression can mean parts of three days. This is evident from the request that the tomb “be made secure *until the third day*,” and not until

the fourth.—Mt 27:64; see study note on Mt 12:40.

27:64 Then this last deception will be worse than the first: Evidently meaning that this supposed “deception,” namely, Jesus’ resurrection, would be worse than the first one, his assertion that he was the Messiah. Jesus’ adversaries apparently knew that if Jesus were to be resurrected, his claim to be the Messiah would be proved true.

27:65 a guard: Pilate evidently provided a group of Roman soldiers. (Mt 28:4, 11) Had the guards been members of the Jewish temple police, the Jews would not have had to consult Pilate. Likewise, the priests promised to set matters right with the governor if he heard of the disappearance of Jesus’ body.—Mt 28:14.

28:1 Sabbath: Lit., “Sabbaths.” In this verse, the plural form of the Greek word *sab’ba-ton* occurs twice. In the first instance, it refers to a single Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week, and it is rendered “the Sabbath.” In the second instance, where it refers to a period of seven days, it is rendered **of the week**. The Sabbath day (Nisan 15) ended at sun-

set. Although some have understood Matthew’s account to refer to a time at dusk “after the Sabbath,” the other Gospel accounts clearly show that the women **came to view the grave** “early” in the morning on Nisan 16, “when the sun had risen.”—Mr 16:1, 2; Lu 24:1; Joh 20:1; see also  Glossary and  App. B12.

the first day of the week: That is, Nisan 16. For the Jews, the day immediately after the Sabbath was the first day of the week.

the other Mary: See study note on Mt 27:61.

28:2 Jehovah’s angel: See study note on Mt 1:20 and  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Mt 28:2.

5 But the angel said to the women: “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was executed on the stake.^a 6 He is not here, for he was raised up, just as he said.^b Come, see the place where he was lying. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he was raised up from the dead, for look! he is going ahead of you into Gal’i-lee.^c You will see him there. Look! I have told you.”^d

8 So, quickly leaving the memorial tomb, with fear and great joy, they ran to report to his disciples.^e 9 And look! Jesus met them and said: “Good day!” They approached and took hold of his feet and did obeisance to him. 10 Then Jesus said to them: “Have no fear! Go, report to my brothers so that they may go to Gal’i-lee, and there they will see me.”

Soldiers Bribe to Lie

11 While they were on their way, some of the guards^f went into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. 12 And after these had gathered with the elders and had consulted together, they gave a considerable

CHAP. 28

- a Mr 16:6
- b Mt 16:21
Mt 17:22, 23
1Co 15:3, 4
- c Mt 26:32
Mt 28:16
Mr 14:28
- d Mr 16:7
- e Mr 16:8
Lu 24:9
- f Mt 27:65, 66

STUDY NOTES

28:7 tell his disciples that he was raised up: These women are not only the first disciples to be told of Jesus’ resurrection but also the ones instructed to inform the other disciples. (Mt 28:2, 5, 7) According to unscriptural Jewish tradition, a woman’s testimony was not permissible in a court of law. By contrast, Jehovah’s angel dignifies the women by giving them this joyful assignment.

28:7, 20 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

28:8 See  Gallery, image 85, Tomb Chamber.

28:9 did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; prostrated themselves to him; paid him homage.”—See study notes on Mt 8:2; 14:33; 15:25.

28:10 my brothers: Here Jesus calls his disciples “brothers” because of the spiritual relationship they enjoy.—See Mt 28:16; compare Mt 25:40; Joh 20:17; Heb 2:10-12.

28:12 elders: See study note on Mt 16:21.

28:14 this: That is, their lie about having been asleep. Roman soldiers could be put to death if they fell asleep at their post.

the governor’s: The governor here referred to is Pontius Pilate.

28:16 to meet: Apparently more than 500 attend this meeting in Galilee.—1Co 15:6.

28:17 some doubted: In the light of 1Co 15:6, it is likely that those who doubted were not among the apostles; rather, they were disciples in Galilee to whom Jesus had not yet appeared.

28:19 make disciples: Or “make learners.” The Greek verb *ma-the-teu’o* has the basic meaning “to teach” with the intent of making pupils or disciples. At Mt 13:52, it is rendered “is taught,” and at Mt 27:57, it is rendered “had . . . become a disciple.” At Ac 14:21, it is used to describe how Paul and Barnabas were “making quite a few disciples” in Derbe. The verbs “baptizing” and “teaching” used in this context show what is involved in the command to “make disciples.”—For a discussion of the related Greek noun *ma-the-tes’*, see study note on Mt 5:1.

people of all the nations: A literal translation reads “all nations,” but the context indicates that this term refers to individuals out of all nations, since the Greek pronoun “them” in the expression **baptizing them** is in the masculine gender and refers to people, not to “nations,” which is neuter in Greek. This command to reach “people of all the nations” was new. Prior to Jesus’ ministry, the Scriptures indicate that Gentiles were welcomed to Israel if they came to serve Jehovah. (1Ki 8:41-43) With this command, however, Jesus commissions his disciples to extend the preaching work to people other than natural Jews, emphasizing the worldwide scope of the Christian disciple-making work.—Mt 10:1, 5-7; Re 7:9; see study note on Mt 24:14.

in the name of: The Greek term for “name” (*o’no-ma*) can refer to more than a personal name. In this context, it involves recognition of authority and position of the Father and the Son as well as the role of the holy spirit. Such recognition results in a new relationship with God.—Compare study note on Mt 10:41.

CHAP. 28

- a Mt 27:64
 b Mt 26:32
 c 1Co 15:6
 d Eph 1:20, 21
 Php 2:9, 10
 e Ac 1:8
 Ro 10:18
 Ro 11:13
 Re 14:6
 f Ac 2:38
 Ac 8:12
 g Ac 20:20
 1Co 11:23
 2Pe 3:1, 2
 1Jo 3:23
 h Mt 13:39
 Mt 13:49
 Mt 24:3

number of silver pieces to the soldiers **13** and said: “Say, ‘His disciples came in the night and stole him while we were sleeping.’”^a **14** And if this gets to the governor’s ears, we will explain the matter to* him and you will not need to worry.” **15** So they took the silver pieces and did as they were instructed, and this story has been spread abroad among the Jews up to this very day.

Commission to Make Disciples

16 However, the 11 disciples went to Gal’i-lee^b to the mountain where Jesus had arranged for them to meet.^c **17** When they saw him, they did obeisance, but some doubted. **18** Jesus approached and spoke to them, saying: “All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth.”^d **19** Go, therefore, and make disciples of people of all the nations,^e baptizing them^f in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.^g And look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things.”^h

FOOTNOTES

28:14 *Lit., “persuade.”

STUDY NOTES

28:19 the Father . . . the Son . . .

the holy spirit: Recognition of the Father, Jehovah God, is natural, since he is our Creator and Life-Giver. (Ps 36:7, 9; Re 4:11) However, the Bible also shows that no human can gain salvation without recognizing the role of the Son in God’s purpose. (Joh 14:6; Ac 4:12) It is also vital to recognize the role of God’s holy spirit because, among other things, God uses his active force to give life (Job 33:4), to inspire his message to humans (2Pe 1:21), and to empower them to do his will (Ro 15:19). Although some believe that this enumeration supports the Trinity doctrine, the Bible never indicates that the three are equal in eternity, power, and position. That they are mentioned together in the same verse does not prove that they share divinity, eternity, and equality. —Mr 13:32; Col 1:15; 1Ti 5:21.

the holy spirit: Or “the holy active force.” The term “spirit” (neuter in Greek) refers to an impersonal force in action, emanating from God.—See  Glossary, “Holy spirit”; “Spirit.”

28:20 teaching them: The Greek word rendered “to teach” involves instruction, explanation, showing things by argument, and offering proofs. (See study notes on Mt 3:1; 4:23.) Teaching them to **observe all the things** that Jesus had commanded would be an ongoing process, which would include teaching what he taught, applying his teaching, and following his example.—Joh 13:17; Eph 4:21; 1Pe 2:21.

conclusion: See study note on Mt 24:3 and  Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things.”

system of things: Or “age.”—See  Glossary, “System(s) of things.”

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO

MARK



- This is the shortest of the Gospel accounts. It is fast-moving. The Greek word *eu-thys*, which can be rendered “immediately,” “at once,” “without delay,” occurs over 40 times. Mark’s Gospel account can be read through entirely in just one or two hours, giving the reader a dynamic view of Jesus’ life and ministry.
- According to ancient tradition, the apostle Peter was the source of many of the eyewitness accounts that Mark recorded. (Mr 13:3) This would agree with the fact that Mark was associated with Peter in Babylon. (1Pe 5:13)
- Mark frequently records how Jesus felt and reacted. (Mr 3:5; 7:34; 8:12; 9:36; 10:13-16, 21)
- Mark emphasizes the activities of the Christ rather than Jesus’ sermons and teachings. Whereas Matthew portrayed Jesus as the promised Messiah and King, Mark shows us Jesus as a man of action—the miracle-working Son of God, the conquering Savior. Mark refers to at least 19 miracles. In contrast, he records only a few of Jesus’ illustrations, one of which is exclusive to his Gospel. (Mr 4:26-29)
- This Gospel may have been composed during the years 60-65 C.E. when Mark visited Paul in Rome.
- While Matthew wrote his Gospel for the Jews, Mark evidently wrote primarily for the Romans. He explains Jewish customs and teachings that would be unfamiliar to non-Jewish readers. (Mr 2:18; 7:3, 4; 14:12; 15:42) He translates Hebrew and Aramaic expressions. (Mr 3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 14:36; 15:22, 34) He gives extra information about geographic locations and seasons that would not be needed by Jewish readers. (Mr 1:13; 11:13; 13:3) Using Roman money, he explains the value of coins commonly used by the Jews. (See study note on Mr 12:42.) He uses more Latin expressions and idioms than the other Gospel writers do. Some examples of this are the terms: *speculator* (bodyguard), *praetorium* (governor’s residence), and *centurio* (army officer). (Mr 6:27; 15:16, 39)

Writer: Mark

Place Written: Rome

Writing Completed: c. 60-65 C.E.

Time Covered: 29-33 C.E.

STUDY NOTES

Mark: From the Latin name *Marcus*. Mark was the Roman surname of the “John” mentioned at Ac 12:12. His mother was Mary, an early disciple who lived in Jerusalem. John Mark was “the cousin of Barnabas” (Col 4:10), with whom he traveled. Mark also traveled with Paul and other early Christian missionaries. (Ac 12:25; 13:5, 13; 2Ti 4:11) Although the

Gospel nowhere specifies who wrote it, writers of the second and third centuries C.E. ascribe this Gospel to Mark.

According to Mark: None of the Gospel writers identify themselves as such in their accounts, and titles are evidently not part of the original text. In some manuscripts of Mark’s Gospel, the title appears as *Eu-ag-ge’li-on Ka-ta’ Mar’kon* (“Good News [or, “Gospel”] According to Mark”), whereas in others a shorter title, *Ka-ta’ Mar’kon* (“According to Mark”), is used. It is not clear exactly when such titles were added or began to be used. Some suggest the second century C.E., since examples of the longer title have

been found in Gospel manuscripts that have been dated to the end of the second century or early third century. According to some scholars, the opening words of Mark’s book (“The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God”) may have been the reason why the term “gospel” (lit., “good news”) came to be used to describe these accounts. The use of such titles along with the name of the writer may have come about for practical reasons, providing a clear means of identification of the books.

See  Gallery, map 2, Gospel of Mark—Some Major Events.

OVERVIEW OF MARK

1:1-13

Events Leading Up to Jesus' Ministry

Ministry of John the Baptizer
(1:1-8)

Baptism of Jesus (1:9-11)

Jesus tempted by Satan (1:12, 13)

1:14-3:35

Early Part of Jesus' Public Ministry, Mainly Around the Sea of Galilee

Jesus begins preaching in Galilee
(1:14, 15)

First four disciples called to be fishers of men (1:16-20)

Jesus teaches in the Capernaum synagogue; expels an unclean spirit (1:21-28)

Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law and many others in Capernaum (1:29-34)

Jesus praying in an isolated place (1:35-39)

A leper healed (1:40-45)

Jesus heals a paralytic in Capernaum (2:1-12)

Jesus calls Levi to be his follower (2:13-17)

Question about fasting (2:18-22)

Jesus, 'Lord of the Sabbath' (2:23-28)

Man with a withered hand healed on the Sabbath (3:1-6)

Great multitude on the shore; many are healed (3:7-12)

The 12 apostles chosen (3:13-19)

Blasphemy against holy spirit (3:20-30)

Jesus' mother and brothers (3:31-35)

4:1-34

Jesus Teaches by Means of Illustrations

From a boat, Jesus teaches large crowds (4:1, 2)

Illustration of the sower and four types of soil (4:3-9)

Why Jesus used illustrations (4:10-13)

Illustration of the sower explained (4:14-20)

A lamp not to be put under a basket (4:21-23)

"The measure that you are measuring out" (4:24, 25)

Illustration of the sower who sleeps (4:26-29)

Illustration of the mustard grain (4:30-32)

Jesus' use of illustrations (4:33, 34)

4:35-5:43

Jesus Performs Various Miracles On and Around the Sea of Galilee

Jesus calms a violent windstorm (4:35-41)

Jesus heals a demonized man; allows demons to enter swine (5:1-20)

Jairus' daughter resurrected; a woman touches Jesus' outer garments (5:21-43)

6:1-9:50

Jesus Expands His Ministry in Galilee and Takes It Into Regions to the North and East

Jesus rejected in his hometown (6:1-6)

The Twelve instructed for the ministry and sent out (6:7-13)

Death of John the Baptizer (6:14-29)

Jesus feeds 5,000 men (6:30-44)

Jesus walks on water (6:45-52)

Healings in Gennesaret (6:53-56)

Human traditions exposed (7:1-13)

Defilement comes from the heart (7:14-23)

Jesus heals Syrophenician woman's daughter (7:24-30)

Jesus heals a deaf man in the Decapolis (7:31-37)

Jesus feeds about 4,000 men (8:1-10)

Pharisees ask for a sign from heaven (8:11-13)

Jesus warns against leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod (8:14-21)

Blind man healed in Bethsaida (8:22-26)

On the way to Caesarea Philippi, Peter identifies Jesus as the Christ (8:27-30)

Jesus foretells his death and resurrection (8:31-33)

Requirements of true discipleship (8:34-9:1)

Jesus' transfiguration (9:2-8)

The coming of Elijah (9:9-13)

Jesus heals a demon-possessed boy (9:14-29)
 Jesus foretells his death and resurrection a second time (9:30-32)
 Disciples argue about who is greater (9:33-37)
 “Whoever is not against us is for us” (9:38-41)
 Stumbling blocks (9:42-48)
 “Have salt in yourselves” (9:49, 50)

10:1-52

Jesus' Ministry in Perea and the Vicinity of Jericho

Jesus teaches about marriage and divorce (10:1-12)
 Jesus blesses young children (10:13-16)
 A rich man's question (10:17-27)
 Sacrifices for the Kingdom will be rewarded (10:28-31)
 Jesus foretells his death and resurrection a third time (10:32-34)
 James and John request positions in the Kingdom (10:35-45)
 Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus near Jericho (10:46-52)

11:1-14:16

Final Days of Jesus' Public Ministry in Jerusalem

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (11:1-11)
 Jesus curses a fig tree on his way to Jerusalem (11:12-14)

Jesus cleanses the temple (11:15-18)
 Lesson from the withered fig tree (11:19-25)
 Jesus' authority challenged (11:27-33)
 Illustration of the murderous vineyard cultivators (12:1-12)
 God and Caesar (12:13-17)
 Question about the resurrection (12:18-27)
 Two greatest commandments (12:28-34)
 Is the Christ the son of David? (12:35-37a)
 Warning against the scribes (12:37b-40)
 Poor widow's two coins (12:41-44)
 Question about “the sign when all these things” will “come to a conclusion” (13:1-4)
 Composite sign and an unprecedented tribulation (13:5-20)
 Danger of being misled by false Christs (13:21-23)
 Coming of the Son of man (13:24-27)
 Illustration of the fig tree (13:28, 29)
 This generation will not pass away (13:30, 31)
 Day and hour unknown by man and angels (13:32)
 Keep on the watch (13:33-37)
 Priests plot to kill Jesus (14:1, 2)
 Woman pours perfumed oil on Jesus (14:3-9)

Judas arranges to betray Jesus (14:10, 11)
 Preparations made for the last Passover (14:12-16)

14:17-15:41

Jesus' Last Nisan 14 on Earth

‘Woe to the one who betrays the Son of man!’ (14:17-21)
 Jesus institutes the Lord's Evening Meal (14:22-26)
 Peter's denial foretold (14:27-31)
 Jesus prays in Gethsemane (14:32-42)
 Jesus is arrested, and the disciples flee (14:43-52)
 Trial before the Sanhedrin (14:53-65)
 Peter denies Jesus three times and weeps (14:66-72)
 Jesus stands before Pilate (15:1-15)
 Soldiers mock Jesus (15:16-20)
 Jesus nailed to stake at Golgotha (15:21-32)
 Death of Jesus (15:33-41)

15:42-16:8

Jesus' Burial and Resurrection

Joseph of Arimathea and the burial of Jesus (15:42-47)
 Women at the empty tomb (16:1-8)

ACCORDING TO MARK

John the Baptizer Preaches

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God: **2** Just as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: “(Look! I am sending my messenger ahead of you,* who will prepare your way.)^a **3** A voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of Jehovah! Make his roads straight.’”^b **4** John the Baptizer was in the wilderness, preaching baptism in symbol of repentance for forgiveness of sins.^c **5** And all the territory of Ju-de’a and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, openly confessing their sins.^d **6** Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist,^e and he ate

CHAP. 1

- a Mal 3:1
Mt 3:1, 3
Mt 11:10
Lu 1:17
Lu 3:4-6
Lu 7:27
- b Isa 40:3
Joh 1:23
- c Mt 3:1, 2
Lu 3:2, 3
Ac 13:24
Ac 19:4
- d Mt 3:5, 6
- e 2Ki 1:8

FOOTNOTES

1:2 *Lit., “before your face.”

STUDY NOTES

1:1 the good news: See study notes on Mt 4:23; 24:14 and  Glossary.

the good news about Jesus Christ: This expression in Greek could also be translated “the good news of Jesus Christ,” that is, the good news that Jesus proclaimed.

the Son of God: Although some manuscripts omit “the Son of God,” the longer reading has strong manuscript support.

1:2 Isaiah the prophet: The quote that follows is a combination of prophecies from Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3. Both prophecies are applied to John the Baptizer. The parentheses serve to distinguish the Malachi quotation from the Isaiah quotation, which starts in verse 3 and highlights the content of John’s message. The Malachi quote focuses on John’s role as the messenger. The entire quote is attributed to Isaiah, perhaps because the quotation from Isaiah contains the part to be stressed.

Look!: The Greek word *i-dou’*, here rendered “look!,” is often used to focus attention on what follows, encouraging the reader to visualize the scene or to take note of a detail in a narrative. It is

also used to add emphasis or to introduce something new or surprising. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term occurs most frequently in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and in the book of Revelation. A corresponding expression is often used in the Hebrew Scriptures.

1:3 Jehovah: In this quote from Isa 40:3, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text. (See  App. C.) Mark applies this prophecy to what “John the Baptizer” (Mr 1:4) did in preparing the way for Jesus.—See study notes on Mt 3:3; Joh 1:23.

Make his roads straight: See study note on Mt 3:3.

1:4 the Baptizer: Or “the Immerser; the Dipper.” The Greek participle rendered “Baptizer” here and at Mr 6:14, 24 could also be rendered “one who baptizes.” The form is slightly different from the Greek noun *Ba-pti-stes’*, which is rendered “Baptist” at Mr 6:25; 8:28 and in Matthew and Luke. The two designations, “Baptizer” and “Baptist,” are used interchangeably at Mr 6:24, 25.—See study note on Mt 3:1.

the wilderness: That is, the wilderness of Judea.—See study note on Mt 3:1.

baptism in symbol of repentance: Lit., “baptism of repentance.” Baptism did not wash away sins. Rather, those baptized by John publicly repented over sins against

the Law, showing their determination to change their behavior. This repentant attitude helped lead them to the Christ. (Ga 3:24) John was thereby preparing a people to see “the salvation” that God had provided.—Lu 3:3-6; see study notes on Mt 3:2, 8, 11 and  Glossary, “Baptism; Baptize”; “Repentance.”

See  Gallery, image 9, The Wilderness.

1:5 all the territory . . . all the inhabitants: The use of “all” here is hyperbole; it emphasizes the intense interest that John’s preaching aroused. It does not mean that every single inhabitant of Judea or Jerusalem went out to see him.

baptized: Or “immersed; dipped.”—See study note on Mt 3:11 and  Glossary, “Baptism; Baptize.”

openly confessing their sins: See study note on Mt 3:6.

1:6 clothing of camel’s hair: See study note on Mt 3:4.

locusts: See study note on Mt 3:4.

wild honey: See study note on Mt 3:4.

See  Gallery, image 10, John the Baptizer’s Clothing and Appearance.

See  Gallery, image 11, Locusts.

See  Gallery, image 12, Wild Honey.

1:7 stronger: See study note on Mt 3:11.

sandals: See study note on Mt 3:11.

CHAP. 1

a Le 11:21, 22

b Mt 3:4

c Lu 3:16
Joh 1:26, 27
Ac 13:25d Joe 2:28
Mt 3:11
Ac 1:5
Ac 2:1, 4
Ac 11:16
1Co 12:13e Mt 3:13
Lu 3:21, 22f Isa 42:1
Mt 3:16
Joh 1:32-34

locusts^a and wild honey.^b **7** And he was preaching: “Someone stronger than I am is coming after me, the lace of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.^c **8** I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with holy spirit.”^d

Baptism of Jesus

9 In the course of those days, Jesus came from Naz'a-reth of Gal'i-lee and was baptized in the Jordan by John.^e **10** And immediately on coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens being parted and, like a dove, the spirit coming down upon him.^f **11** And a voice came out of the heavens: “You are my Son, the beloved; I have approved you.”^g

g Ps 2:7; Mt 3:17; Mt 17:5; Lu 3:22; Heb 1:5; Heb 5:5; 2Pe 1:17, 18.

STUDY NOTES

1:7 See  Gallery, image 15, Sandals.

1:8 baptized you: Or “immersed you.” —See study note on Mt 3:11 and  Glossary, “Baptism; Baptize.”

baptize you with holy spirit: Or “immerse you in holy active force.” Here John the Baptizer announces that Jesus would institute a new arrangement, baptism with holy spirit. Those baptized with God's spirit become his spirit-begotten sons, with prospects of living in heaven and ruling as kings over the earth.—Re 5:9, 10.

1:9 those days: According to Lu 3:1-3, John the Baptizer began his ministry “in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar,” that is, during the spring of 29 C.E. (See study note on Lu 3:1.) About six months later, in the fall of 29 C.E., Jesus came to John to be baptized.—See  App. A7.

See  Gallery, image 18, The Jordan River.

See  Gallery, image 87, View of the Valley of Jezreel.

1:10 immediately: The first of 11 occurrences of the Greek word *eu·thys'* in Mark chapter 1. (Mr 1:10, 12, 18, 20, 21, 23, 28, 29, 30, 42, 43) The Greek term is rendered “immediately; at once; without delay; as soon as,” according to context. Mark's frequent use of the term—over 40 times in his Gospel—adds a feeling of vividness and urgency to his account.

he: Evidently referring to Jesus. As shown at Joh 1:32, 33, John the Baptist also witnessed this, but Mark's account seems to be from Jesus' perspective.

the heavens: See study note on Mt 3:16.

the heavens being parted: God apparently caused Jesus to perceive heavenly matters and may at this point have allowed him to recall memories of his prehuman life. Jesus' own expressions after his baptism, particularly his intimate prayer on Passover night 33 C.E., show that he then knew of his prehuman existence. That prayer also shows that he recalled the things he heard his Father say and saw Him do and that he remembered the glory he had enjoyed in heaven. (Joh 6:46; 7:28, 29; 8:26, 28, 38; 14:2; 17:5) These memories may have been restored to Jesus at the time of his baptism and anointing.

like a dove: Doves had both a sacred use and a symbolic meaning. They were offered as sacrifices. (Mr 11:15; Joh 2:14-16) They symbolized innocence and purity. (Mt 10:16) A dove released by Noah brought an olive leaf back to the ark, indicating that the floodwaters were receding (Ge 8:11) and that a time of rest and peace was at hand (Ge 5:29). Thus, at Jesus' baptism, Jehovah may have used the dove to call attention to the role of Jesus as the Messiah, the pure and sinless Son of God who would sacrifice his life for mankind and lay the basis for a period of rest and peace during his rule as King.

The **coming down** of God's **spirit**, or active force, upon Jesus at his baptism may have looked like the fluttering of a dove as it nears its perch.

upon: Or “into,” that is, to enter into him.

1:11 a voice came out of the heavens: The first of three instances in the Gospel accounts where Jehovah is reported as speaking directly to humans.—See study notes on Mr 9:7; Joh 12:28.

You are my Son: As a spirit creature, Jesus was God's Son. (Joh 3:16) From the time of his birth as a human, Jesus was a “son of God” just as perfect Adam had been. (Lu 1:35; 3:38) However, it seems reasonable that God's words here go beyond a mere statement of Jesus' identity. By this declaration accompanied by the outpouring of holy spirit, God evidently indicated that the man Jesus was His spirit-begotten Son, “born again” with the hope of returning to life in heaven and anointed by spirit to be God's appointed King and High Priest.—Joh 3:3-6; 6:51; compare Lu 1:31-33; Heb 2:17; 5:1, 4-10; 7:1-3.

I have approved you: Or “I am well-pleased with you; I take great delight in you.” The same expression is used at Mt 12:18, which is a quotation from Isa 42:1 regarding the promised Messiah, or Christ. The outpouring of holy spirit and God's declaration concerning his Son were a clear identification of Jesus as the promised Messiah.—See study notes on Mt 3:17; 12:18.

Jesus Tempted by Satan

12 And immediately the spirit impelled him to go into the wilderness. **13** So he continued in the wilderness for 40 days, being tempted by Satan.^a He was with the wild beasts, but the angels were ministering to him.^b

Jesus Begins Preaching in Galilee

14 Now after John was arrested,^c Jesus went into Gal'i-lee,^d preaching the good news of God^e **15** and saying: "The appointed time has been fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent,^f and have faith in the good news."

First Disciples Called

16 While walking alongside the Sea of Gal'i-lee, he saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew^g casting their nets into the sea,^h for they were fishermen.ⁱ **17** So Jesus said to them: "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."^{*j} **18** And at once they abandoned their nets and followed him.^k **19** After going a little farther, he saw James the son of Zeb'e-dee and his brother John, while they were in their boat mending their nets,^l **20** and without delay he called them. So they left their father Zeb'e-dee in the boat with the hired men and went off after him. **21** And they went into Ca-per'na-um.

CHAP. 1

- a Mt 4:1-10
Lu 4:1-13
- b Mt 4:11
- c Mt 14:3-5
Lu 3:19, 20
Joh 4:3
- d Mt 4:12
- e Lu 4:14, 15
Lu 8:1
- f Mt 4:17
- g Mt 10:2
Joh 1:40
- h Lu 5:2-4
- i Mt 4:18
- j Mt 4:19, 20
- k Mt 19:27
- l Mt 4:21, 22
Lu 5:10, 11

FOOTNOTES

1:17 *Or "people."

STUDY NOTES

1:12 **the spirit impelled him to go:** Or "the active force moved him to go." The Greek word *pneuma* here refers to God's spirit, which can act as a driving force, moving and impelling a person to do things in accord with God's will.—Lu 4:1; see  Glossary, "Spirit."

See  Gallery, image 8, The Wilderness of Judea, West of the Jordan River.

1:13 **Satan:** See study note on Mt 4:10.

the wild beasts: In Jesus' day, there were many more wild animals in that region of the world than there are today. The wilderness was the habitat of boars, hyenas, leopards, lions, and wolves. Mark is the only Gospel writer to mention that there were wild beasts in this area. He evidently wrote primarily for non-Jewish readers,

including Romans and others who may not have been familiar with the geography of Israel.

See  Gallery, image 86, Wild Beasts of the Wilderness.

1:15 **The appointed time has been fulfilled:** In this context "the appointed time" (Greek, *kairos*) refers to the time, as foretold in the Scriptures, for Jesus' earthly ministry to begin, giving people the opportunity to **have faith in the good news**. The same Greek word is used of the "time" of inspection that Jesus' ministry brought (Lu 12:56; 19:44) and the "appointed time" of his death.—Mt 26:18.

the Kingdom of God: This expression occurs 14 times in the Gospel of Mark. Matthew uses this phrase only four times (Mt 12:28; 19:24; 21:31; 21:43), but he uses the parallel phrase, "the Kingdom of the heavens," some 30 times. (Compare Mr 10:23 with Mt 19:23, 24.) Jesus made

the Kingdom the theme of his preaching. (Lu 4:43) There are over 100 references to the Kingdom in the four Gospels, most of them in statements made by Jesus.—See study notes on Mt 3:2; 4:17; 25:34.

1:16 **the Sea of Galilee:** See study note on Mt 4:18.

casting their nets: See study note on Mt 4:18.

fishermen: See study note on Mt 4:18.

See  Gallery, image 21, Casting a Net.

See  Gallery, image 22, Fish of the Sea of Galilee.

1:17 **fishers of men:** See study note on Mt 4:19.

1:18 **followed him:** See study note on Mt 4:20.

1:19 **Zebedee:** See study note on Mt 4:21.

James . . . and his brother John: See study note on Mt 4:21.

CHAP. 1

Unclean Spirit Expelled

- a Lu 4:31-37
 b Mt 7:28, 29
 Lu 24:19
 Joh 7:40
 c Mt 8:28, 29
 Mr 3:11, 12
 Lu 4:41
 d Jas 2:19
 e Mr 9:20, 26
 f Mt 8:14, 15
 Lu 4:38, 39
 g 1Co 9:5

As soon as the Sabbath began, he went into the synagogue and started to teach.^a **22** And they were astounded at his way of teaching, for he was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.^b **23** Just then there was a man in their synagogue who was under the power of an unclean spirit, and he shouted: **24** “What have we to do with you, Jesus the Nazarene?”^c Did you come to destroy us? I know exactly who you are, the Holy One of God!”^d **25** But Jesus rebuked it, saying: “Be silent, and come out of him!” **26** And the unclean spirit, after throwing the man into a convulsion and yelling at the top of its voice, came out of him.^e **27** Well, the people were all so astonished that they began to discuss it among themselves, saying: “What is this? A new teaching! He authoritatively orders even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” **28** So the report about him spread quickly in all directions throughout the entire region of Gal’i-lee.

Jesus Heals Many in Capernaum

29 At that they left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon and Andrew with James and John.^f **30** Now Simon’s mother-in-law^g was lying down sick with a fever, and they at once told him about her. **31** Going to her, he took her by the hand and raised her up. The fever left her, and she began ministering to them.

STUDY NOTES

1:20 with the hired men: Only Mark mentions that the fishing business of Zebedee and his sons had “hired men.” Peter, who was evidently a partner in the business and an eyewitness to most of what Mark recorded, may have been the source of this information. (Lu 5:5-11; see also “Introduction to Mark.”) That Zebedee and his sons hired men and, according to Luke’s account, had more than one boat indicates that their business was doing well.—See study note on Mt 4:18.

1:21 Capernaum: See study note on Mt 4:13.

synagogue: See  Glossary.

See  Gallery, image 88, Synagogue in Capernaum.

1:22 his way of teaching: This expression refers to how Jesus taught, his teaching

methods, which also included what he taught.

not as the scribes: Rather than quote revered rabbis as an authority, as was the scribes’ custom, Jesus speaks as Jehovah’s representative, **as one having authority**, basing his teachings on God’s Word.—Joh 7:16.

1:23 an unclean spirit: Mark uses this expression interchangeably with the term “demon.” (Compare Mr 1:23, 26, 27 with 1:34, 39; also Mr 3:11, 30 with 3:15, 22.) The use of this expression highlights the moral and spiritual uncleanness of the demons as well as their unclean influence on humans.

he shouted: When the man shouted the words recorded in verse 24, Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, the source of the man’s words.—Mr 1:25; Lu 4:35.

1:24 What have we to do with you, . . . ?: See study note on Mt 8:29.

we . . . I: Since only one unclean spirit is mentioned in verse 23, the spirit controlling the man evidently speaks in the plural (“we”) with reference to his fellow demons and then in the singular (“I”) with reference to himself alone.

1:25 Be silent: Lit., “Be muzzled.” Although the unclean spirit knew that Jesus was the Christ, or Messiah, and addressed him as “the Holy One of God” (vs. 24), Jesus would not allow demons to witness about him.—Mr 1:34; 3:11, 12.

1:30 Simon’s mother-in-law: See study note on Lu 4:38.

sick with a fever: See study note on Lu 4:38.

32 After evening had fallen, when the sun had set, the people began bringing to him all who were ill and demon possessed;^a **33** and the whole city was gathered right at the door. **34** So he cured many who were ill with various sicknesses,^b and he expelled many demons,^c but he would not let the demons speak, for they knew him to be Christ.^d

CHAP. 1

a Mt 4:24
Mt 8:16
Lu 4:40, 41

b Isa 53:4

c Mt 17:18
Lu 6:18

d Mr 3:11, 12

e Mt 14:23
Mr 14:32
Lu 4:42
Heb 5:7

f Isa 61:1
Lu 4:43
Joh 17:4

g Mt 4:23

h Mt 8:1, 2
Lu 5:12

i Ps 72:13
Mt 9:36
Mt 14:14
Mt 15:32
Mr 6:34
Lu 7:13
Heb 5:2

j Mt 8:3
Lu 5:13
Heb 2:17

Jesus Prays in a Lonely Place

35 Early in the morning, while it was still dark, he got up and went outside and left for an isolated place, and there he began praying.^e **36** However, Simon and those with him hunted him down **37** and found him, and they said to him: “Everyone is looking for you.” **38** But he said to them: “Let us go somewhere else, into the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also, for this is why I have come.”^f **39** And he went, preaching in their synagogues throughout the whole of Gal’i-lee and expelling the demons.^g

A Leper Healed

40 There also came to him a leper, pleading with him even on bended knee, saying to him: “If you just want to, you can make me clean.”^h **41** At that he was moved with pity,ⁱ and he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him: “I want to! Be made clean.”^j **42** Immediately the leprosy vanished

STUDY NOTES

1:32 when the sun had set: Sunset marked the end of the Sabbath day. (Le 23:32; Mr 1:21; see study notes on Mt 8:16; 26:20.) Now with no fear of criticism, all the Jews could begin bringing their sick ones to be cured.—Compare Mr 2:1-5; Lu 4:31-40.

ill and demon possessed: Demons at times caused the people they controlled to suffer from some kind of physical disorder. (Mt 12:22; 17:15-18) However, the Scriptures differentiate between ordinary sickness and the harm caused by demon possession. Regardless of the cause of their suffering, Jesus cured them.—Mt 4:24; 8:16; Mr 1:34.

1:33 the whole city: Similar to the use of “all” at Mr 1:5, the use of “whole” is evidently hyperbole; it vividly describes a large number of people.

1:34 they knew him to be Christ: Some Greek manuscripts read “they knew him,” which could be rendered “they knew who he was.” The parallel account at Lu 4:41 reads: “They knew him to be the Christ.”

1:37 Everyone: Evidently hyperbole to emphasize that a large number of people were looking for Jesus.

1:39 preaching . . . throughout the whole of Galilee: This marks the beginning of Jesus’ first preaching tour of Galilee with his four recently selected disciples—Peter, Andrew, James, and John.—Mr 1:16-20; see  App. A7.

1:40 a leper: See study note on Mt 8:2 and  Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

on bended knee: In the ancient Near East, kneeling was a posture that expressed respect, especially when petitioning superiors. Mark is the only Gospel writer to use this specific term in connection with this event.

1:41 moved with pity: Or “moved with compassion.” (See study note on Mt 9:36.) A few modern Bible translations say “was indignant (angry).” However, the reading “moved with pity (compassion)” can be found in the majority of ancient manuscripts, including the earliest and most authoritative ones. Also, the context supports the idea that Jesus is motivated, not by anger, but by compassion.

touched him: See study note on Mt 8:3.

I want to: See study note on Mt 8:3.

1:44 say nothing to anyone: Jesus likely gave this order because he did not want to magnify his own name or do anything to draw attention away from Jehovah God and the Kingdom good news. His approach fulfilled the prophetic words of Isa 42:1, 2, which say that Jehovah’s servant would “not make his voice heard in the street,” that is, in some sensational way. (Mt 12:15-19) Jesus’ humble

CHAP. 1

- a Le 14:2-4
Le 14:10, 11
De 24:8
Lu 17:14
b Mt 8:4
Lu 5:14
c Lu 5:15

CHAP. 2

- d Mt 4:13
Mt 9:1
e Isa 61:1
Eph 2:17
Heb 2:3
f Lu 5:18, 19
g Ac 14:9, 10
h Isa 53:11
Mt 9:2
Lu 5:20
Lu 7:47, 48
i Mt 9:3-8
Lu 5:21-26
j Joh 10:33
Ac 6:11
k Isa 43:25

from him, and he became clean. **43** Then he gave him strict orders and at once sent him away, **44** saying to him: “See that you say nothing to anyone, but go show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing the things Moses directed,^a for a witness to them.”^b **45** But after going away, the man started to proclaim it a great deal and to spread the account widely, so that Jesus was no longer able to enter openly into a city, but he stayed outside in isolated places. Yet they kept coming to him from all sides.^c

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

2 However, after some days he again entered into Ca-per’na-um, and the word spread that he was at home.^d **2** And so many gathered that there was no more room, not even around the door, and he began to speak the word to them.^e **3** And they brought him a paralytic carried by four men.^f **4** But they could not bring him right to Jesus because of the crowd, so they removed the roof above Jesus, and after digging an opening, they lowered the stretcher on which the paralytic was lying. **5** When Jesus saw their faith,^g he said to the paralytic: “Child, your sins are forgiven.”^h **6** Now some of the scribes were there, sitting and reasoning in their hearts:ⁱ **7** “Why is this man talking this way? He is blaspheming.^j Who can forgive sins except one, God?”^k **8** But immediately Jesus discerned by his spirit that they were reasoning that way among themselves, so he said to them: “Why are you reasoning these things in your

STUDY NOTES

attitude provides a refreshing contrast to that of the hypocrites whom he condemns for praying “on the corners of the main streets to be seen by men.” (Mt 6:5) Jesus apparently wanted solid evidence, not sensational reports of his miracles, to convince people that he was the Christ.

show yourself to the priest: In accord with the Mosaic Law, a priest had to verify that a leper was healed. The cured leper had to travel to the temple and bring as an offering **the things Moses directed**, as outlined at Le 14:2-32.

2:1 Capernaum: See study note on Mt 4:13.

at home: Jesus spent most of the first three years of his ministry in and around Galilee with Capernaum the center of his

activity. He may have stayed at the home of Peter and Andrew.—Mr 1:29; see study note on Mt 9:1.

2:4 removed the roof . . . digging an opening: The roofs of many houses in first-century Israel were flat and were accessed by means of stairs or an external ladder. Mark’s account does not specifically state what the roof of this house was made of. But roofs were often constructed of wooden beams covered with branches, reeds, and a layer of earth, which was plastered. Some houses had tiles; according to Luke’s account, the man was lowered “through the tiling.” (See study note on Lu 5:19.) The friends of the paralytic man could easily have made an opening that would allow enough space to lower the stretcher into the crowded room below.

2:5 saw their faith: See study note on Mt 9:2.

Child: See study note on Mt 9:2.

2:6 scribes: See study note on Mt 2:4 and **M** Glossary, “Scribe.”

2:8 by his spirit: Or “in himself (in his own mind).” Here the Greek word *pneuma* evidently refers to Jesus’ perceptive powers. Isa 11:2, 3 says about the Messiah: “The spirit of Jehovah will settle upon him,” so he would not base his judgment on “what appears to his eyes.” As a result, Jesus was able to discern the thinking, reasoning, and motives of others.—Joh 2:24, 25.

hearts?^a **9** Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and pick up your stretcher and walk?’ **10** But in order for you to know that the Son of man^b has authority to forgive sins on earth—”^c he said to the paralytic: **11** “I say to you, Get up, pick up your stretcher, and go to your home.” **12** At that he got up and immediately picked up his stretcher and walked out in front of them all. So they were all astonished, and they glorified God, saying: “We have never seen anything like this.”^d

Jesus Calls Levi

13 Again he went out alongside the sea, and all the crowd kept coming to him, and he began to teach them. **14** And as he was passing by, he caught sight of Le’vi the son of Al-phae’us sitting at the tax office, and he said to him: “Be my follower.” At that he rose up and followed him.^e **15** Later he was dining in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many of them who were following him.^f **16** But when the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they began saying to his disciples: “Does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” **17** On hearing this, Jesus said to them: “Those who are strong do not need a physician, but those who are ill do. I came to call, not righteous people, but sinners.”^g

CHAP. 2

^a Mt 9:4
Lu 6:8
Joh 2:24, 25
Re 2:23

^b Da 7:13

^c Isa 53:11

^d Mt 9:33
Joh 7:31
Joh 9:32

^e Mt 9:9
Lu 5:27, 28

^f Mt 9:10, 11
Lu 5:29, 30
Lu 15:1, 2

^g Isa 61:1
Mt 9:12, 13
Lu 5:31, 32
Lu 15:7
Lu 19:10
1Ti 1:15

STUDY NOTES

2:9 Which is easier: It would be easy for someone to say that he could forgive sins, since no visible evidence would be needed in order to substantiate such a claim. But to say, **Get up . . . and walk** required a miracle that would make plain for all to see that Jesus had the authority to forgive sins. This account and Isa 33:24 link sickness to our sinful condition.

2:10 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

to forgive sins on earth—: See study note on Mt 9:6.

2:13 the sea: That is, the Sea of Galilee.—Mr 1:16; see study note on Mt 4:18.

2:14 Levi: In the parallel account at Mt 9:9, this disciple is called Matthew. When referring to him as a former tax collector, Mark and Luke use the name Levi (Lu 5:27, 29), but they use the name Matthew when

mentioning him as one of the apostles (Mr 3:18; Lu 6:15; Ac 1:13). The Scriptures do not reveal whether Levi already had the name Matthew before becoming a disciple of Jesus. Mark is the only Gospel writer to mention that Matthew Levi was the son of Alphaeus.—See study note on Mr 3:18.

Alphaeus: Evidently not the same person as the Alphaeus mentioned at Mr 3:18 (see study note on Mr 3:18), who was the father of James, the 9th apostle of the 12 apostles listed.—Mt 10:3; Lu 6:15.

tax office: Or “tax collection booth.” This could be a small building or a booth where the tax collector sat and gathered taxes on exports, imports, and goods taken through a country by merchants. Levi, also known as Matthew, worked at a tax office located in or near Capernaum.

Be my follower: The Greek verb used in this exhortation has the basic sense of “to go along behind, come after,” but

here it means “to follow someone as a disciple.”

2:15 dining: Or “reclining at the table.” To recline with someone at a table indicated close fellowship with that person. Thus, Jews in Jesus’ day would normally never have reclined at the table, or taken a meal, with non-Jews.

his house: Refers to Levi’s house.—Mt 9:10; Lu 5:29.

2:15, 16 tax collectors: See study note on Mt 5:46.

2:15 sinners: See study note on Mt 9:10.

2:18 practice fasting: See study note on Mt 6:16.

2:19 friends of the bridegroom: See study note on Mt 9:15.

2:22 wine into . . . wineskins: See study note on Mt 9:17.

CHAP. 2

Question About Fasting

a Mt 9:14, 15
Lu 5:33-35

b Mt 22:2
2Co 11:2
Re 19:7

c Joh 3:28, 29
d Lu 17:22

e Mt 9:16, 17
Lu 5:36-38

f Ex 12:16
De 23:25
Mt 12:1-8
Lu 6:1-5

g 1Sa 21:1-6

h 1Sa 22:20

18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees practiced fasting. So they came and said to him: "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees practice fasting, but your disciples do not practice fasting?"^a **19** So Jesus said to them: "While the bridegroom^b is with them, the friends of the bridegroom have no reason to fast, do they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.^c **20** But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them,^d and then they will fast on that day. **21** Nobody sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old outer garment. If he does, the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear becomes worse.^e **22** Also, no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost as well as the skins. But new wine is put into new wineskins."

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

23 Now as he was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, his disciples started to pluck the heads of grain as they went.^f **24** So the Pharisees said to him: "Look here! Why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" **25** But he said to them: "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and the men with him were hungry?^g **26** How, in the account about A-bi'a-thar^h the chief priest, he entered into the house of God and ate the loaves of presentation, which it

STUDY NOTES

2:23 through the grainfields: See study note on Mt 12:1.

Sabbath: See  Glossary.

2:24 what is not lawful: See study note on Mt 12:2.

2:26 in the account about: The Greek preposition *e-pi'* used here can refer to time or to place/location, such as a passage of Scripture. Most translators understand it to mean "when (Abiathar was . . .)." However, as explained in the study note on **Abiathar the chief priest** in this verse, the historical event that Jesus is referring to (1Sa 21:1-6) makes it more likely that the Greek preposition should be understood in a locative sense, that is, referring to a Scriptural account. A similar Greek structure is found at Mr 12:26 and Lu 20:37, where many transla-

tions use the phrase "in the account (passage) about."

Abiathar the chief priest: The Greek term used here may be rendered "high priest" or "chief priest." The latter rendering is more appropriate for Abiathar, since his father, Ahimelech, was high priest on the occasion described. (1Sa 21:1-6) Abiathar is first mentioned shortly after David entered the house of God and ate the showbread. It seems that as a son of High Priest Ahimelech, Abiathar was already serving as a prominent, or chief, priest at that time. He was the only son of Ahimelech to survive the slaughter by Doeg the Edomite. (1Sa 22:18-20) He later became high priest, evidently during David's reign. Even if the rendering "high priest" is used, the Greek construction rendered "in the account about" is broad and may refer to the larger sec-

tion of 1 Samuel chapters 21 to 23, where a number of references are made to Abiathar, who later became a well-known high priest. Some Greek scholars favor the rendering "in the time of Abiathar the high priest," which could also refer to the overall time period, including the time when Abiathar later became high priest. Whatever the explanation, we can be sure that this statement of Jesus was in harmony with the historical facts.

house of God: Here referring to the tabernacle. The account Jesus refers to (1Sa 21:1-6) occurred when the tabernacle was located at Nob, a town evidently in the territory of Benjamin and close to Jerusalem.—See  App. B7 (inset).

loaves of presentation: See study note on Mt 12:4 and  Glossary, "Showbread."

is not lawful for anybody to eat except the priests,^a and he also gave some to the men who were with him?” **27** Then he said to them: “The Sabbath came into existence for the sake of man,^b and not man for the sake of the Sabbath. **28** So the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”^c

CHAP. 2

a Ex 25:30
Le 24:5-9

b Ex 20:9, 10
Eze 20:12

c Mt 12:8
Lu 6:5

Man With a Withered Hand Healed

3 Once again he entered into a synagogue, and a man with a withered* hand was there.^d **2** So they were watching him closely to see whether he would cure the man on the Sabbath, in order to accuse him.^e **3** He said to the man with the withered* hand: “Get up and come to the center.” **4** Next he said to them: “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill?”^f But they kept silent. **5** After looking around at them with indignation, being thoroughly grieved at the insensibility of their hearts,^g he said to the man: “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. **6** At that the Pharisees went out and immediately began holding council with the party followers of Herod^h against him, in order to kill him.

CHAP. 3

d Mt 12:9-14
Lu 6:6-11

e Joh 9:16

f Lu 14:1-3

g Joh 12:39, 40

h Mt 22:16
Mr 12:13

i Mt 4:25
Mt 12:15
Lu 6:17

Great Multitude on the Shore; Many Healed

7 But Jesus departed for the sea along with his disciples, and a great multitude from Gal'i-lee and from Ju-de'a followed him.ⁱ **8** Even from Jerusalem and from Id-u-me'a and from across the

FOOTNOTES

3:1, 3 *Or “paralyzed.” Lit., “dried-up.”

STUDY NOTES

2:28 Lord . . . of the Sabbath: Jesus applies this expression to himself (Mt 12:8; Lu 6:5), indicating that the Sabbath was at his disposal for doing the work commanded by his heavenly Father. (Compare Joh 5:19; 10:37, 38.) On the Sabbath, Jesus performed some of his most outstanding miracles, which included healing the sick. (Lu 13:10-13; Joh 5:5-9; 9:1-14) This evidently foreshadowed the kind of relief he will bring during his Kingdom rule, which will be like a sabbath rest. —Heb 10:1.

3:4 life: Or “soul.”—See **L** Glossary, “Soul.”

to save a life or to kill: Or “to save or to kill a soul.”—See **L** Glossary, “Soul.”

3:5 with indignation, being thoroughly grieved: Only Mark records Jesus’ reaction when Jesus observed the **insensibility** of the hearts of the religious leaders on this occasion. (Mt 12:13; Lu 6:10) Peter, himself a man of deep emotion, may have been the source of this vivid description of Jesus’ feelings.—See “Introduction to Mark.”

3:6 began holding council: This is the first of two occasions when the Bible specifically mentions that two opposing parties, **the Pharisees and the party followers of Herod**, consult together to do away with Jesus. The second occasion was nearly two years later, just three days before Jesus was put to death, indicating that these groups plotted together

against Jesus over an extended period of time.—Mt 22:15-22.

party followers of Herod: See **L** Glossary.

3:7 the sea: That is, the Sea of Galilee. —See study note on Mt 4:18.

3:8 Idumea: During the time of Jesus’ ministry, Idumea was the southernmost region of the Roman province of Judea. (See **3** App. B10.) In Greek, the name means “[Land] of the Edomites.” The Edomites originally occupied territory S of the Dead Sea. (See **3** App. B3 and B4.) They were conquered by Babylonian King Nabonidus in the sixth century B.C.E. By the fourth century B.C.E., the Nabataean Arabs occupied their land, so the Edomites moved north into the Negeb, as far as the region around Hebron, and that territory was called

CHAP. 3

a Mt 9:20, 21
Mr 5:27, 28
Mr 6:56

b Mt 8:31

c Mr 1:23, 24
Mr 5:2, 7
Lu 4:41

d Mt 12:15, 16
Mr 1:25

e Joh 15:16

f Lu 6:12, 13

g Lu 9:1, 2

h Mt 10:1
Mr 6:7, 13

i Mt 10:2-4
Lu 6:13-16
Ac 1:13

j Joh 1:42

k Mt 4:21, 22
Mr 10:35
Lu 5:10
Lu 9:54
Joh 21:2

l Joh 1:45, 46

Jordan and from around Tyre and Si'don, a great multitude came to him when they heard about the many things he was doing. **9** And he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him so that the crowd would not press in on him. **10** Because he cured many, all those who had serious diseases were crowding around him to touch him.^a **11** Even the unclean spirits,^b whenever they saw him, would fall down before him and cry out and say: "You are the Son of God."^c **12** But many times he sternly ordered them not to make him known.^d

The 12 Apostles

13 He ascended a mountain and summoned those whom he wanted,^e and they came to him.^f **14** And he formed* a group of 12, whom he also named apostles, those who were to accompany him and whom he would send out to preach^g **15** and to have authority to expel demons.^h

16 And the group of 12ⁱ that he formed* were Simon, to whom he also gave the name Peter,^j **17** James the son of Zeb'e-dee and John the brother of James (he also gave these the name Bo-a-ner'ges, which means "Sons of Thunder"),^k **18** Andrew, Philip, Bar-thol'o-mew,^l Matthew, Thomas, James the son of

FOOTNOTES

3:14, 16 *Or "appointed."

STUDY NOTES

Idumea. They were conquered by the Has-moneans (Maccabees) and forced to be circumcised and live by Jewish law or be expelled. The forefathers of the Herods were among those who submitted to Jewish law and customs.

from across the Jordan: Evidently referring to the region E of the Jordan, also known as Perea (from the Greek word *pe'ran*, meaning "the other side; beyond").

3:12 not to make him known: That is, not to reveal his identity. Although the unclean spirits knew that Jesus was "the Son of God" and addressed him as such (vs. 11), Jesus would not allow demons to witness about him. They are outcasts, rebels, haters of what is holy, and enemies of God. (See study note on Mr 1:25.) Similarly, when "a demon of divination"

impelled a girl to identify Paul and Silas as "slaves of the Most High God" and proclaimers of "the way of salvation," Paul cast the spirit out of her.—Ac 16:16-18.

3:14 apostles: Or "sent ones." The Greek word *a-po'sto-los* is derived from the verb *a-po-stel'lo*, which is used toward the end of the verse and is rendered "send out."—See study note on Mt 10:2.

3:16 to whom he also gave the name Peter: The name that Jesus gave to Simon means "A Piece of Rock." (Joh 1:42) Jesus, who was able to discern that Nathanael was a man "in whom there [was] no deceit" (Joh 1:47), could also discern Peter's makeup. Peter displayed rocklike qualities, especially after Jesus' death and resurrection.—See study note on Mt 10:2.

3:17 Boanerges: A Semitic expression that is found only in Mark's account. Jesus gave James and John this name that likely reflected their fiery enthusiasm.—Lu 9:54.

which means: Mark explains or translates terms that Jewish readers would have been familiar with, indicating that he wrote his account with non-Jews in mind.

Sons of Thunder: In Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, the phrase "son(s) of" can be used to indicate a prominent quality or characteristic that distinguishes a person or to describe a group of people.—See study note on **Boanerges** in this verse and study note on Ac 4:36.

3:18 Bartholomew: Meaning "Son of Tol-mai." He is thought to be the Nathanael mentioned by John. (Joh 1:45, 46) A comparison of the Gospels shows that Matthew and Luke link Bartholomew and Philip in the same way that John associates the name Nathanael with Philip.—Mt 10:3; Lu 6:14.

Al-phae'us, Thad-dae'us, Simon the Ca-na-nae'an, **19** and Judas Is-car'i-ot, who later betrayed him.

Blasphemy Against Holy Spirit

Then he went into a house, **20** and again the crowd gathered, so that they were not able even to eat a meal.^a **21** But when his relatives heard about it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying: "He has gone out of his mind."^b **22** Also, the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying: "He has Be-el'ze-bub, and he expels the demons by means of the ruler of the demons."^c **23** So after calling them to him, he spoke to them with illustrations: "How can Satan expel Satan? **24** If a kingdom becomes divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand;^d **25** and if a house becomes divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. **26** Also, if Satan has risen up against himself and has become divided, he cannot stand but is coming to an end. **27** In fact, no one who enters the house of a strong man is able to steal his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Only then can he plunder his house. **28** Truly I say to you that all things will be forgiven the sons of men, no matter what sins they commit and what blasphemies they speak. **29** But whoever blasphemes against the holy spirit has no forgiveness forever^e but is guilty of everlasting sin."^f **30** He said this because they were saying: "He has an unclean spirit."^g

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

31 Now his mother and his brothers^h came, and standing outside, they sent someone in to call him.ⁱ **32** As there was a

CHAP. 3

- a Mr 6:31
- b Joh 7:5
- c Mt 9:34
Mt 10:25
Lu 11:15
Joh 8:48
- d Lu 11:17, 18
- e Mt 12:31, 32
Lu 12:10
- f Heb 6:4, 6
Heb 10:26
- g Joh 7:20
Joh 10:20
- h Mt 13:55
Joh 2:12
Ac 1:14
Ga 1:19
- i Mt 12:46-50
Lu 8:19-21

STUDY NOTES

3:18 James the son of Alphaeus: Evidently the same disciple as the one called "James the Less" at Mr 15:40. It is generally thought that Alphaeus was the same person as Clopas (Joh 19:25), which would also make him the husband of "the other Mary" (Mt 27:56; 28:1; Mr 15:40; 16:1; Lu 24:10). The Alphaeus mentioned here is evidently not the same person as the Alphaeus mentioned at Mr 2:14, the father of Levi.

Thaddaeus: In the listings of the apostles at Lu 6:16 and Ac 1:13, the name Thaddaeus is not included; instead we find "Judas the son of James," leading to

the conclusion that Thaddaeus is another name for the apostle whom John calls "Judas, not Iscariot." (Joh 14:22) The possibility of confusing this Judas with Judas Iscariot, the traitor, might be a reason why the name Thaddaeus is sometimes used.

the Cananaean: A designation distinguishing the apostle Simon from the apostle Simon Peter. (Mt 10:4) This term is thought to be of Hebrew or Aramaic origin, meaning "Zealot; Enthusiast." Luke referred to this Simon as "the zealous one," using the Greek word *ze-lo-tes'*, also meaning "zealot; enthusiast." (Lu 6:15; Ac 1:13) While it is possible that

Simon once belonged to the Zealots, a Jewish party opposed to the Romans, he may have been given this designation because of his zeal and enthusiasm.

3:19 Iscariot: See study note on Mt 10:4.

3:21 his relatives: These may have included Jesus' half brothers James and Judas (Jude), who each wrote a Bible book. The names of Jesus' four half brothers are mentioned at Mt 13:55 and Mr 6:3.—See study note on Mt 13:55.

3:22 Beelzebub: A designation applied to Satan.—See study note on Mt 10:25.

3:23; 4:2 illustrations: See study note on Mt 13:3.

CHAP. 3

- a Mr 6:3
 b Mt 10:37
 c Mt 12:49
 Heb 2:11
 d Mt 12:50
 Lu 8:21
 Joh 15:14

crowd sitting around him, they said to him: “Look! Your mother and your brothers are outside asking for you.”^a **33** But he replied to them: “Who are my mother and my brothers?”^b **34** Then he looked at those sitting around him in a circle and said: “See, my mother and my brothers!^c **35** Whoever does the will of God, this one is my brother and sister and mother.”^d

CHAP. 4

- e Mt 13:1, 2
 Lu 8:4
 f Mt 13:34
 g Mt 13:3-9
 Lu 8:5-8
 h Mr 4:14
 i Mr 4:15
 j Mr 4:16, 17
 k Mr 4:18, 19
 l Mr 4:20
 m Pr 1:5
 Mt 11:15
 Mt 13:9, 43
 Lu 8:8
 Lu 14:35

Illustration of the Sower

4 Again he began teaching beside the sea, and a very large crowd gathered near him. So he went aboard a boat and sat in it away from the shore, but the whole crowd was next to the sea, along the shore.^e **2** And he began to teach them many things with illustrations,^f and while he was teaching, he said to them:^g **3** “Listen. Look! The sower went out to sow.^h **4** As he was sowing, some seeds fell alongside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.ⁱ **5** Others fell on rocky ground where there was not much soil, and they immediately sprang up because the soil was not deep.^j **6** But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7** Other seeds fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them, and they yielded no fruit.^k **8** But others fell on the fine soil, and growing up and increasing, they began to yield fruit, and they were bearing 30, 60, and 100 times more.”^l **9** Then he added: “Let the one who has ears to listen, listen.”^m

STUDY NOTES

3:25 house: That is, a household. The original-language term for “house” could refer to an individual family or an extended household, including one associated with the palaces of kings. (Ac 7:10; Php 4:22) The term was used of ruling dynasties, such as those of the Herods and the Caesars, where internal dissension was common and destructive.

be able to stand: Or “continue (stay together).”—See study note on **house** in this verse.

3:29 blasphemes against the holy spirit: Blasphemy refers to defamatory, injurious, or abusive speech against God or against sacred things. Since **holy spirit** emanates from God himself, willfully opposing or denying its operation amounted to blasphemy against God. As shown at Mt 12:24, 28 and Mr 3:22, the Jewish religious leaders saw God’s spirit at work in

Jesus as he performed miracles; yet, they attributed this power to Satan the Devil.

guilty of everlasting sin: Seems to refer to willful sin that has eternal consequences; there is no sacrifice to cover such sin.—See study note on **blasphemes against the holy spirit** in this verse and study note on Mt 12:31, the parallel account.

3:31 his brothers: That is, Jesus’ half brothers. Their names are listed at Mt 13:55 and Mr 6:3.—See study note on Mt 13:55 regarding the meaning of the term “brother.”

3:34 See, my mother and my brothers: Jesus here makes a distinction between his natural brothers, some of whom evidently lacked faith in him (Joh 7:5), and his spiritual brothers, his disciples. He shows that regardless of how precious the ties are that bind him to his relatives, his relationship with those who do “the

will of God” is even more precious.—Mr 3:35.

4:1 away from the shore: See study note on Mt 13:2.

4:3 Look!: See study note on Mr 1:2.

4:5 on rocky ground: See study note on Mt 13:5.

4:7 among the thorns: See study note on Mt 13:7.

4:9 Let the one who has ears to listen, listen: Before telling the illustration of the sower, Jesus said: “Listen.” (Mr 4:3) He concludes the illustration with this exhortation, emphasizing how important it is for his followers to heed his counsel carefully. Similar exhortations can be found at Mt 11:15; 13:9, 43; Mr 4:23; Lu 8:8; 14:35; Re 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 13:9.

Why Jesus Used Illustrations

10 Now when he was alone, those around him with the Twelve began questioning him about the illustrations.^a **11** He said to them: “To you the sacred secret^b of the Kingdom of God has been given, but to those outside all things are in illustrations,^c **12** so that, though looking, they may look and still not see, and though hearing, they may hear and still not get the sense of it; nor will they ever turn back and receive forgiveness.”^d **13** Further, he said to them: “You do not know* this illustration, so how will you understand all the other illustrations?”

Illustration of the Sower Explained

14 “The sower sows the word.^e **15** These, then, are the ones alongside the road where the word is sown; but as soon as they have heard it, Satan comes^f and takes away the word that was sown in them.^g **16** Likewise, these are the ones sown on rocky ground; as soon as they have heard the word, they accept it with joy.^h **17** Yet they have no root in themselves, but they continue for a time; then as soon as tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, they are stumbled. **18** There are still others that are sown among the thorns. These are the ones who have heard the word,ⁱ **19** but the anxieties^j of this system of things and the deceptive power of riches^{*k} and the desires^l for everything else make inroads and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. **20** Finally, the ones that were sown on the fine soil are those who listen to the word and favorably receive it and bear fruit—30, 60, and 100 times more.”^m

A Lamp Not to Be Put Under a Basket

21 He also said to them: “A lamp is not brought out to be put under a basket or under a bed, is it? Is it not brought out to be put on a lampstand?ⁿ **22** For there is nothing hidden that will not be exposed; nothing is carefully concealed that will not

CHAP. 4

- a Mt 13:10
Lu 8:9
- b Eph 1:9, 10
Col 1:26, 27
- c Mt 13:11
Lu 8:10
- d Isa 6:9, 10
Mt 13:13, 14
Joh 12:40
Ac 28:26
- e Mt 13:18
Lu 8:11
1Pe 1:25
- f 2Co 2:11
1Pe 5:8
- g Mt 13:19
Lu 8:12
- h Mt 13:20, 21
Lu 8:13
- i Mt 13:22
Lu 8:14
- j Mt 6:25
Mt 24:38, 39
Lu 21:34
Php 4:6, 7
1Pe 5:6, 7
- k Pr 23:4, 5
Mr 10:23
Lu 18:24
1Ti 6:9
2Ti 4:10
- l 1Jo 2:16
- m Mt 13:23
Lu 8:15
- n Mt 5:15
Lu 8:16, 17
Lu 11:33

FOOTNOTES

4:13 *Or “understand.” **4:19** *Or “the seductiveness (deceptive pleasure) of being wealthy.”

STUDY NOTES

4:19 **system of things:** See study note on Mt 13:22.

4:21 **A lamp:** See study note on Mt 5:15.

a basket: See study note on Mt 5:15.

See  Gallery, image 29, Domestic Lampstand.

4:24 **With the measure that you are measuring out:** The context of verses 23 to 25 indicates that if the disciples measure out little interest and attention,

they cannot expect to get much from Jesus’ teaching. But if they give him their fullest measure of attention, he will respond by giving them information and enlightenment beyond their expectations. Thus they will be enriched and better able to impart understanding to others. In his generosity, Jesus will favor them with **more** than they expected.

CHAP. 4

a Mt 10:26
Lu 12:2
Ac 4:19, 20

b Pr 1:5
Mt 11:15
Re 2:7

c Lu 8:18
Jas 1:25

d Mt 25:23

e Mt 13:12
Mt 25:29
Lu 8:18
Lu 19:26

f Mt 13:31, 32
Lu 13:18, 19

g Ps 78:2

h Mt 13:11
Mt 13:34, 35
Mr 4:11

come out in the open.^a **23** Whoever has ears to listen, let him listen.”^b

The Measure You Use

24 He further said to them: “Pay attention to what you are hearing.^c With the measure that you are measuring out, you will have it measured out to you, yes, you will have more added to you. **25** For whoever has will have more given to him,^d but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.”^e

The Sower Who Sleeps

26 So he went on to say: “In this way the Kingdom of God is just as when a man casts seeds on the ground. **27** He sleeps at night and rises up by day, and the seeds sprout and grow tall—just how, he does not know. **28** On its own the ground bears fruit gradually, first the stalk, then the head, finally the full grain in the head. **29** But as soon as the crop permits it, he thrusts in the sickle, because the harvesttime has come.”

The Mustard Grain

30 And he went on to say: “With what can we compare the Kingdom of God, or with what illustration can we explain it? **31** It is like a mustard grain, which at the time it was sown in the ground was the tiniest of all the seeds on the earth.^f **32** But when it has been sown, it grows and becomes greater than all other vegetable plants and produces great branches, so that the birds of heaven are able to find lodging under its shadow.”

Jesus’ Use of Illustrations

33 With many illustrations^g of that sort he spoke the word to them, to the extent that they were able to listen. **34** Indeed, without an illustration he would not speak to them, but he would explain all things privately to his disciples.^h

STUDY NOTES

4:26 **In this way the Kingdom of God is just as when a man casts seeds:** Mark is the only Gospel writer to record the illustration found in verses 26 to 29.

4:31 **mustard grain:** See study note on Mt 13:31.

the tiniest of all the seeds: See study note on Mt 13:32.

4:33 **listen:** Or “understand.” The Greek word for “listen” can convey the meanings “to pay attention by listening” and “to understand (comprehend).”—Compare study notes on Ac 9:7; 22:9.

Jesus Calms a Storm

35 And on that day, when evening had fallen, he said to them: “Let us cross to the other shore.”^a **36** So after they had dismissed the crowd, they took him in the boat, just as he was, and there were other boats with him.^b **37** Now a great violent windstorm broke out, and the waves kept crashing into the boat, so that the boat was close to being swamped.^c **38** But he was in the stern, sleeping on the pillow. So they woke him up and said to him: “Teacher, do you not care that we are about to perish?” **39** With that he got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea: “Hush! Be quiet!”^d And the wind abated, and a great calm set in.^e **40** So he said to them: “Why are you so afraid? * Do you not yet have any faith?” **41** But they felt an unusual fear, and they said to one another: “Who really is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him.”^f

CHAP. 4

- a Mt 8:18
- b Mt 8:23
Lu 8:22
- c Mt 8:24-27
Lu 8:23-25
- d Ps 89:9
- e Mt 14:31, 32
Mr 6:48, 51
- f Joh 6:19

CHAP. 5

- g Mt 8:28
Lu 8:26, 27

Jesus Heals a Demonized Man; Allows Demons to Enter Swine

5 Then they came to the other side of the sea into the region of the Ger'a-senes.^g **2** And immediately after Jesus got out of the boat, a man under the power of an unclean spirit met him from among the tombs. **3** His haunt was among the tombs, and up to that time, absolutely no one was able to bind him securely, even with a chain. **4** He had often been bound

FOOTNOTES

4:40 * Or “fainthearted.”

STUDY NOTES

4:35 the other shore: See study note on Mt 8:18.

4:37 a great violent windstorm: This expression renders three Greek words that could literally be translated “a great hurricane of wind.” (See study note on Mt 8:24.) Mark was not present, so his vivid description of the windstorm and the other details mentioned in this account may indicate that he obtained the information from Peter.—Regarding Peter’s influence on Mark’s Gospel, see “Introduction to Mark.”

See  Gallery, image 24, First-Century Fishing Boat.

See  Gallery, image 25, Remains of a Galilean Fishing Boat.

4:38 the pillow: Or “the cushion.” This is the only place where this word appears in the Christian Greek Scriptures. The use of the definite article in Greek may suggest that the pillow was part of the boat’s equipment. It may have been a sack of sand kept as ballast beneath the stern deck, a leather-covered seat for the helmsman, or a fleece or cushion on which an oarsman could sit.

4:39 See  Gallery, image 2, Jesus Calms the Storm.

5:1 Gerasenes: In the parallel accounts of this event (Mt 8:28-34; Mr 5:1-20; Lu 8:26-39), different names are used for where this event took place. For each account, there are also different readings in ancient manuscripts. According to the best available manuscripts, Matthew originally used “Gadarenes,” whereas Mark and Luke employed “Gerasenes.” However, as shown in the study note on

region of the Gerasenes in this verse, both of these terms refer to the same general region.

region of the Gerasenes: A region on the **other** (the eastern) shore of the Sea of Galilee. The exact limits of this region are unknown today, and the identification is uncertain. Some link “the region of the Gerasenes” with the area around Kursi, near the steep slopes on the E shore of the sea. Others think that it was the large district radiating from the city of Gerasa (Jarash), which was 55 km (34 mi) SSE of the Sea of Galilee. Mt 8:28 calls it “the region of the Gadarenes.” (See study note on **Gerasenes** in this verse and study note on Mt 8:28.) Although different names are used, they refer to the same general area of the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and the regions may have been overlapping. So the accounts are not contradictory.—See also

CHAP. 5

a Lu 8:28-30

b Mt 8:29
Jas 2:19

c Ac 16:17, 18

d Lu 8:31

e Le 11:7, 8
De 14:8f Mt 8:30-33
Lu 8:32-34

g Lu 8:35-37

with fetters and chains, but he snapped the chains apart and smashed the fetters; and nobody had the strength to subdue him. **5** And continually, night and day, he was crying out in the tombs and in the mountains and slashing himself with stones. **6** But on catching sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down to him.^a **7** Then he cried out with a loud voice: “What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I put you under oath by God not to torment me.”^b **8** For Jesus had been saying to it: “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit.”^c **9** But Jesus asked him: “What is your name?” And he replied: “My name is Legion, because there are many of us.” **10** And he kept pleading with Jesus not to send the spirits out of the country.^d

11 Now a great herd of swine^e was feeding there at the mountain.^f **12** So the spirits pleaded with him: “Send us into the swine, so that we may enter into them.” **13** And he gave them permission. With that the unclean spirits came out and went into the swine, and the herd rushed over the precipice* into the sea, about 2,000 of them, and were drowned in the sea. **14** But their herders fled and reported it in the city and in the countryside, and people came to see what had happened.^g **15** So they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who previously had the legion, sitting clothed and in his right

FOOTNOTES

5:13 *Or “steep bank.”

STUDY NOTES

App. A7, Map 3B, “Activity at the Sea of Galilee,” and App. B10.

See Gallery, image 38, Cliffs on the Eastern Side of the Sea of Galilee.

5:2 a man: The Gospel writer Matthew (8:28) mentions two men, but Mark and Luke (8:27) refer to one. Mark and Luke evidently drew attention to just one demon-possessed man because Jesus spoke to him and because his case was more outstanding. Possibly, that man was more violent or had suffered under demon control for a longer time. It could also be that after the two men were healed, only one of them wanted to accompany Jesus.—Mr 5:18-20.

tombs: See study note on Mt 8:28.

5:7 What have I to do with you, . . . ?:

Or “What is there in common between me and you?” Literally translated, this rhetorical question reads: “What to me and to you?” This Semitic idiom is found in the Hebrew Scriptures (Jg 11:12, fn.; Jos 22:24; 2Sa 16:10; 19:22; 1Ki 17:18; 2Ki 3:13; 2Ch 35:21; Ho 14:8), and a corresponding Greek phrase is used in the Christian Greek Scriptures (Mt 8:29; Mr 1:24; 5:7; Lu 4:34; 8:28; Joh 2:4). The exact meaning may vary, depending on context. In this verse (Mr 5:7), the idiom expresses hostility and repulsion, and some have suggested such a rendering as: “Do not bother me!” or “Leave me alone!” In other contexts, it is used to express a difference in viewpoint, or opinion, or to refuse involvement in a suggested action without indicating disdain, arrogance, or hostility.—See study note on Joh 2:4.

torment me: A related Greek term is used of “the jailers” at Mt 18:34 (see study note). So in this context, the “torment”

would seem to refer to a restraining or a confining to “the abyss” mentioned in the parallel account at Lu 8:31.

5:9 Legion: Likely, this was not the demon-possessed man’s actual name, but it indicates that the man was possessed by many demons. Possibly, the chief one of these demons caused this man to say that his name was Legion. In the first century C.E., a Roman legion usually consisted of some 6,000 men, which may indicate that a large number of demons were involved.—See study note on Mt 26:53.

5:11 swine: Pigs were unclean according to the Law (Le 11:7), but there was a market for pork among the many non-Jews living in the Decapolis region; both Greeks and Romans considered pork a delicacy. The account does not state whether the herders were Jews who were violating the Law.—Mr 5:14.

mind, and they grew fearful. **16** Also, those who had seen it related to them how this had happened to the demon-possessed man and the swine. **17** So they began to plead with Jesus to go away from their region.^a

18 Now as he was boarding the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed pleaded to go with him.^b **19** However, he did not let him but said to him: “Go home to your relatives, and report to them all the things Jehovah has done for you and the mercy he has shown you.” **20** This man went away and started to proclaim in the De-cap’o-lis all the things Jesus had done for him, and all the people were amazed.

Jairus’ Daughter Resurrected; a Woman Touches Jesus’ Outer Garment

21 After Jesus had crossed again by boat to the opposite shore, a large crowd gathered together to him, and he was by the sea.^c **22** One of the presiding officers of the synagogue, named Ja’i-rus, now came, and on catching sight of him, he fell at his feet.^d **23** He pleaded with him many times, saying: “My little daughter is extremely ill. Please come and put your hands on her^e so that she may get well and live.” **24** At that Jesus went with him, and a large crowd was following him and pressing against him.

25 Now there was a woman who had had a flow of blood^f for 12 years.^g **26** She had suffered much at the hands of many physicians and had spent all her resources, and she was no better but, rather, had become worse. **27** When she heard the reports about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and

CHAP. 5

- a Mt 8:34
- b Lu 8:38, 39
- c Lu 8:40
- d Mt 9:18, 19
Lu 8:41, 42
- e Lu 4:40
- f Le 15:25
- g Mt 9:20-22
Lu 8:43, 44

STUDY NOTES

5:19 report to them: In contrast with Jesus’ usual instructions not to publicize his miracles (Mr 1:44; 3:12; 7:36), he instructed this man to tell his relatives what had happened. This may have been because Jesus was asked to leave the region and would not personally give them a witness; it would also serve to counteract unfavorable reports that might circulate over the loss of the swine.

all the things Jehovah has done for you: Speaking to the man who had been healed, Jesus is attributing the miracle, not to himself, but to his heavenly Father. This conclusion is supported by

Luke’s use of the Greek word *The-os*’ (God) in recording the same event. (Lu 8:39) Although most Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*ho Ky’ri-os*) here at Mr 5:19, there are good reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced with the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.—See  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Mr 5:19.

5:20 the Decapolis: Or “the Ten City Region.”—See  Glossary and  App. B10.

5:22 presiding officers of the synagogue: The Greek term *ar-khi-sy-na’go-gos* literally means “ruler of a synagogue.”—See study note on Mt 9:18.

5:23 is extremely ill: Or “is near her end,” that is, at the point of dying.

5:25 flow of blood: See study note on Mt 9:20.

5:29 grievous sickness: Lit., “scourging.”—See study note on Mr 5:34.

5:34 Daughter: The only recorded instance in which Jesus directly addressed a woman as “daughter,” perhaps because of her delicate situation and her “trembling.” (Mr 5:33; Lu 8:47) By using this term of endearment, a form of address that signifies nothing about the woman’s age, Jesus emphasizes his tender concern for her.

CHAP. 5

a Mt 14:36
Mr 6:56

b Mt 9:21

c Lu 5:17
Lu 6:19

d Lu 8:45-48

e Lu 7:50
Lu 8:48

f Mt 9:22

g Lu 8:49

h Lu 8:50
Joh 11:39, 40

i Mt 17:1, 2
Mt 26:36, 37

j Mt 9:23-26
Lu 8:51-56

k Mt 9:24
Lu 8:52
Joh 11:11

touched his outer garment,^a **28** for she kept saying: “If I touch just his outer garments, I will get well.”^{*b} **29** And immediately her flow of blood dried up, and she sensed in her body that she had been healed of the grievous sickness.

30 Immediately Jesus realized in himself that power^c had gone out of him, and he turned around in the crowd and asked: “Who touched my outer garments?”^d **31** But his disciples said to him: “You see the crowd pressing in on you, and you ask, ‘Who touched me?’” **32** However, he was looking around to see who had done this. **33** The woman, frightened and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. **34** He said to her: “Daughter, your faith has made you well.^{*} Go in peace,^e and be healed from your grievous sickness.”^f

35 While he was yet speaking, some men from the home of the presiding officer of the synagogue came and said: “Your daughter died! Why bother the Teacher any longer?”^g **36** But Jesus overheard their words and said to the presiding officer of the synagogue: “Have no fear,^{*} only exercise faith.”^h **37** Now he did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James.ⁱ

38 So they came to the house of the presiding officer of the synagogue, and he saw the commotion and those weeping and wailing loudly.^j **39** After stepping in, he said to them: “Why are you weeping and causing this commotion? The child has not died but is sleeping.”^k **40** At this they began to laugh at

FOOTNOTES

5:28 *Or “will be saved.” **5:34** *Or “has saved you.” **5:36** *Or “Stop being afraid.”

STUDY NOTES

5:34 **Go in peace:** This idiomatic expression is often used in both the Greek and the Hebrew Scriptures with the meaning “May it go well with you.” (Lu 7:50; 8:48; Jas 2:16; compare 1Sa 1:17; 20:42; 25:35; 29:7; 2Sa 15:9; 2Ki 5:19.) The Hebrew word often rendered “peace” (*sha-lohm*) has a broad meaning. It refers to the state of being free from war or disturbance (Jg 4:17; 1Sa 7:14; Ec 3:8) and can also convey the idea of health, safety, soundness (1Sa 25:6, ftn.; 2Ch 15:5, ftn.;

Job 5:24, ftn.), welfare (Es 10:3, ftn.), as well as friendship (Ps 41:9). In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word for “peace” (*ei-re’ne*) was used with the same broad connotations as the Hebrew word to express the ideas of well-being, salvation, and harmony, in addition to the absence of conflict.

your grievous sickness: Lit., “your scourging.” The literal meaning of this word refers to a form of whipping often used as torture. (Ac 22:24; Heb 11:36) Here used in its figurative meaning, it vividly describes the suffering caused by the woman’s illness.

5:36 **only exercise faith:** Or “just keep exercising faith.” The Greek verb form used here may indicate continuous

action. Jairus had shown a degree of faith when he first approached Jesus (Mr 5:22-24), and he is now urged to hold on to his faith in the face of his daughter’s death.

5:39 **has not died but is sleeping:** In the Bible, death is often likened to sleep. (Ps 13:3; Joh 11:11-14; Ac 7:60; 1Co 7:39; 15:51; 1Th 4:13) Jesus was going to bring the girl back to life, so he may have said this because he would demonstrate that just as people can be awakened from a deep sleep, they can be brought back from death. Jesus’ power to resurrect the girl came from his Father, “who makes the dead alive and calls the things that are not as though they are.”—Ro 4:17.

him scornfully. But after sending them all outside, he took the child's father and mother and those with him, and he went in where the child was. **41** Then, taking the hand of the child, he said to her: “*Tal'i-tha cu'mi*,” which, when translated, means: “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”^a **42** And immediately the girl rose and began walking. (She was 12 years old.) And at once they were beside themselves with great ecstasy. **43** But he ordered them again and again* to let no one learn of this,^b and he said that something should be given her to eat.

Jesus Rejected in His Hometown

6 He departed from there and came into his home territory,^c and his disciples followed him. **2** When it was the Sabbath, he started teaching in the synagogue, and most who heard him were astounded and said: “Where did this man get these things?^d And why should this wisdom have been given to him, and such powerful works be performed through his hands?^e **3** This is the carpenter,^f the son of Mary^g and the brother of James,^h Joseph, Judas, and Simon,ⁱ is it not? And his sisters are here with us, are they not?” So they began to

CHAP. 5

- a Mt 9:25
- Lu 7:14
- Lu 8:54
- Ac 9:40
- b Mr 1:42-44
- Mr 7:35, 36

CHAP. 6

- c Lu 4:16
- d Joh 6:42
- Joh 7:15
- e Mt 13:54-58
- f Isa 53:2
- g Joh 6:42
- h Ga 1:19
- i Mr 3:31

FOOTNOTES

5:43 *Or “he strongly ordered them.”

STUDY NOTES

5:41 *Talitha cumi*: Matthew and Luke also record the resurrection of Jairus' daughter (Mt 9:23-26; Lu 8:49-56), but only Mark includes these words of Jesus and translates them. This Semitic expression reads *Talitha cum* in some Greek manuscripts. While some scholars classify these words as Aramaic, others feel that they could be either Hebrew or Aramaic.—See study note on Mr 7:34.

5:42 **with great ecstasy**: Or “with great amazement.” The Greek word *ek'sta-sis* (from *ek*, meaning “out of,” and *sta'sis*, meaning “standing”) refers to a person's being cast out of his normal state of mind because of amazement, astonishment, or a vision from God. The Greek word is rendered “overwhelmed with emotion” at Mr 16:8 and “amazement” at Lu 5:26. In the book of Acts, the word is connected with divine action and is rendered “a trance” at Ac 10:10; 11:5; 22:17.—See study note on Ac 10:10.

6:1 **his home territory**: See study note on Mt 13:54.

6:3 **the carpenter**: Jesus was known as both “the carpenter” and “the carpenter's son,” giving us some insight into Jesus' life between his visit to the temple as a 12-year-old and the start of his ministry. (See study note on Mt 13:55.) The accounts in Matthew and Mark are complementary.

the son of Mary: This is the only time that Jesus is referred to in this way. Since no reference is made to Joseph, he may already have died. This possibility is also suggested by Jesus' request that John care for his mother, Mary, after his death.—Joh 19:26, 27.

brother: In the Bible, the Greek word *a-del-phos'* can refer to a spiritual relationship, but here it is used to describe Jesus' relationship with his half brothers, the younger sons of Joseph and Mary. Some who believe that Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Jesus claim that *a-del-phos'* here refers to cousins. However, the Christian Greek Scriptures use a distinct term for “cousin” (Greek,

a-ne-psi-os' at Col 4:10) and a different term for “the son of Paul's sister” (Ac 23:16). Also, Lu 21:16 uses the plural forms of the Greek words *a-del-phos'* and *syg-ge-nes'* (rendered “brothers and relatives”). These examples show that the terms denoting familial relationships are not used loosely or indiscriminately in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

James: See study note on Mt 13:55.

Judas: See study note on Mt 13:55.

6:5 **was not able to do any powerful work there**: Jesus was not able to perform many miracles, not because of a lack of power, but because the circumstances did not warrant it. The people of Nazareth lacked faith, and this kept Jesus from performing many powerful works there. (Mt 13:58) Divine power was not to be wasted on unreceptive skeptics.—Compare Mt 10:14; Lu 16:29-31.

6:6 **amazed at their lack of faith**: Mark is the only Gospel writer to mention how strongly Jesus felt about the reception he received from the people of his “home territory.” (Mt 13:57, 58; see also “Introduction to Mark.”) The Greek verb

CHAP. 6

a Jer 11:21
Mt 13:57
Lu 4:24
Joh 4:44

b Mt 9:35
Lu 13:22

c Lu 10:1

d Mt 10:1
Lu 9:1-6

e Mt 10:9, 10

f Mt 10:11

g Mt 10:14
Lu 10:10, 11
Ac 13:50, 51

h Mt 11:1
Lu 9:6
Ac 2:38
Ac 3:19

i Lu 10:17

stumble because of him. **4** But Jesus said to them: “A prophet is not without honor except in his home territory and among his relatives and in his own house.”^a **5** So he was not able to do any powerful work there except to lay his hands on a few sick people and cure them. **6** Indeed, he was amazed at their lack of faith. And he went around in a circuit to the villages, teaching.^b

The Twelve Instructed for the Ministry

7 He now summoned the Twelve and started sending them out two by two,^c and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits.^d **8** Also, he gave them orders to carry nothing for the trip except a staff—no bread, no food pouch, no money* in their belts^e— **9** but to put on sandals and not to wear two garments.* **10** Further, he said to them: “Wherever you enter into a home, stay there until you leave that place.^f **11** And wherever a place will not receive you or listen to you, on going out from there, shake off the dirt that is on your feet for a witness to them.”^g **12** Then they set out and preached that people should repent,^h **13** and they expelled many demonsⁱ and greased many sick people with oil and cured them.

FOOTNOTES

6:8 *Lit., “copper.” **6:9** *Or “an extra garment.”

STUDY NOTES

rendered “amazed” is often used to describe the way that people felt about Jesus’ miracles and teaching (Mr 5:20; 15:5), but on two occasions it is used to describe Jesus’ reaction. He was amazed that an army officer showed such great faith (Mt 8:10; Lu 7:9), and here his amazement included dismay at the lack of faith of the people of Nazareth.

went around in a circuit to the villages:

This marks the beginning of Jesus’ third preaching tour in Galilee. (Mt 9:35; Lu 9:1) The expression “in a circuit” may imply that he thoroughly covered the area and, according to some, came back to the point where he started. An important feature of Jesus’ ministry was **teaching**.—See study note on Mt 4:23.

6:8 See  Gallery, image 40, Staff and Food Pouch.

6:10 stay there until you leave that

place: Jesus was instructing his disciples that when they reached a town, they should stay in the home where hospitality was extended to them and not be “transferring from house to house.” (Lu 10:1-7) By not seeking a place where the householder could provide them with more comfort, entertainment, or material things, they would show that these things were of secondary importance when compared to their commission to preach.

6:11 shake off the dirt that is on your

feet: This gesture signified that the disciples disclaimed responsibility for the consequences that would come from God. A similar expression occurs at Mt 10:14; Lu 9:5. Mark and Luke add the expression **for a witness to** [or, “against”] **them**. Paul and Barnabas applied this instruction in Pisidian Antioch (Ac 13:51), and when Paul did something similar in Corinth by shaking out his garments, he added the explanatory words: “Let your blood be on your own heads. I am clean.” (Ac 18:6) Such gestures may already

have been familiar to the disciples; pious Jews who had traveled through Gentile country would shake what they perceived to be unclean dust off their sandals before reentering Jewish territory. However, Jesus evidently had a different meaning in mind when giving these instructions to his disciples.

6:13 greased many sick people with oil:

This act was symbolic. While oil was understood to have healing properties (compare Lu 10:34), sick people were **cured**, not by means of the oil itself, but by means of the miraculous operation of God’s holy spirit.—Lu 9:1, 6.

Death of John the Baptizer

CHAP. 6

14 Now King Herod^a heard of this, for the name of Jesus became well-known, and people were saying: “John the Baptizer has been raised up from the dead, and that is why the powerful works* are operating in him.”^b **15** But others were saying: “It is E-li’jah.” Still others were saying: “It is a prophet like one of the prophets of old.”^c **16** But when Herod heard it, he said: “The John whom I beheaded, this one has been raised up.” **17** For Herod himself had sent out and arrested John and had bound him in prison on account of He-ro’di-as, the wife of Philip his brother, because he had married her.^d **18** For John had been saying to Herod: “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.”^e **19** So He-ro’di-as was nursing a grudge against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not. **20** For Herod was in fear of John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man,^f and he was keeping him safe. After hearing him, he was at a great loss as to what to do, yet he continued to hear him gladly.

21 But a convenient day arrived when Herod spread an evening meal on his birthday^g for his high officials and the military commanders and the most prominent men of Gal’i-lee.^h **22** And the daughter of He-ro’di-as came in and danced and pleased Herod and those dining with him.* The king said to the girl: “Ask me for whatever you want, and I will give it to you.”

- a Lu 3:1
- b Mt 14:1-5
Lu 9:7-9
- c Mt 16:14
Mr 8:28
- d Lu 3:19, 20
- e Le 18:16
Le 20:21
- f Mt 11:11
Mt 21:26
- g Ge 40:20-22
- h Mt 14:6-12

FOOTNOTES

6:14 *Or “the miracles.” **6:22** *Or “his dinner guests; those reclining at the table with him.”

STUDY NOTES

6:14 King Herod: That is, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. (See  Glossary, “Herod.”) Matthew and Luke use Antipas’ official Roman title of “tetrarch,” or “district ruler.” (See study notes on Mt 14:1; Lu 3:1.) His tetrarchy consisted of Galilee and Perea. However, he was popularly referred to as “the king,” the title used once by Matthew (Mt 14:9) and the only title Mark uses with reference to Herod. —Mr 6:22, 25, 26, 27.

people were saying: Lit., “they were saying.” Some manuscripts read: “he was saying.”

6:14, 24 the Baptizer: See study note on Mr 1:4.

6:17 arrested John and . . . bound him in prison: See study note on Mt 14:3.

Herodias, the wife of Philip his brother: See study note on Mt 14:3.

6:20 knowing him to be a righteous and holy man: Herod Antipas listened to John and protected him, recognizing that he was righteous and holy. Though Herod was **in fear of John**, his fear of losing the respect of his guests and his lack of faith resulted in his being maneuvered into murdering John. The Jewish historian Josephus called John the Baptist “a good man.”

6:21 his birthday: This event likely occurred at Herod Antipas’ residence in Tiberias, a city located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. One reason for this conclusion is that Mark here

states that **the most prominent men of Galilee** were in attendance. (See study notes on Mt 14:3, 6.) The Bible mentions just two birthday celebrations—the one referred to here, at which John was beheaded; the other, that of a Pharaoh, at which the Egyptian monarch’s chief baker was executed. (Ge 40:18-22) These two accounts are similar in that both occasions were marked with great feasting and the granting of favors, and both are remembered for executions.

military commanders: The Greek term *khi-li’ar-khos* (chiliarch) literally means “ruler of a thousand,” that is, soldiers. It refers to a Roman military tribune. There were six tribunes in each Roman legion. The legion, however, was not divided into six different commands; rather, each tribune commanded the whole legion for one sixth of the time. Such a military commander had great authority, including

CHAP. 6

- a Mt 14:8
 b Lu 9:10
 c Mt 11:29
 Mt 14:13
 d Mr 3:20
 e Joh 6:1, 2
 f Mt 14:14
 Heb 4:15
 g Nu 27:16, 17
 1Ki 22:17
 Isa 53:6
 Eze 34:5, 8
 Mt 9:36
 h Isa 61:1
 Lu 9:11

23 Yes, he swore to her: “Whatever you ask me for, I will give it to you, up to half my kingdom.” **24** So she went out and said to her mother: “What should I ask for?” She said: “The head of John the Baptizer.” **25** She immediately rushed in to the king and made her request, saying: “I want you to give me right away on a platter the head of John the Baptist.”^a **26** Although this deeply grieved him, the king did not want to disregard her request, because of his oaths and his guests.* **27** So the king immediately sent a bodyguard and commanded him to bring John’s head. So he went off and beheaded him in the prison **28** and brought his head on a platter. He gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. **29** When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Jesus Feeds 5,000 Men

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all the things they had done and taught.^b **31** And he said to them: “Come, you yourselves, privately into an isolated place and rest up a little.”^c For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure time even to eat a meal.^d **32** So they set off in the boat for an isolated place to be by themselves.^e **33** But people saw them going and many got to know it, and from all the cities they ran together on foot and got there ahead of them. **34** Well, on getting out, he saw a large crowd, and he was moved with pity for them,^f because they were as sheep without a shepherd.^g And he started to teach them many things.^h

35 By now the hour had grown late, and his disciples came up to him and said: “This place is isolated, and the hour is already

FOOTNOTES

6:26 *Or “and those reclining at the table.”

STUDY NOTES

the power to nominate and assign centurions. The Greek word could also refer to high-ranking military officers in general. In the presence of such men of rank, Herod felt compelled to keep his oath and therefore ordered the beheading of John the Baptizer.

6:22 daughter of Herodias: A daughter of Herod Philip and the only child of her

mother, Herodias. Though her name, Salome, is not given in the Scriptures, it is preserved in the writings of Josephus. In time, Herod Antipas married Salome’s mother, having adulterously taken her from his half brother Philip.

6:26 his oaths: The use of the plural “oaths” may indicate that Herod emphasized or confirmed what he had sworn to Herodias’ daughter (Mr 6:23) with repeated oaths.—See study note on Mt 14:9.

6:27 a bodyguard: The Greek term used here is *spe-kou-la'tor*, a loanword from Latin (*speculator*), which could refer to a bodyguard, a courier, and sometimes

to an executioner. Greek equivalents of some 30 Latin words of a military, judicial, monetary, and domestic nature are found in the Christian Greek Scriptures, mostly in Mark and Matthew. Mark uses them more than any other Bible writer, lending credence to the belief that he wrote his Gospel in Rome and mainly for non-Jews, particularly the Romans.—See study note on Joh 19:20.

6:29 tomb: Or “memorial tomb.”—See Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

6:34 moved with pity: Or “felt compassion.”—See study note on Mt 9:36.

late.^a **36** Send them away, so that they may go off into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”^b **37** He replied to them: “You give them something to eat.” At this they said to him: “Should we go off and buy 200 de-nar’i worth of bread and give it to the people to eat?”^c **38** He said to them: “How many loaves do you have? Go see!” After finding out, they said: “Five, besides two fish.”^d **39** And he instructed all the people to recline in groups on the green grass.^e **40** So they reclined in groups of 100 and of 50. **41** Taking now the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing.^f Then he broke the loaves up and began giving them to the disciples to place them before the people, and he divided up the two fish for all. **42** So they all ate and were satisfied, **43** and they took up 12 baskets full of fragments, aside from the fish.^g **44** Those who ate the loaves were 5,000 men.

CHAP. 6

a Mt 14:15-21
Lu 9:12-17

b Joh 6:5

c 2Ki 4:42-44
Mt 15:33
Joh 6:7

d Joh 6:9

e Joh 6:10-13

f Mr 8:6
Lu 24:30
Ac 27:35

g Mt 14:20
Lu 9:17
Joh 6:13

h Mt 14:22

i Mt 6:6
Mt 14:23
Mr 1:35
Lu 6:12
Joh 6:15

j Mt 14:24-33
Joh 6:16-21

Jesus Walks on Water

45 Then, without delay, he made his disciples board the boat and go on ahead to the opposite shore toward Beth-sa’i-da, while he himself sent the crowd away.^h **46** But after saying good-bye to them, he went to a mountain to pray.ⁱ **47** When evening had fallen, the boat was in the middle of the sea, but he was alone on the land.^j **48** So when he saw them strug-

STUDY NOTES

6:37 You give them something to eat:

This is the only miracle of Jesus that is recorded in all four Gospels.—Mt 14:15-21; Mr 6:35-44; Lu 9:10-17; Joh 6:1-13.

denarii: See  Glossary, “Denarius” and  App. B14.

6:38 fish: See study note on Mt 14:17.

6:41 broke the loaves up: Bread was often made in flat loaves that were baked hard. Therefore, breaking the loaves to eat them was customary.—Mt 14:19; 15:36; 26:26; Mr 8:6; Lu 9:16.

6:43 baskets: These may have been small wicker baskets with a cord handle that a traveler could use for carrying them. It is thought that they had a volume of approximately 7.5 L (2 gal).—See study notes on Mr 8:19, 20.

See  Gallery, image 59, Baskets.

6:44 5,000 men: While this is the only miracle of Jesus that is recorded in all four Gospels (Mt 14:15-21; Mr 6:35-44; Lu 9:10-17; Joh 6:1-13), only Matthew mentions the women and the young children. It is possible that the total number of those miraculously fed was well over 15,000.

6:48 fourth watch: See study note on Mt 14:25.

inclined to: Or “about to.” Evidently meaning that from the disciples’ perspective, it looked as if Jesus was going to pass them by.

6:52 they had not grasped the meaning of the loaves: Just a few hours earlier, the disciples had seen Jesus multiply the loaves miraculously. That event clearly indicated how much power Jesus had been given by means of holy spirit. However, failing to grasp the implications of that miracle, the disciples were utterly amazed

when Jesus walked on water and calmed the storm. Initially, they even thought that his walking on water was just “an apparition,” that is, something unreal, an illusion.—Mr 6:49.

6:53 Gennesaret: See study note on Mt 14:34.

6:56 See  Gallery, image 46, The Marketplace.

7:2 with defiled hands, that is, unwashed ones: Mark’s explanation here and in verses 3 and 4 would benefit readers who were not familiar with the term “defiled hands” or the Jewish practice of handwashing. (See “Introduction to Mark.”) This practice was a ceremonial cleansing to adhere to tradition rather than a concern for hygiene. Later, the Babylonian Talmud (*Sotah 4b*) puts eating with unwashed hands on par with having relations with a prostitute, and it states that those who lightly esteem

CHAP. 6

- a Lu 24:37
 b Mt 14:27
 Joh 6:20
 c Mt 8:26, 27
 d Mt 14:34-36
 e Nu 15:38, 39
 Mt 9:20
 Mr 5:25-28
 Lu 8:43, 44
 Ac 19:11, 12

CHAP. 7

- f Mt 15:1

gling to row, for the wind was against them, about the fourth watch of the night he came toward them, walking on the sea; but he was inclined to pass them by. **49** On catching sight of him walking on the sea, they thought: "It is an apparition!"^a And they cried out. **50** For they all saw him and were troubled. But immediately he spoke to them and said: "Take courage! It is I; do not be afraid."^b **51** Then he got up into the boat with them, and the wind abated.^c At this they were utterly amazed, **52** for they had not grasped the meaning of the loaves, but their hearts continued dull in understanding.

Healings in Gennesaret

53 When they got across to land, they came to Gen-nes'a-ret and anchored the boat nearby.^d **54** But as soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized him. **55** They ran around all that region and started to bring on stretchers those who were ailing to where they heard he was. **56** And wherever he would enter into villages or cities or the countryside, they would place the sick ones in the marketplaces, and they would plead with him that they might touch just the fringe of his outer garment.^e And all those who touched it were made well.*

Human Traditions Exposed

7 Now the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him.^f **2** And they saw some of his disciples eat their meal with defiled hands, that is, unwashed ones. **3** (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands up to the elbow, clinging to the tradition of the men of former times, **4** and when they come from the market, they do not eat unless they wash themselves. There are many other traditions that they have received

FOOTNOTES

6:49 * Or "illusion." **6:56** * Or "were saved."

STUDY NOTES

handwashing will be "uprooted from the world."

7:3 wash their hands: The Mosaic Law required that the priests wash their hands and their feet before ministering at the altar or entering the tent of meeting. (Ex 30:18-21) However, as shown in the study

note on Mr 7:2, the Pharisees and other Jews in Jesus' day adhered to human tradition when they ceremonially cleansed themselves. Of the four Gospel accounts, only Mark's account mentions that the ceremonial washing of hands reached **up to the elbow**.

7:4 wash themselves: Many ancient manuscripts use the Greek word *ba-pti'zo* (to dip; to immerse) here, a term that most often describes Christian baptism, but at Lu 11:38, it is used to describe a broad range of repeated ritual washings

rooted in Jewish tradition. Other ancient manuscripts here use the Greek term *rhan-ti'zo*, meaning "to sprinkle; to cleanse by sprinkling." (Heb 9:13, 19, 21, 22) Regardless of which manuscript reading is preferred, the general meaning remains the same; devout Jews did not eat unless they in some way cleansed themselves ceremonially. In Jerusalem, there is archaeological evidence that the Jews used ritual baths at this time, which in this context could give support for rendering the verb *ba-pti'zo*, "immerse themselves."

and cling to, such as baptisms of cups, pitchers, and copper vessels.)^a **5** So these Pharisees and scribes asked him: “Why do your disciples not observe the tradition of the men of former times, but they eat their meal with defiled hands?”^b **6** He said to them: “Isaiah aptly prophesied about you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far removed from me.’^c **7** It is in vain that they keep worshipping me, for they teach commands of men as doctrines.’^d **8** You let go of the commandment of God and cling to the tradition of men.”^e

9 Further, he said to them: “You skillfully disregard the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.^f **10** For example, Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’^g and, ‘Let the one who speaks abusively of* his father or mother be put to death.’^h **11** But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or his mother: “Whatever I have that could benefit you is corban (that is, a gift dedicated to God),”’ **12** you no longer let him do a single thing for his father or his mother.ⁱ **13** Thus you make the word of God invalid by your tradition that you have handed down.^j And you do many things like this.”^k **14** So calling the crowd to him again, he said to them: “Listen to me, all of you, and understand the meaning.^l **15** Nothing from outside a man that enters into him can defile him; but the things that come out of a man are the things that defile him.”^m **16** —

CHAP. 7

- a Mt 23:25
Lu 11:38, 39
- b Mt 15:2
- c Mt 15:7-9
- d Isa 29:13
- e Ga 1:14
Col 2:8
- f Mt 15:3-6
- g Ex 20:12
De 5:16
Eph 6:2
- h Ex 21:17
Le 20:9
Pr 20:20
- i 1Ti 5:8
- j Mt 15:6
- k Mr 7:3
- l Mt 15:10
- m Mt 15:11
Tit 1:15

FOOTNOTES

7:10 *Or “reviles.”

STUDY NOTES

7:4 baptisms: Or “immersions into water.” The Greek word *ba-pti-smos*’ is here used regarding cleansing rituals practiced by some religious Jews in Jesus’ time. They baptized, or immersed into water, the cups, pitchers, and copper vessels used at meals.

7:6 hypocrites: See study note on Mt 6:2.

7:11 corban: The Greek word *kor-ban*’ is a loanword from the Hebrew *qor-ban*’, meaning “an offering.” This Hebrew word is often used in Leviticus and Numbers and applies both to offerings containing blood and to those that are bloodless. (Le 1:2, 3; 2:1; Nu 5:15; 6:14, 21) A related word, *kor-ba-nas*’, appears at Mt 27:6,

where it is rendered “sacred treasury.”

—See study note on Mt 27:6.

a gift dedicated to God: The scribes and Pharisees taught that money, property, or anything that a person dedicated as a gift to God belonged to the temple. According to this tradition, a son could keep the dedicated gift and use it for his own interests, claiming that it was reserved for the temple. Some evidently evaded the responsibility of caring for their parents by dedicating their assets in this way.—Mr 7:12.

7:16 Some manuscripts here include the words “If anyone has ears to listen, let him listen,” but they do not appear in important early manuscripts. Therefore, these words are evidently not part of the original text of Mark. Similar words, though, can be found at Mr 4:9, 23 as part of the inspired Scriptures. Some

scholars are of the opinion that a copyist introduced these words here as a natural comment following verse 14 by drawing from the wording at Mr 4:9, 23.—See App. A3.

7:19 Thus he declared all foods clean:

The Greek text allows for these words to be a continuation of what Jesus said, but they are generally understood to be Mark’s observation on the implications of what Jesus had just explained. It does not mean that Jesus was declaring that Jews could now eat certain foods that had been considered unclean according to the Mosaic Law. That Law remained in force until Jesus’ death. Mark’s comment must be understood in accord with this historical context. (Le, chap. 11; Ac 10:9-16; Col 2:13, 14) The tradition-bound religious leaders felt that even “clean” foods would make a person unclean unless he first followed elaborate cleansing rituals not

CHAP. 7

Defilement Comes From the Heart

- a Mt 15:15-20
Lu 8:9, 10
- b Mt 15:18
- c Ge 6:5
Ge 8:21
Jer 17:9
- d Ga 5:19-21
- e Mt 15:21
- f Mt 15:22-28

17 Now when he had entered a house away from the crowd, his disciples began to question him about the illustration.^a

18 So he said to them: “Are you also without understanding like them? Are you not aware that nothing from outside that enters into a man can defile him, **19** since it enters, not into his heart, but into his stomach, and it passes out into the sewer?”* Thus he declared all foods clean. **20** Further, he said: “That which comes out of a man is what defiles him.^b **21** For from inside, out of the heart of men,^c come injurious reasonings: sexual immorality, thefts, murders, **22** acts of adultery, greed, acts of wickedness, deceit, brazen conduct, an envious eye, blasphemy, haughtiness, and unreasonableness. **23** All these wicked things come from within and defile a man.”^d

Syrophenician Woman's Faith

24 He rose up from there and went into the region of Tyre and Si'don.^e There he entered into a house and did not want anyone to know it, but he could not escape notice. **25** Immediately, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him and came and fell down at his feet.^f **26** The woman was a Greek, a Sy-ro-phoe-ni'cian by nationality;* and she kept asking him to expel the demon from her daughter. **27** But he said to her: “First let the children be satisfied, for it is not right to take the bread of the children and throw it to the

FOOTNOTES

7:19 *Or “latrine; privy.” **7:26** *Or “by birth.”

STUDY NOTES

required by the Law. Therefore, the meaning of Mark's comment is evidently that Jesus declared that foods counted as “clean” according to the Mosaic Law would not defile the eater just because he had not ritualistically washed his hands according to man-made traditions. Furthermore, some have understood that Mark was also commenting on the future implications Jesus' words would have for Christians. By the time Mark wrote his Gospel, Peter had seen the vision in which he was told, in language similar to this passage in Mark, that “God has cleansed” foods that were once considered defiled

according to the Mosaic Law. (Ac 10:13-15) In either case, the words appear to be Mark's inspired summary of the implications of Jesus' words, not the words of Jesus himself.

7:21 sexual immorality: See study note on Mt 15:19.

7:22 acts of adultery: The plural form of the Greek word for “adultery” (*moi-khei'ra*) is used here.—See  Glossary, “Adultery.”

brazen conduct: Or “shameless conduct.” The Greek word *a-sel'gei-a* denotes conduct that is a serious violation of God's laws and that reflects a brazen or boldly contemptuous attitude.—See  Glossary.

an envious eye: The Greek word here rendered “envious” literally means “bad; wicked.” The term “eye” is here

used figuratively of a person's intent, disposition, or emotions. The expression “an envious eye” could also be rendered “envy.”—See study notes on Mt 6:23; 20:15.

7:26 a Greek: This non-Israelite woman was likely of Greek descent.

Syrophenician: This expression, a combination of “Syrian” and “Phoenician,” probably originated because Phoenicia was part of the Roman province of Syria.—See study note on Mt 15:22, where the woman is called “Phoenician,” or “Canaanite.”

little dogs.”^a **28** But she replied to him: “Yes, sir, and yet even the little dogs underneath the table eat of the crumbs of the little children.” **29** At that he said to her: “Because you said this, go; the demon has gone out of your daughter.”^b **30** So she went away to her home and found the young child lying on the bed, and the demon was gone.^c

Deaf Man Healed

31 When Jesus returned from the region of Tyre, he went through Si'don to the Sea of Gal'i-lee, through the region of Decap'o-lis.^d **32** Here they brought him a deaf man with a speech impediment,^e and they pleaded with him to lay his hand on him. **33** And he took him aside privately, away from the crowd. Then he put his fingers into the man's ears, and after spitting, he touched his tongue.^f **34** And looking up into heaven, he sighed deeply and said to him: “*Eph'pha-tha*,” that is, “Be opened.” **35** At this his ears were opened,^g and his speech impediment was removed, and he began speaking normally. **36** With that he ordered them not to tell anyone,^h but the more he would order them, the more they would proclaim it.ⁱ **37** Indeed, they were astounded beyond measure,^j and they said: “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the speechless speak.”^k

Jesus Feeds About 4,000 Men

8 In those days, there was again a large crowd, and they had nothing to eat. So he summoned the disciples and said to them: **2** “I feel pity for the crowd,^l because they have already stayed with me for three days and they have nothing to eat.”^m

CHAP. 7

- a Mt 10:5, 6
Mt 15:26
Ro 9:4
Eph 2:12
- b Mt 15:28
- c Joh 4:49-51
- d Mt 15:29, 30
- e Mt 9:32, 33
Lu 11:14
- f Mr 8:23
Joh 9:6
- g Isa 35:5
Mt 11:5
- h Isa 42:2
Mt 8:3, 4
Mr 5:42, 43
- i Mr 1:43-45
- j Ac 14:11
- k Isa 35:5, 6
Mt 15:31

CHAP. 8

- l Mt 14:14
Mr 6:34
Heb 2:17
Heb 5:2
- m Mt 15:32-38

STUDY NOTES

7:27 children . . . little dogs: Since dogs were unclean according to the Mosaic Law, the Scriptures often use the term in a derogatory sense. (Le 11:27; Mt 7:6; Php 3:2; Re 22:15) However, in both Matthew's account (15:26) and Mark's account of Jesus' conversation, the diminutive form of the term meaning “little dog” or “house dog” is used, softening the comparison. Perhaps this indicates that Jesus used an affectionate term for household pets in non-Jewish homes. By likening Israelites to “children” and non-Jews to “little dogs,” Jesus evidently wanted to indicate an order of priority.

In a household that had both children and dogs, the children would be fed first.

7:31 Decapolis: See 📖 Glossary and 📖 App. B10.

7:32 a deaf man with a speech impediment: Only Mark mentions Jesus' healing of the deaf man who had a speech impediment.—Mr 7:31-37.

7:33 took him aside privately: This was not something Jesus usually did when healing the sick. He may have desired to avoid embarrassing the man. Jesus wanted to help him in the kindest way possible.

spitting: Some among both Jews and Gentiles considered spitting a means or

sign of healing. So Jesus may have spit simply to convey to the man that he was about to be healed. Whatever the case, Jesus was not using his saliva as a natural healing agent.

7:34 sighed deeply: Mark often records Jesus' feelings, perhaps as related to Mark by Peter, a man of deep emotion. (See “Introduction to Mark.”) This verb may describe a prayerful sigh or groan, reflecting Jesus' sympathy for the man or even Jesus' pain over the suffering of all humans. A related verb at Ro 8:22 describes the “groaning” of all creation.

Ephphatha: A Greek transliteration thought by some to derive from a

CHAP. 8

a Mr 6:38

b Mr 6:41

c Mt 15:37

d Mt 15:39

e Mt 16:1-3

f Mt 12:38

Joh 6:30

g Mt 16:4

h Mt 16:5-12

3 If I send them off to their homes hungry,* they will give out on the road, and some of them are from far away.” **4** But his disciples answered him: “From where will anyone get enough bread in this isolated place to satisfy these people?” **5** At this he asked them: “How many loaves do you have?” They said: “Seven.”^a **6** And he instructed the crowd to recline on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves, gave thanks, broke them, and began giving them to his disciples to serve, and they served them to the crowd.^b **7** They also had a few small fish, and blessing these, he told them to serve these also. **8** So they ate and were satisfied, and they took up seven large baskets full of leftover fragments.^c **9** Now there were about 4,000 men. Then he sent them away.

Request for a Sign

10 Immediately he boarded the boat with his disciples and came into the region of Dal·ma·nu'tha.^d **11** Here the Pharisees came and started disputing with him, demanding from him a sign* from heaven, to put him to the test.^e **12** So he sighed deeply in his spirit and said: “Why does this generation seek a sign?^f Truly I say, no sign will be given to this generation.”^g **13** With that he left them, got aboard again, and went to the opposite shore.

Leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod

14 However, they forgot to take bread along, and they had nothing with them in the boat except for one loaf.^h **15** And

FOOTNOTES

8:3 *Or “without food; fasting.” **8:11** *Or “miraculous proof.”

STUDY NOTES

Hebrew root word that is rendered “be unstopped” at Isa 35:5. Jesus’ use of this expression must have made an indelible impression on an eyewitness, possibly Peter, who may have related it verbatim to Mark. Like the expression “*Talitha cumi*” (Mr 5:41), it is one of the few times that Jesus is quoted verbatim.

8:2 **feel pity:** Or “feel compassion.”—See study note on Mt 9:36.

8:8 **large baskets:** Or “provision baskets.” The Greek word *sphyris* used here

seems to denote a type of basket that is larger than the ones used on an earlier occasion when Jesus fed about 5,000 men. (See study note on Mr 6:43.) The same Greek word is used for the “basket” in which Paul was lowered to the ground through an opening in the wall of Damascus.—See study note on Ac 9:25.

8:9 **about 4,000 men:** Only Matthew’s parallel account (Mt 15:38) mentions the women and the young children when reporting this miracle. It is possible that the total number of those miraculously fed was over 12,000.

8:10 **Dalmanutha:** This name is not mentioned in other Biblical or non-Biblical sources, but it was preserved in Mark’s Gospel. Though the exact location is

uncertain, it seems to have been near the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, since the area is called Magadan in Matthew’s parallel account. (See study note on Mt 15:39.) Dalmanutha may have been another name for Magadan.

8:12 **sighed deeply:** Mark, who frequently records how Jesus felt and reacted (Mr 3:5; 7:34; 9:36; 10:13-16, 21), uses a verb found only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. This intensive form of a related verb, used at Mr 7:34 (see study note), expresses a strong emotional reaction. This deep sigh may have reflected his exasperation over the Pharisees’ demand for a sign while they stubbornly ignored the evident demonstrations of power that they had already seen.

he warned them in no uncertain terms: “Keep your eyes open; look out for the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”^a **16** So they began arguing with one another over the fact that they had no bread. **17** Noting this, he said to them: “Why do you argue over your having no bread? Do you not yet perceive and understand? Are your hearts still dull in understanding? **18** ‘Though having eyes, do you not see; and though having ears, do you not hear?’ Do you not remember **19** when I broke the five loaves^b for the 5,000 men, how many baskets full of fragments you collected?” They said to him: “Twelve.”^c **20** “When I broke the seven loaves for the 4,000 men, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?” And they said to him: “Seven.”^d **21** With that he said to them: “Do you not yet understand?”

CHAP. 8

- a Mt 16:6
Lu 12:1
b Mr 6:38
c Mt 14:20
Mr 6:43
Lu 9:17
Joh 6:13
d Mt 15:37
e Mr 6:56
f Mr 7:32, 33
Joh 9:1, 6

Blind Man Healed in Bethsaida

22 Now they put in at Beth-sa'i-da. Here people brought him a blind man, and they pleaded with him to touch him.^e **23** And he took the blind man by the hand and brought him outside the village. After spitting on his eyes,^f he laid his hands on him and asked him: “Do you see anything?” **24** The man looked up* and said: “I see people, but they look like trees walking about.” **25** Again he laid his hands on the man’s eyes, and the man saw clearly. His sight was restored, and he could see everything distinctly. **26** So he sent him home, saying: “Do not enter into the village.”

FOOTNOTES

8:24 *Or “recovered sight; saw again.”

STUDY NOTES

8:15 leaven: Or “yeast.” Often used figuratively in the Bible to denote corruption and sin, “leaven” here refers to corrupt teaching and influence. (Mt 16:6, 11, 12; 1Co 5:6-8) The repetition of the word in this verse suggests that “the leaven” of the Pharisees was different from that of Herod and his party followers, the Herodians. This latter group was more political than religious. An example of their nationalistic “leaven” was the question about the paying of taxes that the two groups used in an attempt to trap Jesus.—Mr 12:13-15.

Herod: Some ancient manuscripts read “Herodians.”—See  Glossary, “Herod, party followers of.”

See  Gallery, image 56, Coin Made by Herod Antipas.

8:19 baskets: Reporting on the two occasions when Jesus miraculously fed the crowds (see study notes on Mr 6:43; 8:8, 20 and parallel accounts at Mt 14:20; 15:37; 16:9, 10), the accounts consistently distinguish between the types of baskets used for collecting leftovers. When he fed the 5,000 men, the Greek term *ko'phi-nos* (“basket”) is used; when he fed the 4,000 men, the Greek word *sphy-ris'* (“large basket”) is used. This indicates that the writers were present or had received the facts from reliable eyewitnesses.

8:20 large baskets: Or “provision baskets.”—See study notes on Mr 8:8, 19.

8:22 a blind man: Mark is the only Gospel writer to record Jesus’ healing of this blind man.—Mr 8:22-26.

8:27 Caesarea Philippi: See study note on Mt 16:13.

8:28 John the Baptist: See study notes on Mt 3:1; Mr 1:4.

Elijah: See study note on Mt 11:14.

8:29 the Christ: See study note on Mt 16:16.

8:31 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

elders: Lit., “older men.” In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority

CHAP. 8

Peter Identifies Jesus as the Christ; Jesus Foretells His Own Death and Resurrection

- a Mt 16:13-15
Lu 9:18, 19
- b Mt 14:1, 2
Mr 6:14
- c Mr 9:11
- d Mt 16:16
Lu 9:20
Joh 1:40, 41
Joh 6:68, 69
- e Mt 16:20
Mr 9:9
Lu 9:21, 22
- f Mt 26:2
- g Mt 16:21
Mt 17:22, 23
- h Mt 16:22
- i Mt 16:23
- j Mt 10:38
Mt 16:24
Lu 9:23
Lu 14:27
- k Mt 10:39
Mt 16:25
Lu 9:24
Joh 12:25
Re 12:11
- l Mt 16:26
Lu 9:25

27 Jesus and his disciples now left for the villages of Caesare'a Phi-lip'pi, and on the way he began to question his disciples, saying: "Who are people saying that I am?"^a **28** They said to him: "John the Baptist,^b but others say E-li'jah,^c and still others, one of the prophets." **29** And he put the question to them: "You, though, who do you say I am?" Peter answered him: "You are the Christ."^d **30** At that he strictly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.^e **31** Also, he began teaching them that the Son of man must undergo many sufferings and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed,^f and rise three days later.^g **32** Indeed, he was making that statement openly. But Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.^h **33** At this he turned, looked at his disciples, and rebuked Peter, saying: "Get behind me, Satan! because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men."^{*i}

True Discipleship

34 He now called the crowd to him with his disciples and said to them: "If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake and keep following me.^j **35** For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and for the sake of the good news will save it.^k **36** Really, what good will it do a man to gain the whole world and to lose his life?^l **37** What, really, would a man give

FOOTNOTES

8:33 * Or "you have, not God's mind, but that of humans."

STUDY NOTES

and responsibility in a community or a nation. Although the term sometimes refers to physical age (as at Lu 15:25; Ac 2:17), it is not limited to those who are elderly. Here it refers to the leaders of the Jewish nation, who are often mentioned together with chief priests and scribes. The Sanhedrin was made up of men from these three groups.—Mr 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1; see study note on Mt 16:21 and  Glossary, "Elder; Older man."

chief priests: See study note on Mt 2:4 and  Glossary, "Chief priest."

scribes: See study note on Mt 2:4 and  Glossary, "Scribe."

8:33 Get behind me: According to the parallel account at Mt 16:23, Jesus adds: "You are a stumbling block to me." (See study note on Mt 18:7.) Jesus thus strongly **rebuked** Peter. Jesus refused to allow anything to hinder him from fulfilling his Father's will. His words may also have reminded Peter of his proper place as a supportive follower of his Master.

Satan: See study note on Mt 16:23.

8:34 come after me: Or, according to some ancient manuscripts, "follow after me."

let him disown himself: Or "let him give up all right to himself." This indicates a person's willingness to deny himself utter-

ly or to relinquish ownership of himself to God. The Greek phrase can be rendered "he must say no to himself," which is fitting because it may involve saying no to personal desires, ambitions, or convenience. (2Co 5:14, 15) The same Greek verb is used by Mark when describing Peter's denial of Jesus.—Mr 14:30, 31, 72.

torture stake: See study note on Mt 16:24.

8:35, 36 life: Or "soul."—See  Glossary, "Soul."

in exchange for his life?^a **38** For whoever becomes ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man will also be ashamed of him^b when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”^c

Jesus' Transfiguration

9 Furthermore, he said to them: “Truly I say to you that there are some of those standing here who will not taste death at all until first they see the Kingdom of God already having come in power.”^d **2** Six days later Jesus took Peter and James and John along and led them up into a lofty mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them;^e **3** his outer garments began to glisten, becoming far whiter than any clothes cleaner on earth could whiten them. **4** Also, E-li'jah with Moses appeared to them, and they were conversing with Jesus. **5** Then Peter said to Jesus: “Rabbi, it is fine for us to be here. So let us erect three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for E-li'jah.” **6** In fact, he did not know how to react, for they were quite fearful. **7** And a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice^f came out of the cloud: “This is my Son, the beloved.^g Listen to him.”^h **8** Then suddenly they looked around and saw that no one was with them any longer except Jesus.

The Coming of Elijah

9 As they were coming down from the mountain, he strictly ordered them not to relate to anybody what they had seenⁱ until after the Son of man had risen from the dead.^j **10** They took the word to heart,^{*} but discussed among themselves what this rising from the dead meant. **11** And they began to question him, saying: “Why do the scribes say that E-li'jah^k must come first?”^l **12** He said to them: “E-li'jah does come first and restore all things;^m but how is it that it is written about the Son

CHAP. 8

- a Ps 49:8
- b Mt 10:33
Lu 12:9
Ro 1:16
2Ti 1:7, 8
- c Mt 16:27
Mt 25:31
Lu 9:26
2Th 1:7

CHAP. 9

- d Mt 16:28
Lu 9:27
- e Mt 17:1-8
Lu 9:28-36
2Pe 1:16-18
- f Lu 3:22
Joh 12:28
- g Ps 2:7
Isa 42:1
Mt 3:17
2Pe 1:17, 18
- h De 18:15
Mt 17:5
Lu 9:35
Ac 3:22, 23
- i Mt 12:15, 16
Mr 8:29, 30
- j Mt 17:9
Lu 9:36
- k Mal 4:5, 6
Mr 8:27, 28
- l Mt 17:10
- m Mt 17:11

FOOTNOTES

9:10 * Or possibly, “kept the matter to themselves.”

STUDY NOTES

8:37 **life:** Or “soul.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

8:38 **adulterous:** Or “unfaithful.” In a spiritual sense, adultery denotes unfaithfulness to God on the part of those who are joined to him in a covenant. The false

religious practices of natural Israel were a violation of the Law covenant, making the Israelites guilty of spiritual adultery. (Jer 3:8, 9; 5:7, 8; 9:2; 13:27; 23:10; Ho 7:4) For similar reasons, Jesus denounced as adulterous the generation of Jews in his day. (Mt 12:39; 16:4) If Christians who are in the new covenant defile themselves with the present system of things, they commit spiritual adultery. In principle, this would be true of all those who are dedicated to Jehovah.—Jas 4:4.

9:2 **a lofty mountain:** Possibly Mount Hermon, which is near Caesarea Philippi. (Mr 8:27; see study note on Mt 16:13.) It reaches a height of 2,814 m (9,232 ft) above sea level. The transfiguration may have taken place on one of the spurs of Mount Hermon.—See  App. B10.

he was transfigured: See study note on Mt 17:2.

See  Gallery, image 60, Mount Hermon.

CHAP. 9

- a Da 9:26
 b Ps 22:6, 7
 Isa 50:6
 Isa 53:3
 Lu 23:11
 c Mt 11:13, 14
 Lu 1:13, 17
 d Mt 17:12, 13
 e Lu 9:37
 f Mt 17:14-17
 Lu 9:38-42
 g De 32:20
 h Mt 17:17
 Lu 9:41
 i Mr 1:26
 j 2Ch 20:20
 Mt 17:20
 Mr 11:23
 Lu 17:6
 Joh 11:40
 Ac 14:9, 10
 k Lu 17:5
 Heb 12:2

of man that he must undergo many sufferings^a and be treated with contempt?^b **13** But I say to you that E-li'jah,^c in fact, has come, and they did to him whatever they wanted, just as it is written about him."^d

Demon-Possessed Boy Healed

14 When they came to the other disciples, they noticed a large crowd around them, and there were scribes arguing with them.^e **15** But as soon as all the crowd caught sight of him, they were astonished, and they ran up to him to greet him. **16** So he asked them: "What are you arguing about with them?" **17** And one of the crowd answered him: "Teacher, I brought my son to you because he has a speechless spirit.^f **18** Wherever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground, and he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and loses his strength. I asked your disciples to expel it, but they were not able to do so." **19** In response he said to them: "O faithless generation,^g how long must I continue with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him to me."^h **20** So they brought the boy to him, but at the sight of him, the spirit at once threw the child into convulsions.ⁱ After falling on the ground, he kept rolling about, foaming at the mouth. **21** Then Jesus asked the father: "How long has this been happening to him?" He said: "From childhood on, **22** and often it would throw him into the fire and also into the water to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." **23** Jesus said to him: "That expression, 'If you can!' Why, all things are possible for the one who has faith."^j **24** Immediately the child's father cried out and said: "I have faith! Help me out where I need faith!"^{*k}

25 Jesus, now noticing that a crowd was rushing toward them, rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: "You speechless

FOOTNOTES

9:24 * Lit., "Help my lack of faith!"

STUDY NOTES

9:2 See  Gallery, image 61, Mount Hermon As Seen From the Hula Valley Nature Reserve.

9:5 **Rabbi:** Literally meaning "my great one," from the Hebrew word *rav*, meaning "great." In common usage, "Rabbi" meant "Teacher."—Joh 1:38.

9:7 **a voice:** The second of three instances in the Gospel accounts where Jehovah is reported as speaking directly to humans.—See study notes on Mr 1:11; Joh 12:28.

9:9 **Son of man:** See study note on Mt 8:20.

9:17 **a speechless spirit:** That is, an evil spirit that makes a person unable to speak.

9:20 **convulsions:** In this particular case, demon activity was associated with epi-

leptic symptoms. However, the Scriptures do not imply that epilepsy is generally caused by demon possession any more than deafness and speechlessness are. (Compare Mr 9:17, 25.) Rather, Mt 4:24 reports that people brought to Jesus ailing ones who included those who were "demon-possessed *and* epileptic," drawing a distinction between these two types of individuals.—See study note on Mt 4:24.

and deaf spirit, I order you, get out of him and do not enter into him again!”^a **26** After crying out and going through many convulsions, it came out, and the child seemed to be dead, so that most of the people were saying: “He is dead!” **27** But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up, and he stood up. **28** So after he entered into a house, his disciples asked him privately: “Why could we not expel it?”^b **29** He said to them: “This kind can come out only by prayer.”

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection a Second Time

30 They departed from there and went through Gal'i-lee, but he did not want anyone to get to know about it. **31** For he was teaching his disciples and telling them: “The Son of man is going to be betrayed* into men’s hands, and they will kill him,^c but despite being killed, he will rise three days later.”^d **32** However, they did not understand his statement, and they were afraid to question him.

Disciples Argue About Greatness

33 And they came into Ca-per'na-um. Now when he was inside the house, he put the question to them: “What were you arguing about on the road?”^e **34** They kept silent, for on the road they had been arguing among themselves about who is greater. **35** So he sat down and called the Twelve and said to them: “If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and minister of all.”^f **36** Then he took a young child and stood him in their midst; and putting his arms around him, he said to them:

CHAP. 9

^a Mt 17:18
Mr 1:23-25
Lu 4:34, 35
Ac 10:38

^b Mt 17:19
Mt 17:20

^c Mt 26:2

^d Mt 16:21
Mt 17:22, 23
Mr 8:31
Lu 9:44, 45

^e Mt 18:1-5
Lu 9:46-48
Lu 22:24-26

^f Mt 20:26-28
Mt 23:11, 12
Mr 10:43-45
Lu 22:25, 26
Php 2:8, 9

FOOTNOTES

9:31 * Or “handed over.”

STUDY NOTES

9:25 speechless and deaf spirit: That is, an evil spirit that makes a person unable to speak and to hear.

9:29 by prayer: Some manuscripts add “and fasting.” But the earliest and most reliable manuscripts do not include “and fasting.” These words were evidently added by copyists who advocated fasting and practiced it. They repeatedly included references to fasting where these were not found in earlier copies.—See study note on Mt 17:21.

9:42 stumbles: Or “puts a stumbling block in front of.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *skan-da-li'zo* refers to stumbling in a figurative sense. In this context, the term may be used broadly to refer to becoming an obstacle to the faith of one who would otherwise follow Jesus and believe in him. It may also involve causing a person to sin or becoming a snare to a person. Stumbling may involve breaking one of God’s laws on morals, losing faith, or accepting false teachings. (See study note on Mt 18:7.) The expression **these little ones** refers to Jesus’ disciples who may have seemed of little importance from the world’s standpoint but who were precious in God’s eyes.

a millstone that is turned by a donkey: See study note on Mt 18:6.

See  Gallery, image 63, Upper and Lower Millstones.

9:43 makes you stumble: In this context, the Greek word *skan-da-li'zo* could also be rendered “becomes a snare to you; causes you to sin.”—See study note on Mt 18:7.

cut it off: Jesus was using hyperbole. He was saying that a person should be willing to give up something as precious as a hand, a foot, or an eye rather than allow it to cause him to stumble into unfaithfulness. He was obviously not encouraging self-mutilation or implying that a person was somehow subservient to the will of his limbs or eyes. (Mr 9:45, 47) He meant

CHAP. 9

- a Lu 18:16
 b Mt 10:40
 Lu 9:48
 Lu 10:16
 Joh 13:20
 c Nu 11:26-29
 Lu 9:49
 d Lu 9:50
 e Mt 25:35,
 36, 40
 f Mt 10:42
 g Mt 18:6
 Lu 17:1, 2
 h Mt 5:30
 Mt 10:28
 Mt 18:8
 Col 3:5
 i Mt 10:28
 Mt 23:33
 Lu 12:5
 j Ga 5:24
 k Mt 5:29
 Mt 18:9
 Ro 8:13
 l Isa 66:24

37 “Whoever receives one of such young children^a on the basis of my name receives me also; and whoever receives me receives not me only but also Him who sent me.”^b

Anyone Not Against Us Is for Us; Stumbling Blocks

38 John said to him: “Teacher, we saw someone expelling demons by using your name, and we tried to prevent him, because he was not following us.”^c **39** But Jesus said: “Do not try to prevent him, for there is no one who will do a powerful work on the basis of my name who will quickly be able to say anything bad about me. **40** For whoever is not against us is for us.^d **41** And whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ,^e I tell you truly, he will by no means lose his reward.^f **42** But whoever stumbles one of these little ones who have faith, it would be better for him if a millstone that is turned by a donkey were put around his neck and he were pitched into the sea.^g

43 “If ever your hand makes you stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than to go off with two hands into Ge-hen’na, into the fire that cannot be put out.^h **44** — **45** And if your foot makes you stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life lame than to be thrown with two feet into Ge-hen’na.ⁱ **46** — **47** And if your eye makes you stumble, throw it away.^j It is better for you to enter one-eyed into the Kingdom of God than to be thrown with two eyes into Ge-hen’na,^k **48** where the maggot does not die and the fire is not put out.^l

STUDY NOTES

that a person should deaden a body member, or treat it as if it were severed from the body, rather than use it to commit a sin. (Compare Col 3:5.) He should allow nothing to hinder him from gaining life.

9:43, 45, 47 Gehenna: See study note on Mt 5:22 and  Glossary.

9:43 See  Gallery, image 31, Modern-Day Valley of Hinnom.

9:44 Some manuscripts read here “where their maggot does not die and the fire is not put out,” but these words do not appear in important early manuscripts. Similar words do appear in verse 48,

where there is no uncertainty regarding the text. Evidence suggests that a scribe or scribes repeated the words from verse 48 in verses 44 and 46.—See  App. A3.

9:45, 47 makes you stumble: See study note on Mr 9:43.

9:46 See study note on Mr 9:44.

9:48 where: Referring to “Gehenna,” mentioned in the preceding verse. As shown in the study note on Mt 5:22, by Jesus’ day, the Valley of Hinnom (from which the term “Gehenna” is derived) had become a place for burning garbage. By mentioning that **the maggot does not die and the fire is not put out,**

Jesus is evidently alluding to the prophetic words of Isa 66:24. That prophecy is not describing living people being tortured; rather, it tells what happens to “the carcasses of the men” who rebel against Jehovah. Where the fire did not reach, worms, or maggots, would breed, consuming anything not destroyed by the fire. On this basis, Jesus’ words mean that God’s adverse judgment would result, not in torture, but in complete destruction.

“Have Salt in Yourselves”

49 “For everyone must be salted with fire.^a **50** Salt is fine, but if the salt ever loses its saltiness, with what will you season it?^b Have salt in yourselves,^c and keep peace with one another.”^d

CHAP. 9

- a Lu 17:29
- b Mt 5:13
Lu 14:34, 35
- c Col 4:6
- d Pr 15:1
Ro 12:18
Eph 4:29
1Th 5:13
Heb 12:14

Marriage and Divorce

10 From there he got up and came to the borders* of Judea across the Jordan, and again crowds gathered to him. As he was accustomed to do, he again began teaching them.^e **2** And Pharisees approached, intent on testing him, and they asked whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife.^f **3** He answered them: “What did Moses command you?” **4** They said: “Moses allowed the writing of a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her.”^g **5** But Jesus said to them: “Out of regard for your hard-heartedness,^h he wrote this commandment for you.ⁱ **6** However, from the beginning of creation, ‘He made them male and female.^j **7** For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother,^k **8** and the two will be one flesh,^l so that they are no longer two, but one flesh. **9** There-

CHAP. 10

- e Mt 19:1, 2
- f Mt 19:3
- g De 24:1
Mt 5:31
Mt 19:7
- h De 9:6
Ac 13:18
- i Mt 19:8
- j Ge 1:27
Ge 5:2
Mt 19:4
- k Mt 19:5
- l Ge 2:24
Eph 5:31

FOOTNOTES

10:1 *Or “frontiers; regions.”

STUDY NOTES

9:49 salted with fire: This figure of speech could be understood in two different ways. (1) If the expression is connected with the statements Jesus just made, as recorded at Mr 9:43-48, it would refer to destruction by the fire of Gehenna. Jesus might be alluding to what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah, in the vicinity of the Dead (Salt) Sea, when God “made it rain sulfur and fire” on those cities. (Ge 19:24) In this context, Jesus’ statement “**everyone** must be salted with fire” would mean that all who allow their hands, feet, or eyes to stumble them or others into unfaithfulness would be salted with the fire of Gehenna, or eternal destruction. (2) If the expression “salted with fire” is connected with what is said next, as recorded at Mr 9:50, then Jesus may have been speaking of a fire that would come upon his followers and work for their good, promoting peaceful relations among them. In this context,

everyone—that is, all his disciples—would be purified and cleansed by Jehovah’s Word, which burns up all falsehood and error, and also by the fire of persecution or trials, which test and purify one’s loyalty and devotion to Jehovah. (Jer 20:8, 9; 23:29; 1Pe 1:6, 7; 4:12, 13) Jesus may well have had in mind both of the ideas just discussed.

9:50 Salt: A mineral used for preserving and flavoring food.—See study note on Mt 5:13.

loses its saltiness: Or “loses its strength.” In Jesus’ day, salt was often obtained from the Dead Sea area and was contaminated by other minerals. If the salty portion was removed from this mixture, only a tasteless, useless residue remained.

Have salt in yourselves: Jesus evidently here uses “salt” to refer to the quality in Christians that causes them to do and say things that are in good taste, considerate, and wholesome and that tend toward preserving the lives of others. The apostle Paul uses “salt” in a similar way at Col 4:6. Perhaps Jesus was thinking of his

apostles’ arguments about who would be the greatest. Figurative salt makes what a person says easier for others to accept and can thus help to preserve **peace**.

See  Gallery, image 27, Salt on the Shore of the Dead Sea.

10:1 the borders of Judea across the Jordan: This apparently refers to Perea, a region on the E side of the Jordan River, especially the parts of Perea bordering on Judea.—See study note on Mt 19:1 and  App. A7, Map 5.

See  Gallery, image 65, East of the Jordan—Perea.

10:4 certificate of dismissal: See study note on Mt 19:7.

10:6 the beginning of creation: Evidently referring to the creation of mankind. Jesus here describes how the Creator instituted marriage between a man and a woman, thus forming the nucleus of human society.

He: Some ancient manuscripts make the subject specific and read “God.”

10:8 one flesh: See study note on Mt 19:5.

CHAP. 10

- a Mt 19:6
 b Mt 5:32
 Mt 19:9
 Lu 16:18
 c Ro 7:3
 1 Co 7:12, 13
 d Mt 19:13
 Lu 18:15
 e Mt 18:4
 Mt 19:14
 Lu 18:16
 1Pe 2:2
 f Mt 18:3
 Lu 18:17
 g Mr 9:36
 h Mt 19:16-22
 Lu 18:18-23

fore, what God has yoked together, let no man put apart.”^a
10 When they were again in the house, the disciples began to question him about this. **11** He said to them: “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery^b against her, **12** and if ever a woman after divorcing her husband marries another, she commits adultery.”^c

Jesus Blesses the Young Children

13 People now began bringing him young children for him to touch them, but the disciples reprimanded them.^d **14** At seeing this, Jesus was indignant and said to them: “Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such ones.^e **15** Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a young child will by no means enter into it.”^f **16** And he took the children into his arms and began blessing them, laying his hands on them.^g

A Rich Man’s Question

17 As he was going on his way, a man ran up and fell on his knees before him and put the question to him: “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life?”^h **18** Jesus said to him: “Why do you call me good? Nobody is good except one,

STUDY NOTES

10:11 divorces his wife: Or “sends his wife away.” Jesus’ words as recorded by Mark must be understood in the light of the more complete statement at Mt 19:9, which includes the phrase “except on the grounds of sexual immorality.” (See study note on Mt 5:32.) What Mark wrote in quoting Jesus regarding divorce applies if the grounds for obtaining the divorce is anything other than “sexual immorality” (Greek, *por-nei’a*) committed by the unfaithful marriage partner.

commits adultery against her: Jesus here rejects the prevailing Rabbinic teaching that allowed men to divorce their wives “on every sort of grounds.” (Mt 19:3, 9) The concept of committing adultery *against his wife* was alien to most Jews. Their rabbis taught that a husband could never commit adultery against his wife—only a woman could be unfaithful. By putting the husband under the same moral obligation as the wife, Jesus dignifies women and elevates their status.

10:12 if ever a woman after divorcing her husband: With this phrase, Jesus recognizes the right of a woman to divorce an unfaithful husband—something that was evidently not acceptable to the Jews of his day. According to Jesus, however, under the Christian system, the same standard would apply to men and women.

10:13 young children: The children may have been of varying ages, since the Greek word here rendered “young children” is used not only of newborns and infants (Mt 2:8; Lu 1:59) but also of Jairus’ 12-year-old daughter (Mr 5:39-42). However, in the parallel account at Lu 18:15, which describes Jesus’ interaction with this group of young ones, Luke uses a different Greek word, one that refers only to very small children, or infants.—Lu 1:41; 2:12.

10:15 like a young child: Refers to having the desirable qualities of young children. Such qualities include being humble, teachable, trustful, and receptive.—Mt 18:5.

10:16 took the children into his arms: Only Mark’s account includes this detail. The Greek word for “take into one’s arms” occurs only here and at Mr 9:36 and could also be rendered “embrace.” Jesus exceeded the expectations of the adults who brought these children to Jesus so that he might merely “touch” them. (Mr 10:13) As the oldest of a family of at least seven children, he understood the needs of young children. (Mt 13:55, 56) Jesus even **began blessing them**. The Greek word used here is an intensified form of the word for “to bless,” which could be understood to mean that he tenderly and warmly blessed them.

10:17 Good Teacher: The man was evidently using the words “Good Teacher” as a flattering and formalistic title, since such honor was usually demanded by the religious leaders. While Jesus had no objection to being properly identified as “Teacher” and “Lord” (Joh 13:13), he directed all honor to his Father.

God.^a **19** You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder,^b do not commit adultery,^c do not steal,^d do not bear false witness,^e do not defraud,^f honor your father and your mother.’”^g **20** The man said to him: “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth on.” **21** Jesus looked at him and felt love for him and said, “One thing is missing about you: Go, sell what things you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come be my follower.”^h **22** But he grew sad at the answer and went away grieved, for he had many possessions.

Sacrifices for the Kingdom

23 After looking around, Jesus said to his disciples: “How difficult it will be for those with money to enter into the Kingdom of God!”ⁱ **24** But the disciples were surprised at his words. Jesus then responded: “Children, how difficult it is to enter into the Kingdom of God! **25** It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.”^j **26** They became still more astounded and said to him: “Who possibly can be saved?”^k **27** Looking straight at them, Jesus said: “With men it is impossible but not so with God, for all things are possible with God.”^l **28** Peter began to say to him: “Look! We have left all things and followed you.”^m **29** Jesus said: “Truly I say to you, no one has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good newsⁿ **30** who will not get 100 times more now in this period of time*—houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and fields, with persecutions^o—and in the coming system of things, everlasting life. **31** But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”^p

CHAP. 10

- a Ps 86:5
Mt 19:17
Lu 18:19
- b Ex 20:13
De 5:17
Mt 5:21
1Jo 3:15
- c Ex 20:14
De 5:18
- d Ex 20:15
De 5:19
- e Ex 20:16
De 5:20
- f Le 19:13
- g Ex 20:12
De 5:16
Eph 6:2
- h Mt 19:21, 22
Lu 18:22, 23
- i Job 31:24, 28
Jer 9:23
Mt 19:23
Lu 18:24
1Ti 6:17
- j Mt 19:24
Lu 18:25
- k Mt 19:25, 26
Lu 18:26, 27
- l Ge 18:14
Job 42:2
Zec 8:6
- m Mt 19:27
Lu 18:28
- n Mt 10:37
Mt 19:29
Lu 18:29, 30
- o Mt 5:11
Ac 14:22
- p Mt 19:30
Mt 20:16
Lu 13:30

FOOTNOTES

10:30 *Or “in the present time.”

STUDY NOTES

10:18 Nobody is good except one, God:

Jesus here recognizes Jehovah as the ultimate standard of what is good, the One who has the sovereign right to determine what is good and what is bad. By rebelliously eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad, Adam and Eve sought to assume that right. (Ge 2:17; 3:4-6) Unlike them, Jesus humbly leaves the setting of standards to his Father. God has expressed and defined what is

good by means of what he has commanded in his Word.—Mr 10:19.

10:21 felt love for him: Only Mark records Jesus’ sentiments toward the rich young ruler. (Mt 19:16-26; Lu 18:18-30) Peter, himself a man of deep emotion, may have been the source of this description of Jesus’ feelings.—See “Introduction to Mark.”

10:25 easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye: Jesus is using hyperbole to illustrate a point. Just as a literal camel cannot go through the eye of an actual sewing needle, it is impossible for a rich man to enter **the Kingdom of God**

if he continues to put his riches ahead of his relationship with Jehovah. Jesus did not mean that no wealthy person would inherit the Kingdom, for he went on to say: “All things are possible with God.”—Mr 10:27.

10:26 to him: Some manuscripts read: “to one another.”

10:30 the coming system of things: Or “the coming age.” The Greek word *ai-on*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. Jesus is here referring to the coming era under God’s Kingdom rule,

CHAP. 10

- a Mt 20:17-19
Mr 8:31
Mt 9:31
Lu 9:22
Lu 18:31-33
- b Isa 50:6
- c Ac 10:40
1Co 15:3, 4
- d Mt 4:21
Mt 10:2
Mt 27:55, 56
Mr 3:17
Joh 21:2
- e Mt 20:20, 21
- f Mt 19:28
- g Mt 20:22, 23
Lu 12:50
Joh 18:11
Ro 6:3

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection a Third Time

32 Now they were going on the road up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going ahead of them, and they were astonished, but those who followed began to fear. Once again he took the Twelve aside and started to tell them these things that were about to happen to him:^a **33** “Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and hand him over to men of the nations, **34** and these will mock him and spit on him^b and scourge him and kill him, but three days later he will rise.”^c

Request From James and John

35 James and John, the sons of Zeb'e-dee,^d approached him and said to him: “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.”^e **36** He said to them: “What do you want me to do for you?” **37** They replied: “Grant us to sit down, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.”^f **38** But Jesus said to them: “You do not know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup that I am drinking or be baptized with the baptism with which I am being baptized?”^g **39** They said to him: “We can.” At that Jesus said to them: “The cup I am

STUDY NOTES

in which **everlasting life** is promised.—Lu 18:29, 30; see **L** Glossary, “System(s) of things.”

10:32 going on the road up to Jerusalem: The city was about 750 m (2,500 ft) above sea level, so the Scriptures often speak of worshippers going “up to Jerusalem.” (Lu 2:22; Joh 2:13; Ac 11:2) Jesus and his disciples were about to ascend from the Jordan Valley (see study note on Mr 10:1), which at its lowest point is about 400 m (1,300 ft) below sea level. They would have to climb some 1,000 m (3,330 ft) to reach Jerusalem.

10:34 spit on him: Spitting on a person or in his face was an act of extreme contempt, enmity, or indignation, bringing humiliation on the victim. (Nu 12:14; De 25:9) Jesus here states that he would experience such treatment, which fulfilled a prophecy regarding the Messiah: “I did

not hide my face from humiliating things and from spit.” (Isa 50:6) He was spat on during his appearance before the Sanhedrin (Mr 14:65) and by the Roman soldiers after his trial by Pilate (Mr 15:19).

10:35 sons: A few manuscripts read “two sons,” but the shorter reading has strong manuscript support.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached him: According to Matthew’s account, the mother of James and John approaches Jesus with this request, but her two sons are evidently the source of the request. This conclusion is supported by Matthew’s report that on hearing about this request, the ten other disciples “became indignant,” not at the mother, but “at the two brothers.”—Mt 20:20-24; see study notes on Mt 4:21; 20:20.

10:37 one at your right hand and one at your left: Here both positions indicate honor and authority, but the place of

greatest honor is always on the right.—Ps 110:1; Ac 7:55, 56; Ro 8:34; see study note on Mt 25:33.

10:38 drink the cup: See study note on Mt 20:22.

be baptized with the baptism with which I am being baptized: Or “be immersed with the immersion that I am undergoing.” Jesus here uses the term “baptism” in parallel with “cup.” (See study note on Mt 20:22.) He is already undergoing this baptism during his ministry. In his case, he will be *fully* baptized, or immersed, into death when he is executed on the torture stake on Nisan 14, 33 C.E. His resurrection, which includes a raising up, will complete this baptism. (Ro 6:3, 4) Jesus’ baptism into death is clearly distinct and separate from his water baptism, for he had completely undergone water baptism at the beginning of his ministry, at which time his baptism into death had only begun.

drinking, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am being baptized, you will be baptized.^a **40** However, to sit down at my right hand or at my left is not mine to give, but it belongs to those for whom it has been prepared.”

41 When the ten others heard about it, they became indignant at James and John.^b **42** But Jesus called them to him and said to them: “You know that those who appear to be ruling* the nations lord it over them and their great ones wield authority over them.^c **43** This must not be the way among you; but whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister,^d **44** and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all. **45** For even the Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister^e and to give his life as a ransom in exchange for many.”^f

Blind Bartimaeus Healed

46 They then came into Jer'i-cho. But as he and his disciples and a considerable crowd were going out of Jer'i-cho, Bartimae'us (the son of Ti-mae'us), a blind beggar, was sitting beside the road.^g **47** When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene', he started shouting and saying: “Son of David,^h Jesus, have mercy on me!”ⁱ **48** At this many began rebuking him, telling him to be silent, but all the more he kept shouting: “Son of David, have mercy on me!” **49** So Jesus stopped and said: “Call him to me.” So they called the blind man, saying to him: “Take courage! Get up; he is calling you.” **50** Throwing off his outer

CHAP. 10

- a Ac 12:2
Re 1:9
- b Mt 20:24
- c Mt 20:25
Lu 22:25
1Pe 5:2, 3
- d Mt 20:26, 27
Mr 9:35
Lu 9:48
Lu 22:26
- e Joh 13:14
Php 2:7
- f Isa 53:10
Da 9:24
Mt 20:28
Ga 3:13
Tit 2:13, 14
- g Mt 20:29-34
Lu 18:35-43
- h Jer 23:5
Ro 1:3
- i Mt 9:27
Mt 15:22

FOOTNOTES

10:42 *Or “those who are recognized as rulers of.”

STUDY NOTES

10:42 lord it over them: Or “dominate them; are masters over them.” This Greek term is used only four times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (Mt 20:25; Mr 10:42; 1Pe 5:3; and at Ac 19:16, where it is rendered “overpowered”) Jesus’ counsel brought to mind the hated Roman yoke and the oppressive domination by the Herods. (Mt 2:16; Joh 11:48) Peter evidently got the point, later urging Christian elders to lead by example, not by domination. (1Pe 5:3) A related verb used in Luke’s parallel account (Lu 22:25) is also used at 2Co 1:24, where Paul says

that Christians are not to be “masters over” the faith of fellow believers.

10:45 life: See study note on Mt 20:28.

10:46 Jericho: See study note on Mt 20:29.

a blind beggar: Matthew’s account (20:30) of this event states that two blind men were present. Mark and Luke (18:35) each mention one, evidently focusing on **Bartimaeus**, whose name appears only in Mark’s account.

10:47 the Nazarene: A descriptive epithet applied to Jesus and later to his followers. (Ac 24:5) Since many Jews had the name Jesus, it was common to add a further identification; the practice of associating people with the places from which they came was customary in Bible

times. (2Sa 3:2, 3; 17:27; 23:25-39; Na 1:1; Ac 13:1; 21:29) Jesus lived most of his early life in the town of Nazareth in Galilee, so it was natural to use this term regarding him. Jesus was often referred to as “the Nazarene,” in different situations and by various individuals. (Mr 1:23, 24; 10:46, 47; 14:66-69; 16:5, 6; Lu 24:13-19; Joh 18:1-7) Jesus himself accepted the name and used it. (Joh 18:5-8; Ac 22:6-8) On the sign that Pilate placed on the torture stake, he wrote in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek: “Jesus the Nazarene the King of the Jews.” (Joh 19:19, 20) From Pentecost 33 C.E. onward, the apostles as well as others often spoke of Jesus as the Nazarene or as being from Nazareth.—Ac 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 10:38; 26:9; see also study note on Mt 2:23.

CHAP. 10

- a Joh 1:38
Joh 20:16
b Mt 9:20, 22
Lu 8:43, 48
c Isa 35:5
Isa 42:7
Mr 8:25

CHAP. 11

- d Joh 11:18
e Mt 21:1-3
Lu 19:29-34
f Mt 21:6
g 1Ki 1:33
Zec 9:9
h Mt 21:7, 8
Lu 19:35
Joh 12:14, 15
i 2 Ki 9:13
j Lu 19:36
Joh 12:13
k Mt 21:15

garment, he leaped to his feet and went to Jesus. **51** Then Jesus said to him: “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man said to him: “*Rab-bo’ni*,^a let me recover my sight.” **52** And Jesus said to him: “Go. Your faith has made you well.”^{*b} And immediately he recovered his sight,^c and he began to follow him on the road.

Jesus’ Triumphal Entry

11 Now when they were getting near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Beth’any^d at the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples^e **2** and told them: “Go into the village that is within sight, and as soon as you enter it, you will find a colt tied on which no man has sat until now. Untie it and bring it here. **3** And if anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here right away.’” **4** So they went away and found the colt tied at a door, outside on the side street, and they untied it.^f **5** But some of those standing there said to them: “What are you doing untying the colt?” **6** They told them just what Jesus had said, and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt^g to Jesus, and they put their outer garments on it, and he sat on it.^h **8** Also, many spread their outer garments on the road,ⁱ but others cut down foliage from the fields.^j **9** And those going in front and those coming behind kept shouting: “Save, we pray!^k Blessed is the one who

FOOTNOTES

10:52 *Or “has saved you.”

STUDY NOTES

10:47 Son of David: Addressing Jesus as “Son of David,” blind Bartimaeus openly acknowledges him as the Messiah.—See study notes on Mt 1:1, 6; 15:25.

10:51 Rabboni: A Semitic word meaning “My Teacher.” It may be that “*Rabboni*” was originally more respectful or conveyed more warmth than the form “Rabbi,” a title of address meaning “Teacher.” (Joh 1:38) However, when John did his writing, perhaps the first person suffix (“-i” meaning “my”) on this word had lost its special significance in the title, for John translates it “Teacher.”—Joh 20:16.

11:1 Now: The events described at Mr 11: 1-11 take place during the daytime of Nisan 9.—See  App. A7 and B12.

Bethphage: The name of this village on the Mount of Olives comes from Hebrew, probably meaning “House of the Early Figs.” Tradition locates Bethphage between Jerusalem and Bethany on the SE slope of the Mount of Olives, near the peak, about 1 km (less than 1 mi) from Jerusalem.—Mt 21:1; Lu 19:29; see  App. A7, Map 6.

Bethany: See study note on Mt 21:17.

See  Gallery, image 67, Bethphage, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem.

11:2 a colt: That is, a young donkey. The accounts of Mark, Luke (19:35), and John (12:14, 15) mention only one animal, the colt, when describing this event. Matthew’s account (21:2-7) adds the detail that the parent donkey was

also present.—See study notes on Mt 21: 2, 5.

11:7 See  Gallery, image 68, Colt, or Young Donkey.

11:9 Save, we pray: Lit., “Hosanna.” That Greek term comes from a Hebrew expression that means “save, we pray” or “save, please.” Here the term is used as a plea to God for salvation or victory; it could be rendered “please, grant salvation to.” In time, it became an expression of both prayer and praise. The Hebrew expression is found at Ps 118:25, which was part of the Hallel Psalms sung regularly during Passover season. Therefore, these words readily came to mind on this occasion. One way God answered this prayer to save the Son of David was by resurrecting him from the dead. At Mr 12:10, 11, Jesus himself quotes Ps 118:22, 23 and applies it to the Messiah.

comes in Jehovah's name!^a **10** Blessed is the coming Kingdom of our father David!^b Save, we pray, in the heights above!"* **11** And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple, and he looked around at everything, but since the hour was already late, he went out to Beth'a-ny with the Twelve.^c

Fig Tree Cursed

12 The next day when they were leaving Beth'a-ny, he felt hungry.^d **13** From a distance he caught sight of a fig tree that had leaves, and he went to see whether he could find something on it. But on coming to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. **14** So he said to it: "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again."^e And his disciples were listening.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

15 They now came to Jerusalem. There he entered the temple and started to throw out those selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves,^f **16** and he would not let anyone carry a utensil through the temple. **17** He was teaching and saying to them: "Is it not written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations'?"^g But you have made it a cave of robbers."^h **18** And the chief priests and the scribes heard it, and they began to seek how to kill him;ⁱ for they were in fear of him, because all the crowd was astounded at his teaching.^j

CHAP. 11

- a Ps 118:25, 26
Mt 21:9
Lu 19:37, 38
Joh 12:13
- b Zec 9:9
Lu 1:32
- c Mt 21:10
- d Mt 21:18
- e Mt 7:19
Mt 21:19, 43
Mr 11:20
Lu 13:6-9
- f Mt 21:12
Lu 19:45, 46
Joh 2:14-16
- g 1Ki 8:43
Isa 56:7
- h Jer 7:11
Mt 21:13
Lu 19:46
Joh 2:16
- i Mr 14:1
Lu 20:19
- j Mt 21:45, 46
Lu 19:47, 48

FOOTNOTES

11:10 *Or "in the highest places."

STUDY NOTES

11:9 Jehovah's: In this quote from Ps 118: 25, 26, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See **App. C**.

11:10 the coming Kingdom of our father David: The earliest and most reliable manuscripts support the main text reading but there are a few ancient manuscripts that read: "The kingdom of our father David that comes in the name of the Lord." This reading is reflected in some English Bible translations. A number of translations of the Christian Greek

Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J7, 8, 10-12, 14, 16, 17 in **App. C**) here use the Tetragrammaton or an abbreviation of it and read: "The kingdom of our father David that comes in the name of Jehovah."

11:12 The next day: That is, Nisan 10. —See **App. A7** and **B12**.

11:13 he found nothing but leaves: Although it was unusual for a fig tree to bear fruit at that time of year, the tree had leaves—normally a sign that it had produced an early crop of figs. Because the tree had borne only leaves, Jesus knew that it was not going to produce any crop and was therefore deceptive in its appearance. So he cursed it as unproductive, causing it to wither.—**Mr 11:19-21**.

11:15 temple: See study note on **Mt 21:12**.

throw out those selling and buying: See study note on **Lu 19:45**.

money changers: See study note on **Mt 21:12**.

11:16 carry a utensil through the temple: Evidently, some used the temple courtyard as a shortcut to transport items for personal or commercial use. Jesus did not allow this, since it detracted from the sanctity of God's house. Only Mark's account mentions this comment by Jesus.

11:17 a house of prayer for all the nations: Of the three Gospel writers who quote **Isa 56:7**, only Mark includes the phrase "for all the nations [peoples]." (**Mt 21:13**; **Lu 19:46**) The temple in Jerusalem

CHAP. 11

Lesson From Withered Fig Tree

- a Mt 21:19, 20
 b Mr 11:14
 c Mt 17:20
 Mt 21:21
 Lu 17:6
 d Mt 7:7
 Mt 18:19
 Mt 21:22
 Lu 11:9
 Joh 14:13
 Joh 15:7
 Joh 16:24
 Eph 3:20
 e Ps 103:10-12
 Mt 6:12, 14
 Mt 18:35
 Eph 4:32
 Col 3:13
 Jas 2:13
 f Mt 21:23-27
 Lu 20:1-8
 g Mr 1:4
 h Mt 21:25
 Lu 20:4

19 When it became late in the day, they went out of the city. **20** But when they were passing by early in the morning, they saw the fig tree already withered from its roots.^a **21** Peter, remembering it, said to him: “Rabbi, see! the fig tree that you cursed has withered.”^b **22** In reply Jesus said to them: “Have faith in God. **23** Truly I say to you that whoever tells this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but has faith that what he says is going to happen, he will have it happen.^c **24** This is why I tell you, all the things you pray and ask for, have faith that you have received them, and you will have them.^d **25** And when you stand praying, forgive whatever you have against anyone, so that your Father who is in the heavens may also forgive you your trespasses.”^e **26** —

Jesus’ Authority Challenged

27 They came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came **28** and said to him: “By what authority do you do these things? Or who gave you this authority to do these things?”^f **29** Jesus said to them: “I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. **30** Was the baptism by John^g from heaven or from men? Answer me.”^h **31** So they began to reason among themselves, saying: “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why, then, did you not believe

FOOTNOTES

11:30 *Or “of human origin.”

STUDY NOTES

was meant to be a place where both Israelites and God-fearing foreigners could worship and pray to Jehovah. (1Ki 8:41-43) Jesus rightly condemned the Jews who used the temple for commerce, making it a **cave of robbers**. Their actions discouraged people of all nations from approaching Jehovah in his house of prayer, depriving them of the opportunity to come to know him.

cave of robbers: See study note on Mt 21:13.

11:19 late in the day: That is, late on Nisan 10. Jesus and his disciples **went out of** Jerusalem, returning to Bethany on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. Jesus likely spent the night at the home of his friends Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. —See  App. A7 and B12.

11:20 early in the morning: That is, on Nisan 11. Jesus and his disciples are heading back to Jerusalem for the final day of Jesus’ public ministry before he celebrates the Passover, institutes the Memorial of his death, and faces trial and execution.—See  App. A7 and B12.

11:23 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

11:25 stand praying: Among the Hebrews and many of the other nations mentioned in the Bible, there was no set form of pos-

ture for prayer. All the attitudes that they assumed were highly respectful. Standing to pray was common.

11:26 Some ancient manuscripts here read: “But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in the heavens forgive your trespasses.” These words do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and are evidently not part of the original text of Mark. Similar words, though, can be found at Mt 6:15 as part of the inspired Scriptures.—See  App. A3.

11:27 chief priests: See study note on Mt 2:4.

scribes: See study note on Mt 2:4.

elders: See study note on Mr 8:31.

him?’ **32** But dare we say, ‘From men?’” They were in fear of the crowd, for these all held that John had really been a prophet.^a **33** So they answered Jesus: “We do not know.” Jesus said to them: “Neither am I telling you by what authority I do these things.”

Illustration of the Murderous Cultivators

12 Then he started to speak to them with illustrations: “A man planted a vineyard^b and put a fence around it and dug a vat for the winepress and erected a tower;^c then he leased it to cultivators and traveled abroad.^d **2** In due season he sent a slave to the cultivators to collect some of the fruits of the vineyard from them. **3** But they took him, beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. **4** Again he sent another slave to them, and that one they struck on the head and dishonored.^e **5** And he sent another, and that one they killed, and many others, some of whom they beat and some of whom they killed. **6** One more he had, a beloved son.^f He sent him to them last, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ **7** But those cultivators said among themselves, ‘This is the heir.^g Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ **8** So they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard.^h **9** What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill the cultivators and will give the vineyard to others.ⁱ **10** Did you never read this scripture: ‘The stone that the builders rejected, this has become the chief cornerstone.^j **11** This has come from Jehovah, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’”^k

CHAP. 11

- a Mt 3:1, 5
- Mt 14:3, 5
- Mr 6:20

CHAP. 12

- b Isa 5:7
- c Isa 5:2
- d Mt 21:33-41
- Lu 20:9-16
- e Heb 11:32, 37
- f Ps 2:7
- Ga 4:4
- 1Jo 4:9
- g Ps 2:8
- Heb 1:2
- h Ac 2:23
- i Mt 21:41, 43
- j Mt 21:42
- Lu 20:17
- Ac 4:10, 11
- Eph 2:20
- 1Pe 2:7
- k Ps 118:22, 23

STUDY NOTES

12:1 illustrations: See study note on Mt 13:3.

tower: See study note on Mt 21:33.

leased: See study note on Mt 21:33.

See  Gallery, image 69, Winepress.

12:10 this scripture: The singular form of the Greek word *gra·phe* here refers to an individual Scripture passage, Ps 118:22, 23.

chief cornerstone: See study note on Mt 21:42.

12:11 Jehovah: In this quote from Ps 118:22, 23, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated

YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

12:13 party followers of Herod: See  Glossary.

12:14 head tax: See study note on Mt 22:17.

Caesar: See study note on Mt 22:17.

12:15 denarius: This Roman silver coin with an inscription of Caesar was the “head tax” coin that was exacted by the Romans from the Jews. (Mr 12:14) In Jesus’ day, agricultural laborers commonly received a denarius for a 12-hour workday, and the Christian Greek Scriptures often use the denarius to show equivalent value. (Mt 20:2; Mr 6:37; 14:5; Re 6:6) A variety of copper and silver coins were

used in Israel, including silver coins minted in Tyre that were used for the temple tax. Yet, for paying taxes to Rome, people evidently used the silver denarius bearing the image of Caesar.—See  Glossary and  App. B14.

12:16 image and inscription: See study note on Mt 22:20.

12:17 Pay back: See study note on Mt 22:21.

Caesar’s things to Caesar: Jesus’ reply here, and in the parallel accounts at Mt 22:21 and Lu 20:25, is his only recorded reference to the Roman emperor. “Caesar’s things” include payment for services rendered by the secular government as well as the honor and relative subjection

CHAP. 12

a Mt 21:45, 46
Mr 11:18
Lu 20:19

b Mt 22:15-22
Mr 3:6
Lu 20:20-26

c Lu 3:1, 2

d Ro 13:7
Tit 3:1
1Pe 2:13

e Da 3:17, 18
Mal 3:8
Mt 22:21
Lu 20:25
Lu 23:2
Ac 5:29

f Ac 23:8

g Mt 22:23-28
Lu 20:27-33

h Ge 38:7, 8
De 25:5, 6
Ru 1:11, 13

12 At that they wanted to seize* him, but they feared the crowd, for they knew that he spoke the illustration with them in mind. So they left him and went away.^a

God and Caesar

13 Next they sent to him some of the Pharisees and of the party followers of Herod in order to catch him in his speech.^b

14 On arriving, these said to him: “Teacher, we know you are truthful and you do not seek anyone’s favor, for you do not look at the outward appearance of people, but you teach the way of God in line with truth. Is it lawful* to pay head tax to Caesar or not? **15** Should we pay, or should we not pay?” Detecting their hypocrisy, he said to them: “Why do you put me to the test? Bring me a de-nar’i-us to look at.” **16** They brought one, and he said to them: “Whose image and inscription is this?” They said to him: “Caesar’s.”^c **17** Jesus then said: “Pay back Caesar’s things to Caesar,^d but God’s things to God.”^e And they were amazed at him.

Question About the Resurrection

18 Now the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection,^f came and asked him:^g **19** “Teacher, Moses wrote us that if someone’s brother dies and leaves a wife behind but does not leave a child, his brother should take the wife and raise up offspring for his brother.^h **20** There were seven brothers. The first took a wife, but when he died he left no offspring. **21** And the second married her but died without leaving offspring, and the third the same way. **22** And all seven left no offspring. Last of all, the woman also died. **23** In the resurrection, whose wife

FOOTNOTES

12:12 *Or “arrest.” **12:14** *Or “right.”

STUDY NOTES

that is to be shown to such authorities.
—Ro 13:1-7.

God’s things to God: See study note on Mt 22:21.

See  Gallery, image 70, Tiberius Caesar.

12:18 Sadducees: This is the only mention of the Sadducees in the Gospel of Mark. (See  Glossary.) The name (Greek, *Sad-dou-kai’os*) is likely connected with Zadok (often spelled *Sad-douk’* in the

Septuagint), who was made high priest in the days of Solomon and whose descendants evidently served as priests for centuries.—1Ki 2:35.

resurrection: The Greek word *a-na’sta-sis* literally means “raising up; standing up.” It is used about 40 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures with reference to the resurrection of the dead. (Mt 22:23, 31; Ac 4:2; 24:15; 1Co 15:12, 13) In the *Septuagint* at Isa 26:19, the verb form of *a-na’sta-sis* is used to render the Hebrew verb “to live” in the expression “your dead will live.”—See  Glossary.

12:21 the second married her: Among the ancient Hebrews, if a man died sonless, it was expected that his brother would marry the widow in order to produce offspring to continue the dead man’s family line. (Ge 38:8) The arrangement, later incorporated into the Mosaic Law, was known as brother-in-law, or levirate, marriage. (De 25:5, 6) Brother-in-law marriage was practiced in Jesus’ day, as shown by the Sadducees’ reference to it here. The Law did permit relatives to refuse to perform brother-in-law marriage, but if a man would not “build up his brother’s household,” he brought disgrace on himself.—De 25:7-10; Ru 4:7, 8.

will she be? For the seven had her as a wife.” **24** Jesus said to them: “Is not this why you are mistaken, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?^a **25** For when they rise from the dead, neither do men marry nor are women given in marriage, but they are as angels in the heavens.^b **26** But concerning the dead being raised up, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account about the thornbush, that God said to him: ‘I am the God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Jacob’?^c **27** He is a God, not of the dead, but of the living. You are very much mistaken.”^d

CHAP. 12

- a Mt 22:29
 b Mt 22:30
 Lu 20:34-36
 c Ex 3:2, 6
 Lu 20:37
 d Mt 22:31, 32
 Lu 20:38
 e Mt 22:34-36

Two Greatest Commandments

28 One of the scribes who had come up and heard them disputing, knowing that he had answered them in a fine way, asked him: “Which commandment is first* of all?”^e **29** Jesus answered: “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one

FOOTNOTES

12:28 *Or “most important.”

STUDY NOTES

12:24 **the Scriptures:** See study note on Mt 22:29.

12:26 **in the book of Moses:** The Sadducees accepted only Moses’ writings as inspired. They objected to Jesus’ teaching about the resurrection, evidently thinking that there was no basis for such a teaching in the Pentateuch. Jesus could have quoted many scriptures, such as Isa 26:19, Dan 12:13, and Hos 13:14, to show that the dead would rise. But because Jesus knew which writings were accepted by the Sadducees, he proved his point by using words that Jehovah spoke to Moses. —Ex 3:2, 6.

that God said to him: Jesus here refers to a conversation between Moses and Jehovah that took place about 1514 B.C.E. (Ex 3:2, 6) At that time, Abraham had been dead for 329 years, Isaac for 224, and Jacob for 197. Yet, Jehovah did not say ‘I was their God.’ He said: ‘**I am** their God.’—See study note on Mr 12:27.

12:27 **but of the living:** According to the parallel account at Lu 20:38, Jesus includes the comment: “For they are all living to him [or, “from his standpoint].”

The Bible shows that living humans who are alienated from God are dead from his standpoint. (Eph 2:1; 1Ti 5:6) Likewise, approved servants of God who die are still living from Jehovah’s standpoint, since his purpose to resurrect them is so sure of fulfillment.—Ro 4:16, 17.

12:29 **Hear, O Israel:** This quote from De 6:4, 5 is more extensive than in the parallel accounts of Matthew and Luke. Included here is also the introduction to the so-called Shema, or what amounts to the Jewish confession of faith recorded at De 6:4-9; 11:13-21. The name Shema is taken from the first word of the verse in Hebrew, *shema*”, meaning “Listen!; Hear!”

Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: Or “Jehovah is our God; Jehovah is one,” or “Jehovah is our God; there is one Jehovah.” In the Hebrew text of De 6:4, quoted here, the word for “one” can imply being unique, the one and only. Jehovah is the only true God; no false gods can compare to him. (2Sa 7:22; Ps 96:5; Isa 2:18-20) In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses reminded the Israelites that their worship of Jehovah must be exclusive. They were not to follow the peoples around them, who worshipped various gods and goddesses. Some of those false gods were viewed as ruling over certain parts of

nature. Others were separate forms of a particular deity. The Hebrew word for “one” also suggests unity and oneness of purpose and activity. Jehovah God is not divided or unpredictable. Rather, he is always faithful, consistent, loyal, and true. The discussion recorded at Mr 12:28-34 is referred to in all three of the synoptic Gospels, but only Mark includes the introductory part: “Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.” The commandment to love God follows this statement about Jehovah being one, indicating that his worshippers’ love for him must also be undivided.

Jehovah . . . Jehovah: In this quote from De 6:4, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs twice in the original Hebrew text.—See **Ex** App. C.

12:30 **Jehovah:** In this quote from De 6:5, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See **Ex** App. C.

heart: When used in a figurative sense, this term generally refers to the total inner person. When mentioned together with “soul” and “mind,” however, it evidently takes on a more specific meaning and refers mainly to a person’s emotions, desires, and feelings. The four terms used

CHAP. 12

- a De 6:4, 5
De 10:12
Jos 22:5
Mt 22:37
Lu 10:27
- b Le 19:18
Mt 22:39, 40
Ro 13:9
Ga 5:14
Jas 2:8
- c De 4:35, 39
De 6:4
Isa 45:21
Isa 46:9
- d De 6:5
1Sa 15:22
Ho 6:6
- e Mt 22:46
Lu 20:39, 40

Jehovah, **30** and you must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength.’^a **31** The second is this, ‘You must love your neighbor as yourself.’^b There is no other commandment greater than these.” **32** The scribe said to him: “Teacher, you spoke well, in line with truth, ‘He is One, and there is no other besides him’;^c **33** and to love him with one’s whole heart, with one’s whole understanding, and with one’s whole strength and to love one’s neighbor as oneself is worth far more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”^d **34** At this Jesus, discerning that he had answered intelligently, said to him: “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.” But no one had the courage to question him anymore.^e

Is the Christ the Son of David?

35 However, as Jesus continued teaching in the temple, he said: “How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is David’s

STUDY NOTES

here (heart, soul, mind, and strength) are not mutually exclusive; they are used in an overlapping sense, emphasizing in the strongest possible way the need for complete and total love for God.—See study notes on **mind** and **strength** in this verse.

soul: See study note on Mt 22:37.

mind: That is, intellectual faculties. A person must use his mental faculties to come to know God and grow in love for him. (Joh 17:3; Ro 12:1) In this quote from De 6:5, the original Hebrew text uses three terms, ‘heart, soul, and strength.’ However, according to Mark’s account, written in Greek, four different concepts are mentioned, **heart, soul, mind, and strength**. There may be several reasons why different terms are used. The word “mind” may have been added to complete the meaning of overlapping concepts in the Hebrew language. Although ancient Hebrew did not have a specific word for “mind,” this concept was often included in the Hebrew word for “heart,” which refers figuratively to the whole inner person, including a person’s thinking, feelings, attitudes, and motivations. (De 29:4; Ps 26:2; 64:6; see study note on **heart** in this verse.) For this reason, where the Hebrew text uses the word

“heart,” the Greek *Septuagint* often uses the Greek equivalent for “mind.” (Ge 8:21; 17:17; Pr 2:10; Isa 14:13) Mark’s use of **mind** may also indicate that there is some overlapping of ideas between the Hebrew term for “strength” and the Greek term for “mind.” (Compare the wording of Mt 22:37, which uses “mind” rather than “strength.”) The overlapping of ideas may help to explain why the scribe’s answer to Jesus uses the word “understanding.” (Mr 12:33) It may also explain why the Gospel writers when quoting De 6:5 do not use the exact terms found in that passage.—See study note on **strength** in this verse and study notes on Mt 22:37; Lu 10:27.

strength: As mentioned in the study note on **mind**, in this quote from De 6:5, the original Hebrew text uses three terms, ‘heart, soul, and strength.’ The Hebrew word rendered “strength [or, “vital force,” ftn.]” could include both physical strength and mental or intellectual ability. This may be another reason why the concept of “mind” has been included when this scripture is quoted in the Christian Greek Scriptures. This may also explain why Mt 22:37 uses “mind” but does not use “strength” in the same quotation. Whatever the case, when a scribe (according to Luke’s account [10:27] written in Greek) quotes the same Hebrew verse, he refers

to the four concepts of **heart, soul, strength, and mind**, evidently showing that in Jesus’ time, it was commonly accepted that all four Greek concepts were included in the three Hebrew words of the original quotation.

12:31 The second: At Mr 12:29, 30, Jesus’ direct answer to the scribe is recorded. But Jesus now goes beyond the original question and quotes a second commandment. (Le 19:18) He stresses that the “two commandments” are inextricably linked and that the whole Law and the Prophets are summed up in them.—Mt 22:40.

neighbor: See study note on Mt 22:39.

12:33 whole burnt offerings: The Greek word *ho-lo-kau’to-ma* (from the word *ho’los*, meaning “whole,” and *kai’o*, “to burn”) occurs only three times in the Christian Greek Scriptures, here and at Heb 10:6, 8. This is a term used in the *Septuagint* to render a Hebrew word for offerings that were completely burned by fire and presented in their entirety to God, with no part of the animal being eaten by the worshipper. This Greek word occurs in the *Septuagint* at 1Sa 15:22 and Ho 6:6, which the scribe may have had in mind when speaking to Jesus. (Mr 12:32) As a figurative “burnt offering,” Jesus gave himself wholly, fully.

son?^a **36** By the holy spirit,^b David himself said, ‘Jehovah said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies beneath your feet.”’^c **37** David himself calls him Lord, so how can it be that he is his son?”^d

Warning Against the Scribes

And the large crowd was listening to him with pleasure. **38** And in his teaching he went on to say: “Beware of the scribes who want to walk around in robes and want greetings in the marketplaces^e **39** and front seats in the synagogues and the most prominent places at evening meals.^f **40** They devour the houses* of the widows, and for show^g they make long prayers. These will receive a more severe^h judgment.”

Poor Widow’s Two Coins

41 And he sat down with the treasury chests^g in view and began observing how the crowd was dropping money into the treasury chests, and many rich people were dropping in many coins.^h **42** Now a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins of very little value.ⁱ **43** So he called his disciples to him and said to them: “Truly I say to you that this poor widow put in more than all the others who put money into the treasury chests.^j **44** For they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her want,^k put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”^k

CHAP. 12

a Mt 22:42-45
Lu 20:41-44
Joh 7:42

b 2Sa 23:2
2Ti 3:16
2Pe 1:21

c Ps 110:1
Ac 2:34, 35
1Co 15:25
Heb 1:13

d Ro 1:3
Re 22:16

e Lu 20:45-47

f Mt 23:6, 7
Lu 11:43

g 2Ki 12:9

h Lu 21:1

i Lu 21:2

j Lu 21:3
2Co 8:12

k 1Ch 29:9
Pr 3:9
Lu 21:4

FOOTNOTES

12:40 *Or “property.” #Or “for a pretext.” △Or “a heavier.” **12:44** *Or “poverty.”

STUDY NOTES

12:36 **Jehovah:** In this quote from Ps 110:1, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

12:38 **marketplaces:** See study note on Mt 23:7.

See  Gallery, image 46, The Market-place.

12:39 **front seats:** See study note on Mt 23:6.

See  Gallery, image 72, The Front Seats in the Synagogue.

See  Gallery, image 73, Prominent Places at Evening Meals.

12:41 **treasury chests:** Ancient Jewish sources say that these contribution boxes, or receptacles, were shaped like trumpets, or horns, evidently with small openings at the top. People deposited in them various offerings. The Greek word used here also occurs at Joh 8:20, where it is rendered “the treasury,” apparently located in the area called the Court of the Women. (See study note on Mt 27:6 and  App. B11.) According to rabbinical sources, 13 treasury chests were placed around the walls of that court. It is believed that the temple also contained a major treasury where the money from the treasury chests was brought.

money: Lit., “copper,” that is, copper money, or copper coins, though the Greek word was also used as a general term for all money.—See  App. B14.

See  Gallery, image 89, The Treasury Chests and the Widow.

12:42 **two small coins:** Lit., “two lepta,” the plural form of the Greek word *lepton*, meaning something small and thin. A lepton was a coin that equaled 1/128 of a denarius and was evidently the smallest copper or bronze coin used in Israel.—See  Glossary, “Lepton,” and  App. B14.

of very little value: Lit., “which is a quadrans.” The Greek word *ko-dran’tes* (from the Latin word *quadrans*) refers to a Roman copper or bronze coin valued at 1/64 of a denarius. Mark here uses Roman money to explain the value of coins commonly used by the Jews.—See  App. B14.

13:2 **By no means will a stone be left here upon a stone:** See study note on Mt 24:2.

See  Gallery, image 76, Stones From the Temple Mount.

CHAP. 13

“The Sign When All These Things
Are to Come to a Conclusion”

- a Mt 24:1
Lu 21:5
- b Le 26:31
Mt 24:2
Lu 19:44
Lu 21:6
- c Mt 24:3
Lu 21:7
- d Mt 24:4, 5
Lu 21:8
- e Mt 24:6
Lu 21:9
- f Re 6:4
- g Mt 24:7
Lu 21:10, 11
Re 6:6, 8
- h Mt 24:8
- i Ac 4:15
- j Mt 10:17
Mt 23:34
Joh 16:2
Ac 5:40

13 As he was going out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him: “Teacher, see! what wonderful stones and buildings!”^a **2** However, Jesus said to him: “Do you see these great buildings? By no means will a stone be left here upon a stone and not be thrown down.”^b

3 As he was sitting on the Mount of Olives with the temple in view, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately: **4** “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are to come to a conclusion?”^c **5** So Jesus began to tell them: “Look out that nobody misleads you.^d **6** Many will come on the basis of my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and will mislead many. **7** Moreover, when you hear of wars and reports of wars, do not be alarmed; these things must take place, but the end is not yet.^e

8 “For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom;^f there will be earthquakes in one place after another; there will also be food shortages.^g These are a beginning of pangs of distress.^h

9 “As for you, look out for yourselves. People will hand you over to local courts,ⁱ and you will be beaten in synagogues^j and be put on the stand before governors and kings for my sake,

 STUDY NOTES

13:3 with the temple in view: Or “across from (opposite) the temple.” Mark explains that the temple could be seen from the Mount of Olives, an explanation that would not have been necessary for most Jewish readers.—See “Introduction to Mark.”

See  Gallery, image 77, Mount of Olives.

13:4 come to a conclusion: Rendered from the Greek verb *syn-te-le'o*, related to the Greek noun *syn-te'lei-a*, which means “joint end; combination end; ending together” and occurs in the parallel account at Mt 24:3. (The Greek word *syn-te'lei-a* also occurs at Mt 13:39, 40, 49; 28:20; Heb 9:26.) This “conclusion” refers to a time period during which a combination of events would lead to the complete “end” mentioned at Mr 13:7, 13, where a different Greek word, *te'los*, is used.—See study notes on Mr 13:7, 13 and  Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things.”

13:6 I am he: That is, the Christ, or Messiah.—Compare the parallel account at Mt 24:5.

13:7 end: Or “complete end.” The Greek word (*te'los*) used here is different from the Greek noun rendered “conclusion” (*syn-te'lei-a*) at Mt 24:3 and is different from the Greek verb rendered “come to a conclusion” (*syn-te-le'o*) at Mr 13:4.—See study notes on Mt 24:3; Mr 13:4 and  Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things.”

13:8 nation: The Greek word *e'thnos* has a broad meaning and can refer to people living within certain political or geographical boundaries, such as a country, but can also refer to an ethnic group.—See study note on Mr 13:10.

rise: See study note on Mt 24:7.

pangs of distress: The Greek word literally refers to the intense pain experienced during childbirth. While it is used here to

refer to distress, pain, and suffering in a general sense, it may suggest that like birth pains the foretold troubles and suffering will increase in frequency, intensity, and duration in the time period before the “days of a tribulation” mentioned at Mr 13:19.

13:9 local courts: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *sy-ne'dri-on*, here used in plural and rendered “local courts,” is most often used with reference to the Jewish high court in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin. (See  Glossary, “Sanhedrin,” and study notes on Mt 5:22; 26:59.) However, it was also a general term for an assembly or a meeting, and here it refers to local courts that were attached to the **synagogues** and had the power to inflict the penalties of scourging and excommunication.—Mt 10:17; 23:34; Lu 21:12; Joh 9:22; 12:42; 16:2.

for a witness to them.^a **10** Also, in all the nations, the good news has to be preached first.^b **11** And when they are taking you to hand you over, do not be anxious beforehand about what to say; but whatever is given you in that hour, say this, for you are not the ones speaking, but the holy spirit is.^c **12** Furthermore, brother will deliver brother over to death, and a father a child, and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.^d **13** And you will be hated by all people on account of my name.^e But the one who has endured^f to the end^g will be saved.^h

14 “However, when you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolationⁱ standing where it should not be (let the reader use discernment), then let those in Ju-de’a begin fleeing to the mountains.^j **15** Let the man on the housetop not come down nor go inside to take anything out of his house;^k **16** and let the man in the field not return to the things behind to pick up his outer garment. **17** Woe to the pregnant women and those nursing a baby in those days!^l **18** Keep praying that it may not occur in wintertime; **19** for those days will be days of a tribulation^m such as has not occurred from the beginning of the creation that God created until that time,^{*} and will not occur again.ⁿ **20** In fact, unless Jehovah had cut short the days, no flesh would be saved. But on account of the chosen ones whom he has chosen, he has cut short the days.^o

ⁿ Da 12:1; Mt 24:21; ^o Mt 24:22.

CHAP. 13

- a Mt 24:9
Lu 21:12, 13
2Ti 3:12
Re 2:10
- b Mt 24:14
Ro 10:18
Re 14:6
- c Ex 4:12
Mt 10:19, 20
Lu 12:11, 12
Lu 21:14, 15
Joh 14:26
Ac 4:8
Ac 6:9, 10
- d Mic 7:6
Mt 10:21
Mt 24:10
Lu 21:16
2Ti 3:1, 3
- e Lu 21:17
Joh 15:21
- f Re 13:10
- g 2Ti 4:7
Heb 3:6
- h Mt 10:22
Mt 24:13
Lu 21:19
Re 2:10
- i Da 9:27
Da 11:31
Da 12:11
- j Mt 24:15-20
Lu 21:20-23
- k Lu 17:31
- l Lu 19:44
Lu 21:23
Lu 23:28, 29
- m Re 7:14

FOOTNOTES
13:19 *Lit., “until the present time; until now.”

STUDY NOTES
13:10 all the nations: This expression shows the scope of the preaching work, letting the disciples know that it would extend beyond preaching to fellow Jews. In its general sense, the Greek word for “nation” (*e’thnos*) refers to a group of people who are more or less related to one another by blood and who have a common language. Such a national or ethnic group often occupies a defined geographic territory.
the good news: See study note on Mt 24:14.

13:11 taking you: The Greek verb *a’go* is here used as a legal technical term meaning “to arrest; to take into custody.” It can imply the use of force.
13:13 has endured: Or “endures.” The Greek verb rendered “to endure” (*hy-po-me’no*) literally means “to remain (stay) under.” It is often used in the sense of “remaining instead of fleeing; standing one’s ground; persevering; remaining steadfast.” (Mt 10:22; Ro 12:12; Heb 10:32; Jas 5:11) In this context, it refers to maintaining a course of action as Christ’s disciple despite opposition and trials. —Mr 13:11-13.
end: Or “complete end; final end.”—See study note on Mr 13:7.
13:14 Judea: See study note on Mt 24:16.
to the mountains: See study note on Mt 24:16.

13:15 on the housetop: See study note on Mt 24:17.
13:18 in wintertime: See study note on Mt 24:20.
13:20 unless Jehovah had cut short the days: Jesus is explaining to his disciples what his Father will do during the great tribulation. The wording of Jesus’ prophecy here is similar to that of prophetic statements in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name is used. (Isa 1:9; 65:8; Jer 46:28 [26:28, *Septuagint*]; Am 9:8) Although most Greek manuscripts use the term “Lord” (Greek, *Ky’ri-os*) here, there are good reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced with the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.—See  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Mr 13:20.

CHAP. 13

- a Mt 24:23-25
Lu 17:23
Lu 21:8
1Jo 4:1
- b Mt 7:15
- c Mt 24:42
Eph 6:18
2Pe 3:17
- d Mt 24:29
Lu 21:25, 26
- e Da 7:13
- f Mt 24:30
Lu 21:27
Re 1:7
- g De 30:4
Mt 24:31
- h Mt 24:32
Lu 21:29-33
- i Mt 24:33
- j Mt 24:34
Lu 21:32
- k Isa 51:6
- l Jos 23:14
Isa 40:8
Mt 24:35
- m Mt 24:36
Ac 1:7

Dangers of False Christs

21 “Then, too, if anyone says to you, ‘See! Here is the Christ,’ or, ‘See! There he is,’ do not believe it.^a **22** For false Christs and false prophets will arise^b and will perform signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, the chosen ones. **23** You, then, watch out.^c I have told you all things beforehand.

Coming of the Son of Man

24 “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,^d **25** and the stars will be falling out of heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. **26** And then they will see the Son of man^e coming in the clouds with great power and glory.^f **27** And then he will send out the angels and will gather his chosen ones together from the four winds, from earth’s extremity to heaven’s extremity.^g

Illustration of the Fig Tree

28 “Now learn this illustration from the fig tree: Just as soon as its young branch grows tender and sprouts its leaves, you know that summer is near.^h **29** Likewise also you, when you see these things happening, know that he is near at the doors.ⁱ **30** Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things happen.^j **31** Heaven and earth will pass away,^k but my words will by no means pass away.^l

“Keep on the Watch”

32 “Concerning that day or the hour nobody knows, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but the Father.^m **33** Keep

STUDY NOTES

13:22 false Christs: Or “false Messiahs.”

The Greek word *pseu-do'khri-stos* occurs only here and in the parallel account at Mt 24:24. It refers to anyone who wrongly assumes the role of the Christ, or the Messiah (lit., “Anointed One”).—See study notes on Mt 24:5; Mr 13:6.

13:26 see: See study note on Mt 24:30.

Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

the clouds: Clouds tend to obstruct vision rather than facilitate it, but observers can “see” with eyes of understanding.—Ac 1:9.

13:27 the four winds: See study note on Mt 24:31.

13:28 illustration: See study note on Mt 24:32.

13:31 Heaven and earth will pass away: Other scriptures show that heaven and earth will endure forever. (Ge 9:16; Ps 104:5; Ec 1:4) So Jesus’ words here could be understood as hyperbole, meaning that even if the impossible happened and heaven and earth *did* pass away, Jesus’ words would still be fulfilled. (Compare Mt 5:18.) However, the heaven and earth here may well refer to the figurative heavens and earth that are called “the former heaven and the former earth” at Re 21:1.

my words will by no means pass away: Or “my words will certainly not pass away.” The use of two Greek negatives with the verb emphatically expresses rejection of an idea, vividly emphasizing the permanence of Jesus’ words. Although some Greek manuscripts use only one of the two negatives, the emphatic reading used in the main text has strong manuscript support.

looking, keep awake,^a for you do not know when the appointed time is.^b **34** It is like a man traveling abroad who left his house and gave the authority to his slaves,^c to each one his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to keep on the watch.^d **35** Keep on the watch, therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming,^e whether late in the day or at midnight or before dawn or early in the morning,^f **36** in order that when he comes suddenly, he does not find you sleeping.^g **37** But what I say to you, I say to all: Keep on the watch.”^h

CHAP. 13

- a Ro 13:11
1Th 5:6
b Mt 25:13
Lu 21:34
c Mt 25:14
d Lu 12:35, 36
e Mt 24:42
f Lu 21:36
g Mt 25:5
h Hab 2:3

Priests Plot to Kill Jesus

14 Now the Passoverⁱ and the Festival of Unleavened Bread^j was two days later.^k And the chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to seize* him by cunning# and kill him;^l **2** for they were saying: “Not at the festival; perhaps there might be an uproar of the people.”

CHAP. 14

- i Ex 12:3, 6
Le 23:5
j Le 23:6
k Joh 13:1
l Mt 26:2-5
Lu 22:1, 2

Woman Pours Perfumed Oil on Jesus

3 And while he was at Beth'a-ny dining* in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of perfumed

FOOTNOTES

14:1 *Or “arrest.” #Or “deceit; craftiness.” **14:3** *Or “reclining at the table.”

STUDY NOTES

13:34 doorkeeper: In ancient times, doorkeepers, or gatekeepers, served at entrances to cities, temples, and sometimes private homes. Besides ensuring that gates and doors were shut at night, these individuals also served as watchmen. (2Sa 18:24, 26; 2Ki 7:10, 11; Es 2:21-23; 6:2; Joh 18:17) By likening a Christian to a doorkeeper of a house, Jesus emphasized the need for Christians to be alert and **keep on the watch** concerning his future coming to execute judgment.—Mr 13:26.

13:35 Keep on the watch: The Greek term has the basic meaning “stay (keep) awake,” but in many contexts it means “be on guard; be watchful.” In addition to this verse, Mark uses the term at Mr 13:34, 37; 14:34, 37, 38.—See study notes on Mt 24:42; 26:38; Mr 14:34.

late in the day: In this verse, reference is made to the four watches of the night of about three hours each, running from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., according to the Greek and Roman division of the night. (See also following study notes on this verse.) The Hebrews formerly divided the night into three watches of about four hours each (Ex 14:24; Jg 7:19), but by Jesus’ day, they had adopted the Roman system. The expression “late in the day” in this verse refers to the first night watch, that is, from sunset to about 9:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 14:25.

at midnight: This refers to the second night watch according to the Greek and Roman division, that is, from about 9:00 p.m. to midnight.—See study note on **late in the day** in this verse.

before dawn: Lit., “when the rooster crows.” According to the Greek and Roman division, this was the name given to the third watch of the night. It refers to the time from midnight to about 3:00 a.m. (See preceding study notes on this verse.) It was probably during this

time that “a rooster crowed.” (Mr 14:72) It is generally agreed that roosters’ crowing has long been and still is a time indicator in the lands to the E of the Mediterranean.—See study notes on Mt 26:34; Mr 14:30, 72.

early in the morning: This refers to the fourth night watch according to the Greek and Roman division of the night, that is, from about 3:00 a.m. to sunrise.—See preceding study notes on this verse.

14:1 Now: The events described at Mr 14:1, 2 took place on Nisan 12; the verse states that **the Passover** (on Nisan 14; see study note on Mt 26:2) and **the Festival of Unleavened Bread** (on Nisan 15-21; see  Glossary) was **two days later**.—See  App. A7, B12, B15, and study notes on Mr 14:3, 10.

14:3 while he was at Bethany: The events described at Mr 14:3-9 evidently took place after sunset when Nisan 9 began. That timing is indicated by the parallel account in John, where Jesus is said to *arrive* at Bethany “six days before the Passover.” (Joh 12:1) He must

CHAP. 14

- a Mt 26:6-9
Lu 7:37
Joh 12:2-6
- b Mt 20:2
- c Mt 26:10
Joh 12:7
- d De 15:11
- e Mt 26:11
Joh 12:8
- f Mt 26:12
Lu 23:55, 56
Joh 12:7
- g Mt 24:14
- h Mt 26:13
- i Mt 26:14-16
Lu 22:3-6

oil, genuine nard, very expensive. She broke open the alabaster jar and began pouring it on his head.^a **4** At this some said to one another indignantly: “Why has this perfumed oil been wasted? **5** For this perfumed oil could have been sold for more than 300 de-nar’i-i^b and the money given to the poor!” And they were greatly annoyed with* her. **6** But Jesus said: “Let her alone. Why do you try to make trouble for her? She did a fine deed toward me.^c **7** For you always have the poor with you,^d and you can do them good whenever you want to, but you will not always have me.^e **8** She did what she could; she poured perfumed oil on my body beforehand, in view of the burial.^f **9** Truly I say to you, wherever the good news is preached in all the world,^g what this woman did will also be told in memory of her.”^h

Judas Arranges to Betray Jesus

10 And Judas Is-car’i-ot, one of the Twelve, went off to the chief priests in order to betray him to them.ⁱ **11** When they

FOOTNOTES

14:5 * Or “they spoke angrily to; they scolded.”

STUDY NOTES

have arrived about the beginning (at sunset) of the Sabbath on Nisan 8, which was the day before the meal at Simon’s place.—Joh 12:2-11; see  App. A7 and B12.

Simon the leper: This Simon is mentioned only here and in the parallel account at Mt 26:6. He may have been a former leper whom Jesus healed.—See study note on Mt 8:2 and  Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

a woman: See study note on Mt 26:7.

alabaster jar: See  Glossary, “Alabaster.”

perfumed oil: John says that the weight was a pound. Mark’s and John’s accounts specify that it was worth “more than 300 denarii.” (Mr 14:5; Joh 12:3-5) That sum represented about a year’s wages for an ordinary laborer. The source of such perfumed oil is generally thought to be an aromatic plant (*Nardostachys jatamansi*)

found in the Himalayas. Nard was often adulterated, even counterfeited, but both Mark and John say that this oil was **genuine nard**.—See  Glossary, “Nard.”

pouring it on his head: According to Matthew and Mark, the woman poured the oil on Jesus’ head. (Mt 26:7) John, who wrote years later, supplied the added detail that she also poured it on his feet. (Joh 12:3) Jesus explains that this loving act, in a figurative sense, prepared him for burial.—See study note on Mr 14:8.

See  Gallery, image 81, Alabaster Jar.

14:5 300 denarii: Matthew’s account simply says “a great deal of money” (Mt 26:9), but the accounts of Mark and John are more specific.—See study note on Mr 14:3;  Glossary, “Denarius”; and  App. B14.

14:8 she poured perfumed oil on my body: The woman (see study note on Mt 26:7) performed this generous act out of love and appreciation for Jesus. He explained that she was unknowingly preparing his body for **burial**, since such perfumed oil and ointments were often applied to dead bodies.—2Ch 16:14.

14:9 Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

is preached in all the world: Similar to his prophecy at Mr 13:10, Jesus here foretells that the good news would be proclaimed in all the world and would include this woman’s act of devotion. God inspired three Gospel writers to mention what she did.—Mt 26:12, 13; Joh 12:7; see study note on Mr 13:10.

14:10 And: What is described in verses 10 and 11 happened on Nisan 12, the same day that the events described at Mr 14:1, 2 took place.—See  App. A7, B12, and study notes on Mr 14:1, 3.

Iscaiot: See study note on Mt 10:4.

heard it, they were delighted and promised to give him silver money.^a So he began seeking an opportunity to betray him.

Jesus' Last Passover

12 Now on the first day of the Unleavened Bread,^b when they customarily offered up the Passover sacrifice,^c his disciples said to him: "Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?"^d **13** With that he sent two of his disciples and said to them: "Go into the city, and a man carrying an earthenware water jar will meet you. Follow him,^e **14** and wherever he goes inside, say to the master of the house, "The Teacher says: "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"" **15** And he will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Prepare it for us there." **16** So the disciples went out, and they entered the city and found it just as he said to them, and they prepared for the Passover.

17 After evening had fallen, he came with the Twelve.^f **18** And as they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said: "Truly I say to you, one of you who is eating with me will betray me."^g **19** They began to be grieved and to say to him one by one: "It is not I, is it?" **20** He said to them: "It is one of the Twelve, the one dipping with me into the bowl.^h **21** For the Son of man is going away, just as it is written about him, but woe to that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed!ⁱ It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."^j

CHAP. 14

- a Zec 11:12
- b Ex 12:15, 18
Ex 23:15
- c Lu 22:1
- d Nu 9:2
Mt 26:17-19
Lu 22:7-9
- e Lu 22:10-13
- f Mt 26:20
Lu 22:14
- g Ps 41:9
Mt 26:21, 22
Lu 22:21, 23
Joh 13:21, 22
- h Mt 26:23
Joh 13:26
- i Lu 22:22
- j Mt 26:24

STUDY NOTES

14:11 silver money: Lit., "silver," that is, silver used as money. According to Mt 26:15, the amount of money was "30 silver pieces." Matthew is the only Gospel writer to mention the amount for which Jesus was betrayed. These were possibly 30 silver shekels minted in Tyre. The use of this sum appears to show the chief priests' contempt for Jesus, since under the Law, it was the price of a slave. (Ex 21:32) Likewise, when the prophet Zechariah asked the unfaithful Israelites for his wages for his prophetic work among God's people, they weighed out to him "30 pieces of silver," suggesting that they considered him to be worth no more than a slave.—Zec 11:12, 13.

14:12 on the first day of the Unleavened

Bread: The Festival of Unleavened Bread began on Nisan 15, the day after the Passover (Nisan 14), and the festival lasted for seven days. (See  App. B15.) By Jesus' time, however, the Passover had become so closely connected to this festival that all eight days, including Nisan 14, were sometimes referred to as "the Festival of the Unleavened Bread." (Lu 22:1) The day mentioned here refers to Nisan 14 because it is said to be the day **when they customarily offered up the Passover sacrifice.** (Ex 12:6, 15, 17, 18; Le 23:5; De 16:1-8) What is described in verses 12-16 likely took place on the afternoon of Nisan 13 in preparation for the Passover, which was celebrated "after evening had fallen" at the beginning of

Nisan 14.—Mr 14:17, 18; see  App. B12 and study note on Mt 26:17.

See  Gallery, image 82, The Passover Meal.

14:15 See  Gallery, image 90, Upper Room.

14:17 After evening had fallen: That is, the evening marking the start of Nisan 14.—See  App. A7 and B12.

14:20 dipping with me: People usually ate food with their fingers, or they used a piece of bread somewhat like a spoon. This expression could also be an idiom meaning "to share food together." Eating with a person signified close friendship. To turn against such an intimate companion was considered the vilest form of treachery.—Ps 41:9; Joh 13:18.

CHAP. 14

Instituting the Lord's Evening Meal

- a Mt 26:26
Lu 22:19
1Co 11:23, 24
- b Mt 26:27
1Co 10:16
1Co 11:25
- c Le 17:11
Heb 9:22
- d Ex 24:8
Jer 31:31
Heb 7:22
Heb 9:15
- e Isa 53:12
Mt 26:28
Lu 22:20
- f Mt 26:29
Lu 22:18
- g Mt 26:30
Lu 22:39
Joh 18:1
- h Isa 53:5
Da 9:26
- i Zec 13:7
Mt 26:31-33
Mt 26:56
Mr 14:50
Joh 16:32
- j Mr 16:7
- k Lu 22:31-33
Joh 13:37
- l Mt 26:34
Mr 14:72
Lu 22:34
Joh 13:38
- m Mt 26:35
- n Mt 26:36, 37
Lu 22:39-41
Joh 18:1
- o Mr 9:2
- p Joh 12:27

22 And as they continued eating, he took a loaf, said a blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying: "Take it; this means my body."^a **23** And taking a cup, he offered thanks and gave it to them, and they all drank out of it.^b **24** And he said to them: "This means my 'blood^c of the covenant,'^d which is to be poured out in behalf of many.^e **25** Truly I say to you, I will by no means drink anymore of the product of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God."^f **26** Finally, after singing praises, they went out to the Mount of Olives.^g

Peter's Denial Foretold

27 And Jesus said to them: "You will all be stumbled, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd,^h and the sheep will be scattered about.'ⁱ **28** But after I have been raised up, I will go ahead of you into Gal'i-lee."^j **29** But Peter said to him: "Even if all the others are stumbled, I will not be."^k **30** At that Jesus said to him: "Truly I say to you that today, yes, on this very night, before a rooster crows twice, you will disown me three times."^l **31** But he kept insisting: "If I have to die with you, I will by no means disown you." Also, all the others began to say the same thing.^m

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

32 So they came to a spot named Geth-sem'a-ne, and he said to his disciples: "Sit down here while I pray."ⁿ **33** And he took Peter and James and John along with him,^o and he began to feel deeply distressed* and to be greatly troubled. **34** He said to them: "I am deeply grieved,^p even to death. Stay here and keep

FOOTNOTES

14:33 * Or "feel stunned."

STUDY NOTES

14:20 bowl: The Greek word denotes a relatively deep bowl from which a meal was eaten. A few ancient manuscripts have a reading that can be rendered "the common bowl," but the current reading has strong manuscript support.

14:22 said a blessing: This expression evidently refers to a prayer offering praise and thanks to God.

took a loaf . . . broke it: See study note on Mt 26:26.

means: See study note on Mt 26:26.

14:24 blood of the covenant: See study note on Mt 26:28.

14:25 drink it new: See study note on Mt 26:29.

14:26 praises: See study note on Mt 26:30.

14:30 before a rooster crows: All four Gospels mention this, but only Mark's account adds the detail that the rooster would crow **twice**. (Mt 26:34, 74, 75; Mr

14:72; Lu 22:34, 60, 61; Joh 13:38; 18:27) The Mishnah indicates that roosters were bred in Jerusalem in Jesus' day, lending support to the Bible account. This crowing likely occurred very early in the morning. —See study note on Mr 13:35.

14:32 Gethsemane: See study note on Mt 26:36.

14:34 I am: See study note on Mt 26:38.

on the watch.”^a **35** And going a little way forward, he fell to the ground and began praying that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him. **36** And he said: “*Abba*, Father,^b all things are possible for you; remove this cup from me. Yet, not what I want, but what you want.”^c **37** He returned and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter: “Simon, are you sleeping? Did you not have the strength to keep on the watch for one hour?”^d **38** Keep on the watch and pray continually, so that you do not come into temptation.^e The spirit, of course, is eager,^{*} but the flesh is weak.”^f **39** And he went away again and prayed, saying the same thing.^g **40** And he came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were weighed down, so they did not know what to answer him. **41** And he returned the third time and said to them: “At such a time as this, you are sleeping and resting! It is enough! The hour has come!^h Look! The Son of man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. **42** Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer has drawn near.”ⁱ

CHAP. 14

a Mt 26:38

b Ro 8:15
Ga 4:6c Mt 26:39
Lu 22:42
Joh 6:38
Heb 5:7d Mt 26:40
Lu 22:45e Mt 6:13
Lu 11:4
Lu 22:46f Mt 26:41
Ro 7:23

g Mt 26:42-46

h Joh 13:1

i Joh 18:2

j Mt 26:47-51
Lu 22:47-51
Joh 18:3

Jesus Arrested and Disciples Flee

43 And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.^j **44** Now his betrayer had given them an agreed sign, saying: “Whoever it is I kiss, he is the one; take him into custody, and lead him away under guard.”^{*} **45** And he came straight up and approached him and said, “Rabbi!” and gave him a

FOOTNOTES

14:38 *Or “willing.” **14:44** *Or “securely.”

STUDY NOTES

14:34 **keep on the watch:** Lit., “stay awake.” Jesus had emphasized the need for his disciples to stay awake spiritually because of not knowing the day and hour of his coming. (See study notes on Mt 24: 42; 25:13; Mr 13:35.) He repeats that exhortation here and again at Mr 14:38, where he links staying awake spiritually with persevering in prayer. Similar exhortations are found throughout the Christian Greek Scriptures, showing that spiritual alertness is vital for true Chris-

tians.—1Co 16:13; Col 4:2; 1Th 5:6; 1Pe 5:8; Re 16:15.

14:35 **fell to the ground:** Or “threw himself to the ground.” The parallel account at Mt 26:39 says that Jesus “fell facedown.” In the Bible, several postures for prayer are mentioned, including standing and kneeling. However, perhaps the humblest posture was when a person in fervent prayer would lie facedown with his body outstretched.

14:36 **Abba:** A Hebrew or Aramaic word (transliterated into Greek) occurring three times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (Ro 8:15; Ga 4:6) The word literally means “the father” or “O Father.” It combines some of the intimacy of the English word “papa” with the dignity of the word

“father,” being informal and yet respectful. It was among the first words a child learned to speak; yet in ancient Hebrew and Aramaic writings, it was also used by a grown son when addressing his father. Therefore, it was an endearing form of address rather than a title. Jesus’ use of this expression shows the close, trusting relationship he has with his Father.

Father: All three instances of *Abba* are followed by the translation *ho pa-ter*’ in Greek, which literally means “the father” or “O Father.”

remove this cup from me: In the Bible, “cup” is often used figuratively of God’s will, or the “assigned portion,” for a person. (See study note on Mt 20:22.) Jesus no doubt felt great concern over the

CHAP. 14

- a Mt 26:51
Lu 22:50
Joh 18:10
- b Mt 26:55, 56
Lu 22:52, 53
- c Lu 19:47
Joh 18:20
- d Ps 22:6
Isa 53:7
Da 9:26
Lu 22:37
- e Zec 13:7
Mt 26:31
Joh 16:32
- f Joh 18:13
- g Mt 26:57
Lu 22:54, 55
- h Mt 26:58
Joh 18:15, 16
- i Mt 26:59, 60
- j Ps 27:12
Ps 35:11

tender kiss. **46** So they seized him and took him into custody. **47** However, one of those standing by drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, taking off his ear.^a **48** But in response Jesus said to them: “Did you come out to arrest me with swords and clubs as against a robber?”^b **49** Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching,^c and yet you did not take me into custody. Nevertheless, this is to fulfill the Scriptures.”^d

50 And they all abandoned him and fled.^e **51** However, a certain young man wearing only a fine linen garment over his naked body began to follow him nearby, and they tried to seize him, **52** but he left his linen garment behind and got away naked.

Trial Before the Sanhedrin

53 They now led Jesus away to the high priest,^f and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes assembled.^g **54** But Peter, from a good distance, followed him as far as into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting together with the house attendants and warming himself before a bright fire.^h **55** Now the chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin were looking for testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they were not finding any.ⁱ **56** Many, indeed, were giving false witness against him,^j but their testimonies were not in agreement. **57** Also, certain ones were standing up

STUDY NOTES

reproach that his death as one charged with blasphemy and sedition could bring on God, moving him to pray that this “cup” be removed from him.

14:38 spirit: See study note on Mt 26:41.

flesh: See study note on Mt 26:41.

14:40 their eyes were weighed down: A Greek idiomatic expression that means “to be extremely sleepy.” It could also be rendered, “they could not keep their eyes open.”

14:41 Look!: See study note on Mr 1:2.

14:45 gave him a tender kiss: The Greek verb rendered “to give a tender kiss” is an intensive form of the verb for “kiss,” used at Mr 14:44. By greeting Jesus in such a warm, friendly manner, Judas showed the depth of his deceitfulness and hypocrisy.

14:47 one of those standing by: The parallel account at Joh 18:10 shows that it was Simon Peter who **drew his sword** and that the name of **the slave of the high priest** was Malchus. The accounts of Luke (22:50) and John (18:10) also add the detail that it was his “right ear” that was cut off.

struck the slave of the high priest: See study note on Joh 18:10.

14:51 a certain young man: Mark is the only one who records the incident described in verses 51 and 52. The young man may have been the writer himself. If so, Mark may have had some personal contact with Jesus.—See “Introduction to Mark” and study note on **Mark**.

14:52 naked: See study note on Mt 25:36.

14:53 the high priest: When Israel functioned as an independent nation, the high

priest held his office for life. (Nu 35:25) However, during the Roman occupation of Israel, the rulers assigned by Rome had authority to appoint the high priest and to depose him. The high priest who presided at Jesus’ trial was Caiaphas (Mt 26:3, 57), a skillful diplomat who held his office longer than any of his immediate predecessors. He was appointed about 18 C.E. and remained in office until about 36 C.E.—See  Glossary, “High priest,” and  App. B12 for the possible location of Caiaphas’ house.

14:55 Sanhedrin: See study note on Mt 26:59.

and bearing false witness against him, saying: **58** “We heard him say, ‘I will throw down this temple that was made with hands, and in three days I will build another not made with hands.’”^a **59** But even on these grounds, their testimony was not in agreement.

60 Then the high priest stood up in their midst and questioned Jesus, saying: “Do you say nothing in reply? What is it these men are testifying against you?”^b **61** But he kept silent and made no reply at all.^c Again the high priest began to question him and said to him: “Are you the Christ the Son of the Blessed One?” **62** Then Jesus said: “I am; and you will see the Son of man^d sitting at the right hand^e of power and coming with the clouds of heaven.”^f **63** At this the high priest ripped his garments and said: “What further need do we have of witnesses?^g **64** You heard the blasphemy. What is your decision?”* They all condemned him as deserving of death.^h **65** And some started to spit on himⁱ and to cover his face and hit him with their fists and say to him: “Prophecy!” And slapping him in the face, the court attendants took him.^j

CHAP. 14

- a Mt 26:61
Mr 15:29
Joh 2:19
- b Mt 26:62, 63
- c Isa 53:7
1Pe 2:23
- d Da 7:13
- e Ps 110:1
Eph 1:20
Col 3:1
- f Mt 24:30
Mt 26:64
Lu 21:27
Re 1:7
- g Mt 26:65, 66
- h Le 24:16
Joh 19:7
- i Isa 50:6
Isa 53:3
- j Mt 26:67, 68
Lu 22:63-65
- k Mt 26:69-75
Lu 22:55-62
Joh 18:17,18
- l Joh 18:25, 26

Peter Denies Jesus

66 Now while Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came.^k **67** On seeing Peter warming himself, she looked straight at him and said: “You too were with the Naz-a-rene’, this Jesus.” **68** But he denied it, saying: “Neither do I know him nor do I understand* what you are talking about,” and he went outside to the entryway. **69** There the servant girl saw him and again began to say to those standing by: “This is one of them.”^l **70** Again he was denying it. And after a little while, those standing by again began saying

FOOTNOTES

14:64 *Or “What do you think?”; “How does it seem to you?” **14:68** *Or “I neither know nor understand.”

STUDY NOTES

14:59 **their testimony was not in agreement:** Mark is the only Gospel writer to report that the false witnesses at Jesus’ trial were not in agreement.

14:61 **the Christ:** See study note on Mt 11:2.

14:62 **right hand of power:** See study note on Mt 26:64.

14:63 **ripped his garments:** Here a gesture expressing indignation. Caiaphas likely tore open the part of his garment that covered his chest to dramatize his sanctimonious outrage at Jesus’ words.

14:65 **Prophecy!:** Here “prophecy” does not imply making a prediction but, rather, identifying by divine revelation. The context shows that Jesus’ persecutors had covered his face, and the parallel account at Mt 26:68 reveals that the taunt they

addressed to him was, in full: “Prophecy to us, you Christ. Who struck you?” They were thus challenging the blindfolded Jesus to identify who was hitting him. —See study notes on Mt 26:68; Lu 22:64.

14:68 **entryway:** Or “vestibule.”—See study note on Mt 26:71.

14:71 **curse:** See study note on Mt 26:74.

swear: See study note on Mt 26:74.

14:72 **a rooster crowed:** All four Gospels mention this event, but only Mark’s account adds the detail that the rooster

CHAP. 14

a Joh 18:27
 b Mt 26:34
 Mr 14:30
 Lu 22:34
 Joh 13:38

CHAP. 15

c Lu 22:66
 d Ps 2:2
 Mt 27:1, 2
 Lu 23:1
 Joh 18:28
 Ac 3:13
 Ac 4:26
 e Joh 18:33, 37
 f Mt 27:11-14
 Lu 23:3
 g Lu 23:2, 10
 Joh 18:29
 h Mt 26:62
 i Joh 19:9, 10
 j Isa 53:7
 k Mt 27:15-18
 Joh 18:39
 l Lu 23:16
 m Mt 21:38

to Peter: “Certainly you are one of them, for you are, in fact, a Gal-i-le’an.” **71** But he started to curse and swear: “I do not know this man of whom you speak!” **72** Immediately a rooster crowed a second time,^a and Peter recalled what Jesus had said to him: “Before a rooster crows twice, you will disown me three times.”^b And he broke down and began to weep.

Jesus Stands Before Pilate

15 Immediately at dawn, the chief priests with the elders and the scribes, indeed, the whole San’he-drin, consulted together,^c and they bound Jesus and led him off and handed him over to Pilate.^d **2** So Pilate put the question to him: “Are you the King of the Jews?”^e In answer he said: “You yourself say it.”^f **3** But the chief priests were accusing him of many things.^g **4** Now Pilate began questioning him again, saying: “Have you no reply to make?^h See how many charges they are bringing against you.”ⁱ **5** But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.^j

6 Well, from festival to festival,^{*} he used to release to them one prisoner whom they requested.^k **7** At the time the man named Bar·ab’bas was in prison with the seditionists, who in their sedition had committed murder. **8** So the crowd came up and began to make their request according to what Pilate used to do for them. **9** He responded to them, saying: “Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?”^l **10** For Pilate was aware that out of envy the chief priests had handed him over.^m **11** But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have

FOOTNOTES

15:6 * Or “at each festival.”

STUDY NOTES

crowed **a second time**. (Mt 26:34, 74, 75; Mr 14:30; Lu 22:34, 60, 61; Joh 13:38; 18:27) The Mishnah indicates that roosters were bred in Jerusalem in Jesus’ day, lending support to the Bible account. This crowing likely occurred sometime before dawn.—See study note on Mr 13:35.

15:1 Sanhedrin: See study note on Mt 26:59.

Pilate: The Roman governor (prefect) of Judea appointed by Emperor Tiberius in 26 C.E. His rule lasted about ten years. Pi-

late is mentioned by non-Biblical writers, including Roman historian Tacitus, who wrote that Pilate ordered the execution of Christ during the reign of Tiberius. A Latin inscription with the words “Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea” was found in the ancient Roman theater in Caesarea, Israel.—See  App. B10 for the domain ruled by Pontius Pilate.

See  Gallery, image 91, The Sanhedrin.

15:2 Are you the King of the Jews?: See study note on Mt 27:11.

You yourself say it: See study note on Mt 27:11.

15:6 used to release to them one prisoner: This incident is mentioned by

all four Gospel writers. (Mt 27:15-23; Lu 23:16-25; Joh 18:39, 40) There is no basis or precedent for this custom in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, it seems that by Jesus’ day, the Jews had developed this tradition. The practice would not have seemed strange to the Romans, since there is evidence that they released prisoners to please the crowds.

him release Bar·ab·bas to them instead.^a **12** Again in reply Pilate said to them: “What, then, should I do with the one you call the King of the Jews?”^b **13** Once more they cried out: “To the stake with him!”^{*c} **14** But Pilate went on to say to them: “Why? What bad thing did he do?” Still they cried out all the more: “To the stake with him!”^{*d} **15** At that Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Bar·ab·bas to them; and after having Jesus whipped,^e he handed him over to be executed on the stake.^f

CHAP. 15

- a Mt 27:20-23
Lu 23:18, 19
Joh 18:40
Ac 3:14
- b Lu 23:20-25
- c Joh 19:6
- d Joh 19:15
Ac 3:13
Ac 13:28
- e Joh 19:1
- f Mt 27:24, 26
- g Mt 27:27-31
- h Lu 23:11
Joh 19:2, 3

Soldiers Mock Jesus

16 The soldiers now led him off into the courtyard, that is, into the governor’s residence, and they called the whole body of troops together.^g **17** And they dressed him in purple and braided a crown of thorns and put it on him;^h **18** and they began to call out to him: “Greetings, you King of the Jews!”

FOOTNOTES

15:13, 14 *Or “Execute him on the stake!”

STUDY NOTES

15:13 **Once more:** As indicated at Lu 23:18-23, the crowd yelled at least three times, demanding that Pilate execute Jesus. The account here in Mark indicates that Pilate three times asked the crowd questions regarding Jesus.—Mr 15:9, 12, 14.

15:15 **whipped:** See study note on Mt 27:26.

15:16 **governor’s residence:** See study note on Mt 27:27.

15:17 **they dressed him in purple:** This was done to mock Jesus and make fun of his kingship. Matthew’s account (27:28) says that the soldiers draped Jesus “with a scarlet cloak,” a garment worn by kings, magistrates, or military officers. Mark’s and John’s accounts (19:2) say that it was a purple garment, but in ancient times, “purple” was used to describe any color that had a mixture of red and blue. Also, angle, light reflection, and background could have influenced the observer’s perception of the exact color. This variation in describing the color shows that the

Gospel writers did not simply copy one another’s accounts.

crown: Along with the purple garment (mentioned earlier in this verse), Jesus was given mock attributes of royalty —thorns for a crown and, according to Mt 27:29, “a reed” for a scepter.

15:18 **Greetings:** See study note on Mt 27:29.

15:19 **spitting on him:** This contemptuous treatment of Jesus fulfilled Jesus’ own words at Mr 10:34 as well as the prophecy regarding the Messiah at Isa 50:6.—See study note on Mr 10:34.

bowed down to him: Or “did obeisance to him; paid him homage.” Here the Greek verb *pro-sky-ne’o* is used of the soldiers who mockingly bowed down to Jesus, calling him “King of the Jews.”—Mr 15:18; see study note on Mt 2:2.

15:20 **nail him to the stake:** Or “fasten him on a stake (pole).”—See study note on Mt 20:19 and  Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

15:21 **compelled into service:** A reference to the compulsory service that the Roman authorities could demand from a citizen. They could, for example, press men or animals into service or commander whatever was considered necessary

to expedite official business.—See study note on Mt 5:41.

Cyrene: See study note on Mt 27:32.

the father of Alexander and Rufus: Only Mark mentions this point regarding Simon of Cyrene.

torture stake: See study note on Mt 27:32.

15:22 **Golgotha:** See study note on Mt 27:33.

Skull Place: The Greek expression *Kra-ni’ou To’pos* renders the Hebrew word *Golgotha*. (See Joh 19:17 and the study note on *Golgotha* in this verse.) The term Calvary is used at Lu 23:33 in some English Bible translations. It comes from the Latin word for “skull,” *calvaria*, used in the *Vulgate*.

15:23 **wine drugged with myrrh:** The parallel account at Mt 27:34 says that the wine was “mixed with gall.” The drink likely contained both myrrh and bitter gall. This mixture was evidently given to deaden pain.—See study note on **he would not take it** in this verse and study note on Mt 27:34.

he would not take it: Jesus evidently wanted to have full possession of all his faculties during this test of his faith.

CHAP. 15

- a Joh 19:16
 b Mt 27:32
 Lu 23:26
 c Mt 27:33-37
 Lu 23:33
 Joh 19:17
 Heb 13:12
 d Ps 69:21
 e Ps 22:18
 Joh 19:23, 24

19 Also, they were hitting him on the head with a reed and spitting on him, and they got on their knees and bowed down to him. **20** Finally, after they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple and put his outer garments on him. And they led him out to nail him to the stake.^a **21** Also, they compelled into service a passerby, a certain Simon of Cy-re'ne, coming from the countryside, the father of Alexander and Ru'fus, to carry* his torture stake.^b

Nailed to a Stake at Golgotha

22 So they brought him to the place called *Gol'go-tha*, which means, when translated, "Skull Place."^c **23** Here they tried to give him wine drugged with myrrh,^d but he would not take it. **24** And they nailed him to the stake and distributed his outer garments by casting lots over them to decide who would take what.^e **25** It was now the third hour, and they nailed him to

FOOTNOTES

15:21 *Or "lift up."

STUDY NOTES

15:24 distributed his outer garments:

See study note on Mt 27:35.

by casting lots: See  Glossary, "Lots."

See  Gallery, image 84, Nail in a Heel Bone.

15:25 the third hour: That is, about 9:00 a.m. Some point to a seeming discrepancy between this account and Joh 19:14-16, which says "it was about the sixth hour" when Pilate handed Jesus over to be executed. Although the Scriptures do not fully explain the difference, here are some factors to consider: The Gospel accounts generally harmonize with regard to the timing of events during Jesus' last day on earth. All four accounts indicate that the priests and the elders met after dawn and then had Jesus taken to Roman Governor Pontius Pilate. (Mt 27:1, 2; Mr 15:1; Lu 22:66-23:1; Joh 18:28) Matthew, Mark, and Luke all report that when Jesus was already on the stake, darkness fell over the land from "the sixth hour . . . until the ninth hour." (Mt 27:45, 46; Mr 15:33, 34; Lu 23:44) A factor that may have a bearing on the timing of

Jesus' execution is this: Scourging, or whipping, was considered by some to be a part of the execution process. Sometimes the scourging was so terrible that the victim died. In Jesus' case, it was sufficiently severe to make it necessary for another man to carry the torture stake after Jesus started out carrying it alone. (Lu 23:26; Joh 19:17) If the scourging was viewed as the start of the execution procedure, some time would have elapsed before Jesus was actually nailed to the torture stake. Supporting this, Mt 27:26 and Mr 15:15 mention the scourging (whipping) and execution on the stake together. Therefore, different individuals might give different times for the execution, depending on their perspective regarding the time when the process began. This may explain why Pilate was astonished to learn that Jesus died so soon after he was nailed to the stake. (Mr 15:44) Additionally, Bible writers frequently reflect the practice of dividing the day into four segments of three hours each, as was done with the night. Dividing the day in that way explains why there often are references to the third, sixth, and ninth hours, counting from sunrise at about 6:00 a.m. (Mt 20:1-5; Joh 4:6; Ac 2:15; 3:1; 10:3, 9, 30) Also, people in general did not have precise timepieces, so the time of day was frequently qualified with the

term "about," as we find at Joh 19:14. (Mt 27:46; Lu 23:44; Joh 4:6; Ac 10:3, 9) In summary: Mark may have included both the scourging and the nailing to the stake, while John referred only to the nailing to the stake. Both writers may have rounded off the time of day to the nearest three-hour period, and John used "about" when referring to his stated time. These factors may account for the difference in times mentioned in the accounts. Finally, the fact that John, writing decades later, included a time that appears to vary from that given by Mark shows that John did not simply copy Mark's account.

the stake. **26** And the inscription of the charge against him was written: “The King of the Jews.”^a **27** Moreover, they put two robbers on stakes alongside him, one on his right and one on his left.^b **28** — **29** And those passing by spoke abusively to him, shaking their heads^c and saying: “Ha! You who would throw down the temple and build it in three days,^d **30** save yourself by coming down off the torture stake.” **31** In the same way also, the chief priests with the scribes were mocking him among themselves, saying: “Others he saved; himself he cannot save!”^e **32** Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down off the torture stake, so that we may see and believe.”^f Even those who were on stakes alongside him were reproaching him.^g

CHAP. 15

- a Mt 27:29
Mt 27:37
Lu 23:38
Joh 19:19
- b Mt 27:38
- c Ps 22:7
Ps 109:25
Isa 53:3
- d Mt 27:39-43
Mr 14:58
Joh 2:19
- e Lu 23:35
- f Mt 16:4
- g Mt 27:44
1Pe 2:23
- h Mt 27:45
Lu 23:44
- i Ps 22:1
Mt 27:46-49

Death of Jesus

33 When it became the sixth hour, a darkness fell over all the land* until the ninth hour.^h **34** And at the ninth hour, Jesus called out with a loud voice: “*E’li, E’li, la’ma sa-bach-tha’ni?*” which means, when translated: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”ⁱ **35** And some of those standing near, on hearing it, began to say: “See! He is calling E-li’jah.” **36** Then someone ran, soaked a sponge in sour wine, put it on a reed, and

FOOTNOTES

15:33 *Lit., “earth.”

STUDY NOTES

15:27 robbers: See study note on Mt 27:38.

15:28 A few later manuscripts here add the words: “And the scripture was fulfilled that says: ‘And he was counted with lawless ones,’” which quotes a part of Isa 53:12. But these words do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and are evidently not part of the original text of Mark. A similar statement is part of the inspired text at Lu 22:37. Some are of the opinion that a copyist inserted into Mark’s account the expression from Luke’s account.—See [App. A3](#).

15:29 shaking their heads: See study note on Mt 27:39.

15:30, 32 torture stake: See study note on Mt 27:32.

15:33 the sixth hour: That is, about 12:00 noon.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

a darkness: Luke’s parallel account adds the observation that “the sunlight failed.” (Lu 23:44, 45) This darkness was miraculous, caused by God. It could not have been caused by a solar eclipse. Those occur at the time of the new moon, but this was Passover season, when the moon is full. And this darkness lasted for three hours, far longer than the longest possible total eclipse, which is less than eight minutes.

the ninth hour: That is, about 3:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

15:34 *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*: See study note on Mt 27:46.

My God, my God: See study note on Mt 27:46.

15:35 Elijah: From the Hebrew name meaning “My God Is Jehovah.”

15:36 sour wine: See study note on Mt 27:48.

reed: See study note on Mt 27:48.

15:37 expired: Or “breathed his last.”—See study note on Mt 27:50.

15:38 curtain: See study note on Mt 27:51.

sanctuary: See study note on Mt 27:51.

15:39 army officer: Or “centurion,” that is, one in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army. This high-ranking officer may have been at Jesus’ trial before Pilate and may have heard the Jews say that Jesus claimed to be God’s Son. (Mr 15:16; Joh 19:7) Mark here uses the Greek word *ken-ty-ri’on*, a Latin loanword that also occurs at Mr 15:44, 45.—See “Introduction to Mark” and study notes on Mr 6:27; Joh 19:20.

15:40 Mary Magdalene: See study note on Mt 27:56.

James the Less: One of Jesus’ apostles and the son of Alphaeus. (Mt 10:2, 3; Mr 3:18; Lu 6:15; Ac 1:13) The designation “the Less” may indicate that this James was either not as old or not as tall as the other apostle James, the son of Zebedee.

CHAP. 15

- a Ps 69:21
Joh 19:29
- b Ps 31:5
Mt 27:50
Lu 23:46
Joh 19:30
- c Ex 26:31-33
Heb 6:19
- d Mt 27:51
Lu 23:45
Heb 10:19, 20
- e Mt 27:54
Lu 23:47
- f Mt 27:55, 56
Lu 23:49
Joh 19:25
- g Lu 8:2, 3
- h De 21:22, 23
Mt 27:57, 58
Lu 23:50-52
Joh 19:38

gave it to him to drink,^a saying: “Let him be! Let us see whether E-li’jah comes to take him down.” **37** But Jesus let out a loud cry and expired.^b **38** And the curtain of the sanctuary^c was torn in two from top to bottom.^d **39** Now when the army officer who was standing by with him in view saw that he had expired under these circumstances, he said: “Certainly this man was God’s Son.”^{*e}

40 There were also women watching from a distance, among them Mary Mag’da-lene as well as Mary the mother of James the Less and of Jo’ses, and Sa-lo’me,^f **41** who used to accompany him and minister to him^g when he was in Gal’i-lee, and many other women who had come up together with him to Jerusalem.

Burial of Jesus

42 Now as it was already late in the afternoon, and since it was Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, **43** there came Joseph of Ar-i-ma-the’a, a reputable member of the Council, who also himself was waiting for the Kingdom of God. He took courage and went in before Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.^h **44** But Pilate wondered whether he could already be dead, and summoning the army officer, he asked him

FOOTNOTES

15:39 *Or possibly, “a son of God; a son of a god.”

STUDY NOTES

15:40 Joses: From Hebrew, a shortened form of Josiphiah, meaning “May Jah Add (Increase); Jah Has Added (Increased).” Although a few manuscripts here read “Joseph,” the majority of ancient manuscripts read “Joses.”—Compare the parallel account at Mt 27:56.

Salome: Probably from a Hebrew word meaning “peace.” Salome was a disciple of Jesus. A comparison of Mt 27:56 with Mr 3:17 and 15:40 may indicate that Salome was the mother of the apostles James and John; Matthew mentions “the mother of the sons of Zebedee,” and Mark calls her “Salome.” Further, a comparison with Joh 19:25 points to Salome as possibly being the fleshly sister of Mary, Jesus’ mother. If so, then James and John were first cousins of Jesus. In addition, as

Mt 27:55, 56, Mr 15:41, and Lu 8:3 imply, Salome was among the women who accompanied Jesus and ministered to him from their belongings.

15:42 Preparation: As Mark evidently writes primarily with non-Jewish readers in mind, he clarifies that this expression refers to **the day before the Sabbath**, an explanation not found in the other Gospel accounts. (Mt 27:62; Lu 23:54; Joh 19:31) On this day, Jews got ready for the Sabbath by preparing extra meals and finishing any work that could not wait until after the Sabbath. In this case, the day of Preparation fell on Nisan 14.—See  Glossary.

15:43 Joseph: The individuality of the Gospel writers is evident in the varying details they provide about Joseph. Tax collector Matthew notes that he was “a rich man”; Mark, writing primarily for the Romans, says that he was “a reputable member of the Council” who was waiting for God’s Kingdom; Luke, the sympathetic physician, says that he “was a good and

righteous man” who did not vote in support of the Council’s action against Jesus; John alone reports that he was “a secret [disciple] because of his fear of the Jews.”—Mt 27:57-60; Mr 15:43-46; Lu 23:50-53; Joh 19:38-42.

Arimatea: See study note on Mt 27:57.

member of the Council: Or “councilor,” that is, a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court in Jerusalem.—See study note on Mt 26:59 and  Glossary, “Sanhedrin.”

whether Jesus had already died. **45** So after making certain from the army officer, he granted the body to Joseph. **46** After he bought fine linen and took him down, he wrapped him in the fine linen and laid him in a tomb^a that was quarried out of rock; then he rolled a stone up to the entrance of the tomb.^b **47** But Mary Mag'da-lene and Mary the mother of Jo'ses continued looking at where he had been laid.^c

CHAP. 15

- a Isa 53:9
 b Mt 27:59, 60
 Lu 23:53
 Joh 19:40, 41
 c Mt 27:61
 Lu 23:55

 STUDY NOTES

15:46; 16:2 tomb: See study note on Mt 27:60.

15:46 a stone: Apparently a circular stone, since this verse says that it was rolled into place and Mr 16:4 says that it “had been rolled away” when Jesus was resurrected. It might have weighed a ton or more. Matthew’s account calls it “a big stone.”—Mt 27:60.

See  Gallery, image 85, Tomb Chamber.

16:1 Sabbath: The Sabbath day (Nisan 15) ended at sunset. All four Gospel accounts contain the report of Jesus’ resurrection.—Mt 28:1-10; Mr 16:1-8; Lu 24:1-12; Joh 20:1-29.

Mary Magdalene: See study note on Mt 27:56.

James: That is, James the Less.—See study note on Mr 15:40.

Salome: See study note on Mr 15:40.

bought spices . . . apply them to his body: Jesus’ body had already been prepared for burial “according to the burial custom of the Jews.” (Joh 19:39, 40) However, since Jesus died about three hours before the start of the Sabbath and the Jews were not allowed to do such work during the Sabbath, this task was likely done hastily. Now, on this first day after the Sabbath, that is, the third day from Jesus’ execution, the women may have come to add more spices and oils, perhaps as a means of preserving the body for a longer period. (Lu 23:50–24:1) Likely, they would apply the spices and oils over the wrapped body.

16:2 the first day of the week: See study note on Mt 28:1.

16:3 the stone: Apparently a circular stone, since this verse says that the women asked about who would “roll the stone away,” and verse 4 says that it “had been rolled away.” It might have weighed a ton or more. Matthew’s account calls it “a big stone.”—Mt 27:60.

16:7 tell his disciples: See study note on Mt 28:7.

and Peter: Mark is the only Gospel writer to include the detail that Peter was specifically named in the angel’s message. (Compare the parallel account at Mt 28:7.) Joh 20:2 says that Mary Magdalene brought the message “to Simon Peter and to the other disciple,” that is, John. Sometime before Jesus appeared to his disciples as a group, he apparently appeared to Peter when Peter was alone. (Lu 24:34; 1Co 15:5) This personal attention, plus the specific mention of Peter in this angelic message, no doubt reassured Peter that he had been forgiven for three times denying any association with his friend.—Mt 26:73-75.

16:8 for they were in fear: According to the earliest available manuscripts of the last part of Mark, the Gospel ends with the words found in verse 8. Some assert that such an ending is too abrupt to have been the original conclusion to the book. However, in view of Mark’s generally terse writing style, that assertion is not necessarily valid. Also, fourth-century scholars Jerome and Eusebius indicate that the authentic record closes with the words “for they were in fear.”

There are a number of Greek manuscripts and translations into other languages that add either a long or a short conclusion after verse 8. The long conclusion (consisting of 12 extra verses) is found in Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Ephraemi Syri rescriptus, and Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis, all from the fifth century C.E. It also appears in the Latin *Vulgate*, the Curetonian Syriac, and the Syriac *Peshitta*. However, it does not appear in two earlier fourth-century Greek manuscripts, Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, or in Codex Sinaiticus Syriacus of the fourth or fifth century, or in the earliest Sahidic Coptic manuscript of Mark of the fifth century. Similarly, the oldest manuscripts of Mark in Armenian and Georgian end at verse 8.

Certain later Greek manuscripts and translations into other languages contain the short conclusion (consisting of just a couple of sentences). The Codex Regius of the eighth century C.E. has both conclusions, giving the shorter conclusion first. It prefaces each conclusion with a note saying that these passages are current in some quarters, though it evidently recognizes neither of them as authoritative.

See  Gallery, image 92, Codex Sinaiticus—End of Mark’s Gospel.

See  Gallery, image 93, Codex Vaticanus—End of Mark’s Gospel.

CHAP. 16

Women at the Empty Tomb

- a Ex 20:8, 9
 b Mt 28:1
 c Lu 23:55, 56
 d Lu 24:1
 Joh 20:1
 e Mr 15:46
 f Mt 28:2, 3
 Lu 24:2, 3
 g Lu 24:4
 h Mr 8:31
 Lu 18:33
 Ac 4:10
 i Mt 28:5, 6
 j Mt 26:32
 Mr 14:28
 k Mt 28:7
 l Mt 28:8
 Lu 24:9

16 So when the Sabbath^a was over, Mary Mag'da-lene, Mary^b the mother of James, and Sa-lo'me bought spices in order to come and apply them to his body.^c **2** And very early on the first day of the week when the sun had risen, they came to the tomb.^d **3** They were saying to one another: "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb for us?"^e **4** But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away, although it was very large.^f **5** When they entered into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe, and they were stunned. **6** He said to them: "Do not be stunned.^g You are looking for Jesus the Naz-a-rene' who was executed on the stake. He was raised up.^h He is not here. Look, here is the place where they laid him.ⁱ **7** But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Gal'i-lee.^j You will see him there, just as he told you.'^k **8** So when they came out, they fled from the tomb, trembling and overwhelmed with emotion. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were in fear.^l

SHORT CONCLUSION

The short conclusion after Mr 16:8 is not part of the inspired Scriptures. It reads as follows:

But all the things that had been commanded they related briefly to those around Peter. Further, after these things, Jesus himself sent out through them from the east to the west the holy and incorruptible proclamation of everlasting salvation.

LONG CONCLUSION

The long conclusion after Mr 16:8 is not part of the inspired Scriptures. It reads as follows:

9 After he rose early on the first day of the week he appeared first to Mary Mag'da-lene, from whom he had expelled seven demons. **10** She went and reported to those who had been with him, as they were mourning and weeping. **11** But

they, when they heard he had come to life and had been viewed by her, did not believe. **12** Moreover, after these things he appeared in another form to two of them walking along, as they were going into the country; **13** and they came back and reported to the rest. Neither did they believe these. **14** But later he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table, and he reproached their lack of faith and hardheartedness, because they did not believe those who had beheld him now raised up from the dead. **15** And he said to them: "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. **16** He that believes and is baptized will be saved, but he that does not believe will be condemned. **17** Furthermore, these signs will accompany those believing: By the use of my name they will expel demons, they will speak with tongues, **18** and with their hands they will pick up serpents, and if they drink

anything deadly it will not hurt them at all. They will lay their hands upon sick persons, and these will become well."

19 So, then, the Lord Jesus, after having spoken to them, was taken up to heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. **20** They, accordingly, went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and backed up the message through the accompanying signs.

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO

LUKE



- Luke’s account appears to have been written after Matthew wrote his account but before Mark wrote his Gospel. Luke likely wrote his Gospel after he returned from Philippi with Paul at the end of Paul’s third missionary journey. Luke may have compiled his account while Paul was spending two years in prison at Caesarea before being taken to Rome for his appeal to Caesar.
- Matthew evidently wrote his Gospel especially for the Jews, and it seems that Mark wrote his account primarily for non-Jewish readers, especially the Romans. Luke, however, wrote his Gospel for all people. Some 60 percent of Luke’s Gospel is unique. He relates at least six specific miracles not recorded by Matthew, Mark, and John. (Lu 5:1-6; 7:11-15; 13:11-13; 14:1-4; 17:12-14; 22:50, 51) And he includes many illustrations that are not mentioned in the other Gospel accounts; the ones recorded at Lu 10:30-35; 15:11-32; and 16:19-31 are just a few examples.
- Luke, a physician, provides extra details about the physical condition of some of those suffering from an illness. (Lu 4:38; 5:12; Col 4:14) Suggesting the level of Luke’s education, his vocabulary is larger than that of the other three Gospel writers combined.
- Although Luke is nowhere named in the account, the Gospel is attributed to him in the Muratorian Fragment (c. 170 C.E.). Also, Luke was accepted as the author by such second-century writers as Clement of Alexandria and Irenaeus.
- Because Luke was not one of the Twelve and probably not even a believer until after Jesus’ death, he was not an eyewitness to all the events he recorded in his Gospel. However, he accompanied Paul to Jerusalem at the end of the apostle’s third missionary journey. (Ac 21:15-17) So Luke would have been in a good position to trace accurately the things pertaining to Jesus Christ in the very land where the Son of God had carried out his activity. For example, Luke had the opportunity personally to interview many who saw the events of Jesus’ life, such eyewitnesses as the surviving disciples and possibly Jesus’ mother, Mary. In addition, Luke could have referred to Matthew’s Gospel.

Writer: Luke

Place Written: Caesarea

Writing Completed: c. 56-58 C.E.

Time Covered: 3 B.C.E.–33 C.E.

STUDY NOTES

Luke: The Greek form of the name is *Lou-kas'*, from the Latin name *Lucas*. Luke, the writer of this Gospel and of Acts of Apostles, was a physician and a faithful companion to the apostle Paul. (Col 4:14; see also “Introduction to Luke.”) Because of his Greek name and his style of writing, some have claimed that Luke was not a Jew. Also, at Col 4:10-14, Paul first speaks of “those circumcised” and later

mentions Luke. However, that claim runs contrary to the indication at Ro 3:1, 2, which says that the Jews “were entrusted with the sacred pronouncements of God.” Therefore, Luke may have been a Greek-speaking Jew with a Greek name.

According to Luke: None of the Gospel writers identify themselves as such in their accounts, and titles are evidently not part of the original text. In some manuscripts of Luke’s Gospel, the title appears as *Eu-ag-ge'li-on Ka-ta' Lou-kan'* (“Good News [or, “Gospel”] According to Luke”), whereas in others a shorter title, *Ka-ta' Lou-kan'* (“According to Luke”), is used. It is not clear exactly when such titles were added or began to be used.

Some suggest the second century C.E., since examples of the longer title have been found in Gospel manuscripts that have been dated to the end of the second century or early third century. According to some scholars, the opening words of Mark’s book (“The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God”) may have been the reason why the term “gospel” (lit., “good news”) came to be used to describe these accounts. The use of such titles along with the name of the writer may have come about for practical reasons, providing a clear means of identification of the books.

See  Gallery, map 3, Gospel of Luke –Some Major Events.

OVERVIEW OF LUKE

1:1-4

Luke's Introduction

Background for writing the account (1:1, 2)

Addressing Theophilus (1:3, 4)

1:5-80

Events Surrounding the Births of John the Baptist and Jesus

John the Baptist's birth foretold by Gabriel (1:5-25)

Jesus' birth foretold by Gabriel (1:26-38)

Mary visits her relative Elizabeth (1:39-45)

Mary magnifies Jehovah (1:46-56)

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2:1-52

Jesus' Birth and Early Life

Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem; Jesus is born (2:1-7)

Angels appear to shepherds in the fields (2:8-20)

Jesus circumcised and presented at the temple (2:21-24)

Simeon privileged to see the Christ (2:25-35)

Anna speaks about the child (2:36-38)

Return to Nazareth (2:39, 40)

Twelve-year-old Jesus at the temple (2:41-50)

Jesus returns to Nazareth with his parents (2:51, 52)

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Starting point of John's ministry (3:1, 2)

John preaches baptism (3:3-20)

The baptism of Jesus (3:21, 22)

Genealogy of Jesus Christ (3:23-38)

Jesus rejects the Devil's temptations (4:1-13)

4:14-6:11

Early Part of Jesus' Ministry, Mainly in Galilee

Jesus begins preaching in Galilee (4:14, 15)

Jesus rejected in Nazareth (4:16-30)

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Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law and others (4:38-41)

Crowds find Jesus in an isolated place (4:42-44)

Miraculous catch of fish; first disciples called (5:1-11)

Jesus heals a man full of leprosy (5:12-16)

Jesus forgives and heals a paralytic (5:17-26)

Levi called by Jesus to be his follower (5:27-32)

Question regarding fasting (5:33-39)

Jesus, "Lord of the Sabbath" (6:1-5)

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The 12 apostles chosen (6:12-16)

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Jesus resurrects a widow's son in Nain (7:11-17)

John the Baptist asks about "the Coming One" (7:18-23)

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Why Jesus used illustrations (8:9, 10)

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A lamp not to be covered (8:16-18)

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The 70 return (10:17-20)

Jesus praises his Father for favoring the humble (10:21-24)

Illustration of the neighborly Samaritan (10:25-37)

Jesus visits Martha and Mary (10:38-42)

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Illustration of the persistent friend (11:5-13)

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attends to his master's needs
(17:7-10)

Jesus heals ten lepers (17:11-19)

The coming of God's Kingdom
(17:20-37)

Illustration of the persistent widow
(18:1-8)

Illustration of the Pharisee and
the tax collector (18:9-14)

Jesus and the little children
(18:15-17)

A rich ruler's question regarding
everlasting life (18:18-30)

Jesus again foretells his death
and resurrection (18:31-34)

Jesus heals a blind beggar
near Jericho (18:35-43)

Jesus visits the tax collector
Zacchaeus (19:1-10)

Illustration of the ten minas
(19:11-27)

19:28–21:4

Beginning of Jesus' Final Week of Public Ministry in and Around Jerusalem

Jesus' triumphal entry into
Jerusalem (19:28-40)

Jesus weeps over Jerusalem
(19:41-44)

Jesus cleanses the temple
(19:45-48)

Jesus' authority challenged
(20:1-8)

Illustration of murderous
vineyard cultivators (20:9-19)

God and Caesar (20:20-26)

Question about resurrection
(20:27-40)

Is the Christ the son of David?
(20:41-44)

Warning against the scribes
(20:45-47)

Needy widow's two small coins
(21:1-4)

21:5-36

Jesus' Great Prophecy About the Sign of What Was to Come

Question about the sign; warning
against being misled (21:5-9)

Features of the composite sign:
wars, great earthquakes,
pestilences, food shortages
(21:10, 11)

Persecution foretold (21:12-19)

Jerusalem to be surrounded
by armies; appointed times of
the nations foretold (21:20-24)

The coming of the Son of man
(21:25-28)

Illustration of the fig tree
(21:29-31)

“This generation will by no means pass away” (21:32, 33)

‘Never let your hearts become weighed down; keep awake’ (21:34-36)

21:37–23:25

Jesus’ Final Days in Jerusalem; His Arrest and Trial

Jesus teaches in the temple (21:37, 38)

Priests plot to kill Jesus (22:1-6)

Preparations for the last Passover (22:7-13)

Jesus institutes the Lord’s Evening Meal (22:14-20)

“My betrayer is with me at the table” (22:21-23)

Heated dispute over who is the greatest (22:24-27)

Jesus’ covenant for a kingdom (22:28-30)

Peter’s denial foretold (22:31-34)

Need for preparedness; the two swords (22:35-38)

Jesus’ prayer on the Mount of Olives (22:39-46)

Jesus is arrested (22:47-53)

Peter denies Jesus (22:54-62)

Jesus is mocked and made fun of (22:63-65)

Trial before the Sanhedrin (22:66-71)

Jesus stands before Pilate and Herod (23:1-25)

23:26–24:53

Jesus’ Execution, Burial, Resurrection, and Ascension

Jesus addresses the daughters of Jerusalem (23:26-31)

Jesus and two criminals are hung on stakes (23:32-42)

Jesus promises: “You will be with me in Paradise” (23:43)

Death of Jesus (23:44-49)

Burial of Jesus (23:50-56)

Women and Peter at the empty tomb (24:1-12)

On the road to Emmaus (24:13-35)

Jesus appears to the disciples (24:36-49)

Jesus ascends to heaven (24:50-53)

ACCORDING TO LUKE

Address to Theophilus

1 Seeing that many have undertaken to compile an account of the facts that are given full credence among us,^a **2** just as these were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses^b and attendants of the message,^c **3** I resolved also, because I have traced all things from the start with accuracy, to write them to you in logical order,^d most excellent The-oph'i-lus,^e **4** so that you may know fully the certainty of the things that you have been taught orally.^f

CHAP. 1

- a Joh 20:30, 31
- b Joh 15:27
1Pe 5:1
2Pe 1:16
- c Heb 2:3
- d Ec 12:9, 10
- e Ac 1:1
- f Joh 20:30, 31
- g Mt 2:1
- h 1Ch 24:3
1Ch 24:10

Gabriel Foretells John the Baptist's Birth

5 In the days of Herod,^g king of Ju-de'a, there was a priest named Zech-a-ri'ah of the division of A-bi'jah.^h His wife was

STUDY NOTES

1:1 that are given full credence: The Greek expression could also be rendered "that are given full credibility." It highlights that **the facts** had been thoroughly examined. Combining this with the expression **among us** indicates that there was full conviction among Christians that all things connected with Christ had been fulfilled and had proved true and were worthy of being accepted with confidence. Therefore, some translations use such phrases as "that have been fully believed among us." In other contexts, forms of the same Greek word are rendered "fully convinced" and "with firm conviction."—Ro 4:21; 14:5; Col 4:12.

1:2 attendants of the message: Or "servants of the word." Two translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁸, ²² in  App. C) here use the Tetragrammaton and read "servants of Jehovah's word."

1:3 traced: Or "carefully investigated." Luke was not an eyewitness to the events he recorded. So in addition to being inspired by holy spirit, he evidently based his account on the following sources: (1) Written records available to him as he compiled Jesus' genealogy. (Lu 3:23-38) (2) The inspired account penned by Matthew. (3) Personal interviews with many

eyewitnesses (Lu 1:2), such as the surviving disciples and possibly Jesus' mother, Mary. Nearly 60 percent of the material in Luke's Gospel is unique to his account. —See "Introduction to Luke."

in logical order: Or "in an orderly sequence." The Greek expression *ka-the-xes'*, rendered "in logical order," can refer to sequence of time, topic, or logic, but it does not necessarily denote strict chronological order. That Luke did not always record the events in chronological sequence is evident from Lu 3:18-21. Therefore, all four Gospel accounts need to be examined to establish the order of events during Jesus' life and ministry. Luke generally related events in chronological order, but he evidently allowed other factors to influence his systematic presentation of events and topics.

most excellent: The Greek word for "most excellent" (*kra'ti-stos*) is used in an official sense when addressing high officials. (Ac 23:26; 24:3; 26:25) Therefore, some scholars feel that this term may indicate that **Theophilus** held a high position before becoming a Christian. Others understand the Greek term to be simply a friendly or polite form of address or an expression of high esteem. Theophilus was evidently a Christian, for he had

already been "taught orally" about Jesus Christ and his ministry. (Lu 1:4) Luke's written statement would have served to assure him of the certainty of what he had previously learned by word of mouth. However, there are other views on this matter. Some feel that Theophilus was at first an interested person who later converted, whereas others feel that the name, meaning "Loved by God; Friend of God," was used as a pseudonym for Christians in general. When addressing Theophilus at the beginning of Acts of Apostles, Luke does not use the expression "most excellent."—Ac 1:1.

1:5 Herod: Refers to Herod the Great. —See  Glossary.

Zechariah: From the Hebrew name meaning "Jehovah Has Remembered." Some Bible translations use "Zacharias," reflecting the Greek form of the name.

the division of Abijah: Abijah was a priestly descendant of Aaron. In King David's day, Abijah was recognized as head of one of the paternal houses of Israel. David divided the priesthood into 24 divisions, each to serve at the sanctuary in Jerusalem for a one-week period every six months. The paternal house of Abijah was chosen by lot to head the eighth division. (1Ch 24:3-10) "The division of Abijah" did not necessarily have to do with the line

CHAP. 1

- a Ge 11:30
Ge 18:11
- b 1Ch 24:1
1Ch 24:19
2Ch 8:14
2Ch 31:2
- c Ex 30:7, 8
- d Ex 40:5

from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

6 They both were righteous before God, walking blamelessly in accord with all the commandments and legal requirements of Jehovah. **7** But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they both were well along in years.^a

8 Now as he was serving as priest in the assignment of his division^b before God, **9** according to the established practice* of the priesthood it became his turn to offer incense^c when he entered into the sanctuary of Jehovah.^d **10** And the entire multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of offering incense. **11** Jehovah's angel appeared to him, standing at the right side of the incense altar. **12** But Zech-a-ri'ah

FOOTNOTES

1:9 * Or "the custom."

STUDY NOTES

of descent of Zechariah but with the priestly division with which Zechariah was assigned to serve.—See study note on Lu 1:9.

Abijah: From the Hebrew name meaning "My Father Is Jehovah."

Elizabeth: The Greek name *E-lei-sa'bet* comes from the Hebrew name *'E-li-she'va'* (Elisheba), meaning "My God Is Plenty; God of Plenty." Elizabeth was **from the daughters of Aaron**, that is, a descendant of Aaron, so John's parents were both of priestly descent.

See  Gallery, image 94, Entrance to Herod's Temple.

1:6 Jehovah: In this translation, this is the first occurrence of the divine name in the Gospel of Luke. Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced with the title Lord. (See  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Lu 1:6.) The first two chapters of Luke's account are rich with references to and allusions to expressions and passages in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. For example, the phrase **commandments and legal requirements** and similar combinations of legal terms can be found in the Hebrew

Scriptures in contexts where the divine name is used or where Jehovah is speaking.—Ge 26:2, 5; Nu 36:13; De 4:40; 27:10; Eze 36:23, 27.

1:9 his turn to offer incense: High Priest Aaron initially offered the incense on the golden altar. (Ex 30:7) However, his son Eleazar was given oversight of the incense and other tabernacle items. (Nu 4:16) Zechariah, who was an underpriest, is here described as burning the incense, so it appears that handling this service, except on the Day of Atonement, was not restricted to the high priest. The burning of incense may have been considered the most esteemed of the daily services at the temple. It was done after the sacrifice was offered, and during that time, the people would be gathered for prayer outside the sanctuary. According to Rabbinic tradition, lots were drawn for this service but a priest who had previously officiated was not allowed to do so again unless all present had performed the service before. If this is so, a priest might have the honor only once in a lifetime.

sanctuary: In this context, the Greek word *na-os'* refers to the central temple building. When it was Zechariah's "turn to offer incense," he had to enter the Holy, the first compartment of the sanctuary, where the altar of incense was located.—See study notes on Mt 27:5; 27:51 and  App. B11.

the sanctuary of Jehovah: As mentioned in the study note on Lu 1:6, the first two chapters of Luke's account are rich with

references to and allusions to passages and expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. For example, expressions corresponding to the combination "sanctuary [or "temple"] of Jehovah" often include the Tetragrammaton. (Nu 19:20; 2Ki 18:16; 23:4; 24:13; 2Ch 26:16; 27:2; Jer 24:1; Eze 8:16; Hag 2:15) As explained in  App. C1, there are good reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced with the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.—See  App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:9.

1:11 Jehovah's angel: Starting at Ge 16:7, this phrase is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for "angel" and the Tetragrammaton. When it occurs at Zec 3:5, 6 in an early copy of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. This fragment, found in a cave in Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert, is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression "Jehovah's angel" in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts of Lu 1:11 read "Lord's angel," are explained in  App. C1 and C3.

became troubled at the sight, and he was overcome with fear. **13** However, the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zech·a·ri’ah, because your supplication has been favorably heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to name him John.^a **14** You will have joy and great gladness, and many will rejoice over his birth,^b **15** for he will be great in the sight of Jehovah.^c But he must drink no wine or any alcoholic drink at all,^d and he will be filled with holy spirit even from before birth,^e **16** and he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to Jehovah their God.^f **17** Also, he will go ahead of him with E·li·jah’s spirit and power,^g to turn back the hearts of fathers to children^h and the disobedient ones to the practical wisdom of righteous ones, in order to get ready for Jehovah a prepared people.”ⁱ

18 Zech·a·ri’ah said to the angel: “How can I be sure of this? For I am old, and my wife is well along in years.”^j **19** In reply the angel said to him: “I am Ga’bri-el,^k who stands near before God,^l and I was sent to speak with you and to declare this good news to you. **20** But look! you will be silent and unable to speak until the day these things take place,^m because you did

CHAP. 1

- a Ge 16:11
Ge 17:19
Jg 13:2, 3
Lu 1:59, 60
b Lu 1:57, 58
c Lu 7:28
d Nu 6:2, 3
Mt 11:18
e Jer 1:5
Ro 9:10-12
f Mal 4:6
Mt 11:7-10
Joh 1:29-31
g Mt 11:13, 14
Mt 17:10-12
h Mal 4:5, 6
i Isa 40:3
Mal 3:1
j Ge 17:17
k Da 8:16
Da 9:21
Lu 1:26, 27
l Heb 1:7
Heb 1:14
m Lu 1:64

FOOTNOTES

1:15 *Or “right from his mother’s womb.”

STUDY NOTES

1:13 John: See study note on Mt 3:1.

1:15 in the sight of Jehovah: The Greek expression *e-no’pi-on Ky-ri’ou* (lit., “in sight of [before] Lord”) reflects a Hebrew idiom and occurs over 100 times in existing copies of the *Septuagint* as a translation of Hebrew phrases where the Tetragrammaton is used in the original text. (Jg 11:11; 1Sa 10:19; 2Sa 5:3; 6:5) The Hebrew Scripture background for this expression is an indication that *Ky’ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.—See ☞ App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:15.

holy spirit: Or “holy active force.”—See 📖 Glossary, “Holy spirit”; “Spirit.”

1:16 Jehovah: The angel’s message to Zechariah (vss. 13-17) strongly reflects language used in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, the combination of *Ky’ri-os*

(Lord) and *The-os’* (God) along with a personal pronoun (here rendered **Jehovah their God**) is common in quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures. (Compare the expression “Jehovah your God” at Lu 4:8, 12; 10:27.) In the Hebrew Scriptures, the combination “Jehovah their God” occurs over 30 times, whereas the expression “the Lord their God” is never used. Also, the term **the sons of Israel** reflects a Hebrew idiom used many times in the Hebrew Scriptures, meaning “the people of Israel” or “the Israelites.”—Ge 36:31; ftn.; see ☞ App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:16.

1:17 Elijah’s: From the Hebrew name meaning “My God Is Jehovah.”

to turn back the hearts of fathers to children: This expression, quoting a prophecy at Mal 4:6, is not foretelling a general reconciliation between fathers and their children. Rather, John’s message would move fathers to repent, changing their hard hearts into humble, teachable hearts, like those of obedient children. Some would become children of God. Malachi similarly foretold that the hearts of sons would turn back to

fathers, meaning that repentant men would become more like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, their faithful forefathers.

get ready for Jehovah a prepared people: The angel’s words to Zechariah (vss. 13-17) contain allusions to such verses as Mal 3:1; 4:5, 6; and Isa 40:3, where the divine name is used. (See study notes on Lu 1:15, 16.) An expression similar to the Greek phrase for **to get ready . . . a people** can be found in the *Septuagint* at 2Sa 7:24, where the Hebrew text reads: “You established your people Israel . . . , O Jehovah.”—See ☞ App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:17.

1:19 Gabriel: From the Hebrew name meaning “A Strong (Able-Bodied) One of God.” (Da 8:15, 16) Other than Michael, Gabriel is the only angel named in the Bible and the only materialized angel to reveal his own name.

declare this good news: The Greek verb *eu-ag-ge-li’zo-mai* is related to the noun *eu-ag-ge’li-on*, “good news.” The angel Gabriel is here acting as an evangelizer.—See study notes on Mt 4:23; 24:14; 26:13.

CHAP. 1

- a Ge 30:22, 23
1Sa 1:10, 11
- b Da 8:16
Lu 1:19
- c Isa 7:14
- d Mt 1:18

not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their appointed time.” **21** Meanwhile, the people continued waiting for Zech-ari’ah, and they were surprised that he delayed so long in the sanctuary. **22** When he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they perceived that he had just seen a supernatural sight* in the sanctuary. He kept making signs to them but remained speechless. **23** When the days of his holy service were completed, he went off to his home.

24 Some days later Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and she kept herself secluded for five months, saying: **25** “This is how Jehovah has dealt with me in these days. He has turned his attention to me to take away my reproach among men.”^a

Gabriel Foretells Jesus’ Birth

26 In her sixth month, the angel Ga’bri-el^b was sent from God to a city of Gal’i-lee named Naz’a-reth, **27** to a virgin^c promised in marriage to a man named Joseph of David’s house, and the name of the virgin was Mary.^d **28** And coming in, the angel said to her: “Greetings, you highly favored one, Jehovah is with you.” **29** But she was deeply disturbed at his words and tried

FOOTNOTES

1:22 *Or “a vision.”

STUDY NOTES

1:23 holy service: Or “public service.” The Greek word *lei-tour-gi’a* used here and the related words *lei-tour-ge’o* (to render public service) and *lei-tour-gos’* (public servant, or worker) were used by the ancient Greeks and Romans to refer to work or service for the State or for civil authorities and done for the benefit of the people. For example, at Ro 13:6, the secular authorities are called God’s “public servants” (plural form of *lei-tour-gos’*) in the sense that they provide beneficial services for the people. The term as used here by Luke reflects the usage found in the *Septuagint*, where the verb and noun forms of this expression frequently refer to the temple service of the priests and Levites. (Ex 28:35; Nu 8:22) Service performed at the temple included the idea of a public service for the benefit of the people. However, it also included holiness, since the Levitical priests taught God’s

Law and offered sacrifices that covered the sins of the people.—2Ch 15:3; Mal 2:7.

1:25 how Jehovah has dealt with me: Or “what Jehovah has done for me.” Here Elizabeth expresses her gratitude in a way that may bring to mind Sarah’s experience as described at Ge 21:1, in which verse the divine name occurs. Elizabeth’s comment about how her **reproach** of being childless has been taken away echoes the words of Rachel, recorded at Ge 30:23. —See **■** App. C1 and C3 introduction; Lu 1:25.

1:26 In her sixth month: That is, the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, as shown by the context, verses 24 and 25. Lit., “In the sixth month.”

1:27 promised in marriage: See study note on Mt 1:18.

Mary: Corresponding to the Hebrew name “Miriam.” Six women in the Christian Greek Scriptures are named Mary: (1) Mary the mother of Jesus, (2) Mary Magdalene (Mt 27:56; Lu 8:2; 24:10), (3) Mary the mother of James and Joses (Mt 27:56; Lu 24:10), (4) Mary the sister

of Martha and Lazarus (Lu 10:39; Joh 11:1), (5) Mary the mother of John Mark (Ac 12:12), and (6) Mary of Rome (Ro 16:6). In Jesus’ day, Mary was one of the most common female names.

1:28 Jehovah is with you: This and similar phrases that include the divine name often occur in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Ru 2:4; 2Sa 7:3; 2Ch 15:2; Jer 1:19) The angel’s greeting to Mary is similar to the words used when Jehovah’s angel addressed Gideon at Jg 6:12: “Jehovah is with you, you mighty warrior.”—See **■** App. C1 and C3 introduction; Lu 1:28.

to understand what kind of greeting this might be. **30** So the angel said to her: “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. **31** And look! you will become pregnant* and give birth to a son,^a and you are to name him Jesus.^b **32** This one will be great^c and will be called Son of the Most High,^d and Jehovah God will give him the throne of David his father,^e **33** and he will rule as King over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end to his Kingdom.”^f

34 But Mary said to the angel: “How is this to be, since I am not having sexual relations with a man?”^g **35** In answer the angel said to her: “Holy spirit will come upon you,^h and power of the Most High will overshadow you. And for that reason the one who is born will be called holy,ⁱ God’s Son.^j **36** And look! Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son, in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her, the so-called barren woman; **37** for no declaration will be impossible for God.”^k **38** Then Mary said: “Look! Jehovah’s slave girl! May it happen to me according to your declaration.” At that the angel departed from her.

^j Mt 14:33; Joh 1:32; Joh 1:34; Joh 20:31; ^k Ge 18:14; Ps 115:3; Jer 32:17; Zec 8:6; Mt 19:26.

CHAP. 1

- ^a Ga 4:4
^b Mt 1:21-23
 Lu 2:21
^c Php 2:9-11
 1Ti 6:15
^d Mt 16:16
 Mt 27:54
 Joh 1:49
 Joh 11:27
 Ac 9:20
^e 2Sa 7:8
 2Sa 7:12
 Ps 132:11
 Isa 9:6, 7
 Isa 11:1
 Isa 11:10
 Jer 23:5
 Mt 1:1
 Ro 1:3
 Re 22:16
^f 2Sa 7:16, 17
 Ps 72:5-7
 Jer 33:17
 Da 2:44
 Da 7:13, 14
 Heb 1:8
^g Isa 7:14
 Mt 1:24, 25
^h Mt 1:18
 Mt 1:20
ⁱ Joh 6:68, 69
 Heb 7:26

FOOTNOTES

1:31 *Or “will conceive in your womb.”

STUDY NOTES

1:31 Jesus: See study note on Mt 1:21.

1:32 Jehovah God: As mentioned in the study note on Lu 1:6, the first two chapters of Luke’s account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. The angel’s words about **the throne of David** are an allusion to the promise at 2Sa 7:12, 13, 16, where Jehovah is speaking to David through the prophet Nathan and where the Tetragrammaton occurs several times in the immediate context. (2Sa 7:4-16) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the expression here rendered “Jehovah God” and similar combinations occur mainly in quotes from the Hebrew Scriptures or in passages reflecting Hebrew language style.—See study note on Lu 1:16 and **3** App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:32.

1:36 your relative: This form of the Greek term (spelled *syg-ge-nis*’) occurs only once in the Christian Greek Scriptures, but another spelling (*syg-ge-nes*’) of the word is used in other verses. (Lu 1:58; 21:16; Ac 10:24; Ro 9:3) Both terms refer to a relative in general, someone belonging to the same extended family or clan. So Mary and Elizabeth were related, but the exact relationship is not specified. Zechariah and Elizabeth were of the tribe of Levi and Joseph and Mary were of the tribe of Judah, so the relationship may not have been close.

1:37 no declaration will be impossible for God: Or “no word from God will ever fail.” Or possibly, “nothing will be impossible for God.” The Greek word *rhe’ma*, rendered “declaration,” can refer to “a word; a saying; a declaration.” Or it can refer to “a thing; the thing spoken of,” whether an event, an action described, or the result of what has been declared. Although the Greek text could be rendered in different ways, the overall meaning remains the same, namely, that nothing is impossible as far as God

is concerned or with respect to any of his promises. The wording here is similar to the *Septuagint* rendering of Ge 18:14, where Jehovah assured Abraham that his wife, Sarah, would give birth to Isaac in her old age.

1:38 Look! Jehovah’s slave girl!: With these words, Mary echoes expressions of other servants of Jehovah mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Hannah says in her prayer recorded at 1Sa 1:11: “O Jehovah of armies, if you look upon the affliction of your servant [or, “slave girl”].” At 1Sa 1:11, the *Septuagint* uses the same Greek word for “slave girl” as is used in Luke’s account.—See **3** App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:38.

1:39 traveled . . . into the mountainous country: From Mary’s home in Nazareth, this trip into the Judean hills might have taken three or four days, depending on where the city of Zechariah and Elizabeth was located. The distance may have been 100 km (60 mi) or more.

CHAP. 1

Mary Visits Elizabeth

- a 1Sa 2:1
 b 2Sa 22:3
 Isa 43:3
 Hab 3:18
 Tit 1:3
 Jude 25
 c 1Sa 1:10, 11
 Ps 138:6
 d Lu 11:27
 e Ps 71:19
 Ps 111:9

39 So Mary set out in those days and traveled with haste into the mountainous country, to a city of Judah, **40** and she entered the home of Zech·a·ri'ah and greeted Elizabeth. **41** Well, as Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the infant in her womb leaped, and Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit **42** and loudly cried out: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruitage of your womb! **43** So how is it that this privilege is mine, to have the mother of my Lord come to me? **44** For look! as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. **45** Happy too is she who believed, for there will be a complete fulfillment of those things spoken to her from Jehovah."

Mary Magnifies Jehovah

46 And Mary said: "My soul magnifies Jehovah,^a **47** and my spirit cannot keep from being overjoyed at God my Savior,^b **48** because he has looked upon the low position of his slave girl.^c For look! from now on all generations will declare me happy,^d **49** because the powerful One has done great deeds for me, and holy is his name,^e **50** and for generation after

STUDY NOTES

1:42 the fruitage of your womb: Or "the child in your womb." The Greek word for "fruit; fruitage" (*kar-pos*) is here used figuratively together with the term rendered "womb" to refer to an unborn child. The whole expression reflects a Hebrew idiom that refers to offspring as a "fruit; fruitage," or product, of human reproduction.—Ge 30:2, ftn.; De 7:13, ftn.; 28:4, ftn.; Ps 127:3; 132:11, ftn.; Isa 13:18; La 2:20, ftn.

1:45 from Jehovah: The things spoken to Mary by the angel had their origin with Jehovah God. The Greek expression *pa-ra' Ky-ri'ou*, here rendered "from Jehovah," occurs in existing copies of the *Septuagint* as a translation of Hebrew expressions in which the divine name is typically used.—Ge 24:50; Jg 14:4; 1Sa 1:20; Isa 21:10; Jer 11:1; 18:1; 21:1; see  App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:45.

1:46 And Mary said: Mary's words of praise that follow in verses 46-55 con-

tain well over 20 references to or allusions to the Hebrew Scriptures. Many of her expressions echo words of the prayer of Hannah, Samuel's mother, who also received a blessing from Jehovah in the matter of childbirth. (1Sa 2:1-10) Some other examples of expressions referred to or alluded to can be found at Ps 35:9; Hab 3:18; Isa 61:10 (vs. 47); Ge 30:13; Mal 3:12 (vs. 48); De 10:21; Ps 111:9 (vs. 49); Job 12:19 (vs. 52); Ps 107:9 (vs. 53); Isa 41:8, 9; Ps 98:3 (vs. 54); Mic 7:20; Isa 41:8; 2Sa 22:51 (vs. 55). Mary's words give evidence of her spirituality and her knowledge of the Scriptures. They show her appreciative attitude. Her words also reveal the depth of her faith, as she spoke of Jehovah as abasing the haughty and powerful and as helping the lowly and poor who seek to serve him.

My soul: Or "My whole being." The Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally rendered "soul," here refers to a person's entire being. In this context, "my soul" can also be rendered "I."—See  Glossary, "Soul."

My soul magnifies Jehovah: Or "My soul praises (proclaims) the greatness of Jehovah." These words of Mary may echo passages in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as Ps 34:3 and 69:30, where the divine name is used in the same verse or in the context. (Ps 69:31) In these verses, the same Greek word for "magnify" (*me-ga-ly'no*) is used in the *Septuagint*.—See study note on **And Mary said** in this verse and study notes on Lu 1:6, 25, 38 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:46.

See  Gallery, image 95, Symmachus' Greek Translation Containing the Hebrew Tetragrammaton.

generation his mercy is upon those who fear him.^a **51** He has acted mightily with his arm;^b he has scattered those who are haughty in the intention of their hearts.^c **52** He has brought down powerful men from thrones^d and has exalted lowly ones;^e **53** he has fully satisfied hungry ones with good things^f and has sent away empty-handed those who had wealth. **54** He has come to the aid of Israel his servant, remembering his mercy,^g **55** just as he spoke to our forefathers, to Abraham and to his offspring,^{*h} forever.” **56** Mary stayed with her about three months and then returned to her own home.

Birth and Naming of John

57 The time now came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son. **58** And the neighbors and her relatives heard that Jehovah had magnified his mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.ⁱ **59** On the eighth day they came to circumcise the young child,^j and they were going to name him after his father, Zech·a·ri’ah. **60** But his mother said in reply: “No! but he will be called John.” **61** At this they said to her: “Not one of your relatives is called by this name.” **62** Then they asked his father by signs what he wanted him to be called. **63** So he asked for a tablet and wrote: “John is his name.”^k At this they were all amazed. **64** Instantly his mouth was opened and his tongue was set free and he began to speak,^l praising God. **65** And fear fell upon all those living in their neighborhood, and all these things began to be talked about in the whole mountainous country of Ju·de’a. **66** And all who heard noted

CHAP. 1

- a Ex 20:6
Ps 103:17
b Ps 89:10
Isa 40:10
Isa 52:10
c 2Sa 22:28
d Job 12:19
Isa 40:23
e 1Sa 2:7
f 1Sa 2:5
Ps 34:10
Ps 107:9
Isa 65:13
g Ps 98:3
Isa 41:8, 9
Jer 31:3
h Ge 17:19
Mic 7:20
Ga 3:16
i Lu 1:14
j Ge 17:10
Ge 17:12
Le 12:2, 3
k Lu 1:13
l Lu 1:20

FOOTNOTES

1:55 * Lit., “seed.”

STUDY NOTES

1:58 that Jehovah had magnified his mercy to her: This expression reflects the wording of verses in the Hebrew Scriptures, including Ge 19:18-20, where Lot addresses Jehovah by saying: “Jehovah! . . . You are showing great kindness to me [lit., “You are magnifying your kindness”].”—See  App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:58.

1:63 See  Gallery, image 96, Writing Tablets.

1:66 hand: This term is often used figuratively for “power.” Since the hand applies the power of the arm, “hand” may also convey the idea of “applied power.”

hand of Jehovah: This phrase, as well as “Jehovah’s hand,” is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “hand” and the Tetragrammaton. (Ex 9:3; Nu 11:23; Jg 2:15; Ru 1:13; 1Sa 5:6, 9; 7:13; 12:15; 1Ki 18:46; Ezr 7:6; Job 12:9; Isa 19:16; 40:2; Eze 1:3) The Greek expression rendered “hand of Jehovah” also occurs at Ac 11:21; 13:11. —See study notes on Lu 1:6, 9; Ac 11:21 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:66.

1:68 Let Jehovah be praised: Or “Blessed be Jehovah.” This expression

of praise is common in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it is often used with the divine name.—1Sa 25:32; 1Ki 1:48; 8:15; Ps 41:13; 72:18; 106:48; see  App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:68.

1:69 a horn of salvation: Or “a powerful savior.” In the Bible, animal horns often represent strength, conquest, and victory. (1Sa 2:1; Ps 75:4, 5, 10; 148:14; ftns.) Also, rulers and ruling dynasties, both the righteous and the wicked, are symbolized by horns, and their achieving of conquests was likened to pushing with horns. (De 33:17; Da 7:24; 8:2-10, 20-24) In this context, the expression “a horn of salvation” refers to the Messiah as the one having power to save, a mighty savior. —See  Glossary, “Horn.”

CHAP. 1

- a 1Ki 1:48
Ps 41:13
Ps 72:18
Ps 106:48
- b Ps 111:9
Lu 7:16
- c 1Sa 2:10
- d Ps 132:17
- e Jer 23:5
Da 9:24
- f Ps 106:10
- g Ge 17:7
Le 26:42
De 4:31
Ps 106:45, 46
- h Ge 22:15-18
Ps 105:8, 9
Mic 7:20
Heb 6:13, 14
- i Isa 40:3
Mal 3:1
Mt 3:3
- j Mr 1:4
- k Ps 97:11
- l Ps 107:10
Isa 9:2
Mt 4:16

it in their hearts, saying: “What will this young child turn out to be?” For the hand of Jehovah was indeed with him.

Zechariah's Prophecy

67 Then Zech-a-ri'ah his father was filled with holy spirit, and he prophesied, saying: **68** “Let Jehovah be praised, the God of Israel,^a because he has turned his attention to his people and has brought them deliverance.^b **69** And he has raised up a horn of salvation^c for us in the house of David his servant,^d **70** just as he has spoken through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,^e **71** of a salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all those hating us;^f **72** to show mercy in connection with our forefathers and to call to mind his holy covenant,^g **73** the oath that he swore to Abraham our forefather,^h **74** to grant us, after we have been rescued from the hands of enemies, the privilege of fearlessly rendering sacred service to him **75** with loyalty and righteousness before him all our days. **76** But as for you, young child, you will be called a prophet of the Most High, for you will go ahead of Jehovah to prepare his ways,ⁱ **77** to give knowledge of salvation to his people by forgiveness of their sins,^j **78** because of the tender compassion of our God. With this compassion a daybreak will visit us from on high,^k **79** to give light to those sitting in darkness and death's shadow^l and to guide our feet in the way of peace.”

80 And the young child grew up and became strong in spirit, and he continued in the desert until the day he showed himself openly to Israel.

STUDY NOTES

1:74 rendering sacred service to him:

Or “worshipping him.” The Greek verb *la-treu'o* basically denotes serving. As used in the Scriptures, it refers to rendering service to God or in connection with the worship of him (Mt 4:10; Lu 2:37; 4:8; Ac 7:7; Ro 1:9; Php 3:3; 2Ti 1:3; Heb 9:14; 12:28; Re 7:15; 22:3) or to rendering service at the sanctuary or temple (Heb 8:5; 9:9; 10:2; 13:10). Thus, in some contexts the expression can also be rendered “to worship.” In a few cases, it is used in connection with false worship—rendering service to, or worshipping, created things.—Ac 7:42; Ro 1:25.

1:76 Jehovah: The prophetic words of Zechariah in the second part of this verse

reflect the wording of Isa 40:3 and Mal 3:1, where the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See study notes on Lu 1:6, 16, 17; 3:4 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 1:76.

you will go ahead of Jehovah: John the Baptist would “go ahead of Jehovah” in the sense that he would be the forerunner of Jesus, who would *represent* his Father and come in his Father's name.—Joh 5:43; 8:29; see the study note on **Jehovah** in this verse.

1:80 the day he showed himself openly to Israel: Referring to the time when John the Baptist began his public ministry, that is, during the spring of 29 C.E.—See study notes on Mr 1:9; Lu 3:1, 23.

Birth of Jesus

CHAP. 2

2 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus for all the inhabited earth to be registered. **2** (This first registration^a took place when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) **3** And all the people went to be registered, each one to his own city. **4** Of course, Joseph^b also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to David's city, which is called Bethlehem,^c because of his being a member of the house and family of David. **5** He went to get registered with Mary, who had been given him in marriage as promised^d and who was soon to give birth.^e **6** While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. **7** And she gave birth to her son, the firstborn,^f and she wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger,^g because there was no room for them in the lodging place.

a Ac 5:37
 b Mt 1:16
 c 1Sa 16:1
 Mic 5:2
 Mt 2:6
 Joh 7:42
 d Lu 1:26, 27
 e Mt 1:18
 f Mt 1:25
 Mr 6:3
 g Isa 53:2

STUDY NOTES

2:1 Caesar: Or “Emperor.” The Greek word *Kai’sar* corresponds to the Latin term *Caesar*. (See  Glossary.) The name **Augustus**, a Latin word meaning “August One,” was first given by the Roman Senate as a title to Gaius Octavius, the first Roman emperor, in the year 27 B.C.E. He thus became known as **Caesar Augustus**. His **decree** resulted in Jesus’ being born in Bethlehem, in fulfillment of Bible prophecy.—Da 11:20; Mic 5:2.

the inhabited earth: In a broad sense, the Greek word for “inhabited earth” (*oi-kou-me’ne*) refers to the earth as the dwelling place of mankind. (Lu 4:5; Ac 17:31; Ro 10:18; Re 12:9; 16:14) In the first century, this term was also used in reference to the vast Roman Empire, where the Jews had been dispersed.—Ac 24:5.

to be registered: Augustus likely issued this decree because a census would help him to tax his subjects and conscript men for military service. In doing so, Augustus evidently fulfilled Daniel’s prophecy about a ruler “who causes an exactor to pass through the splendid kingdom.” Daniel further foretold that during the reign of that ruler’s successor, “a despised one,” something momentous would happen: “The Leader of the covenant,” or the Messiah, would be “broken,” or put to death.

(Da 11:20-22) Jesus was executed during the reign of Augustus’ successor, Tiberius.

See  Gallery, image 97, Caesar Augustus.

2:2 Quirinius . . . governor of Syria: Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, a distinguished Roman senator, is mentioned only once in the Bible. Scholars initially claimed that Quirinius served only one term of governorship over the Roman province of Syria in about 6 C.E., during which a rebellion broke out in response to a census. As a result, they attacked this passage and cast doubt on Luke’s account by reasoning that Quirinius was governor in 6 or 7 C.E., whereas Jesus’ birth was earlier. However, in 1764 an inscription was found that strongly suggests that Quirinius served as governor (or, legate) in Syria for two distinct terms. Other inscriptions too have led some historians to acknowledge that Quirinius served a term as governor of Syria earlier, in the B.C.E. period. It was evidently during this term that the **first registration**, mentioned in this verse, took place. Furthermore, the critics’ reasoning ignores three key facts. First, Luke acknowledges that there was more than one census, calling this the “*first registration*.” He was evidently aware of a later registration, which occurred about 6 C.E. That registration was mentioned by Luke in the book of

Acts (5:37) and by Josephus. Second, Bible chronology rules out the possibility that Jesus was born during Quirinius’ second term. However, it does harmonize with Jesus’ being born during Quirinius’ first term, which was somewhere between the years 4 and 1 B.C.E. Third, Luke is well-known as a meticulous historian, one who lived in the era of many of the events he described. (Lu 1:3) In addition, he was inspired by holy spirit.—2Ti 3:16.

2:4 went up from Galilee: There was a town named Bethlehem just 11 km (7 mi) from Nazareth, but prophecy specified that the Messiah would come from “Bethlehem Ephrathah.” (Mic 5:2) That **Bethlehem**, referred to as **David’s city**, was located in **Judea**, in the south. (1Sa 16:1, 11, 13) The direct distance (as the crow flies) from Nazareth to Bethlehem Ephrathah is about 110 km (69 mi). The actual travel distance through Samaria (based on present-day roads) may have been up to 150 km (93 mi). The route passes through hilly country, and the journey would have been an arduous one, taking several days.

See  Gallery, image 7, Winter in Bethlehem.

2:7 the firstborn: This expression implies that Mary later had other children.—Mt 13:55, 56; Mr 6:3.

CHAP. 2

Angels Appear to Shepherds

- a 1Sa 20:6
 b Isa 9:6
 c Ac 2:36
 Php 2:11

8 There were also in the same region shepherds living out of doors and keeping watch in the night over their flocks. **9** Suddenly Jehovah's angel stood before them, and Jehovah's glory gleamed around them, and they became very fearful. **10** But the angel said to them: "Do not be afraid, for look! I am declaring to you good news of a great joy that all the people will have. **11** For today there was born to you in David's city^a a savior,^b who is Christ the Lord.^c **12** And this is a sign for you: You will find an infant wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger." **13** Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude

STUDY NOTES

2:7 manger: The Greek word *phat'ne*, rendered "manger," means "feeding place." It may have been some kind of feeding trough for animals, though the Greek word *phat'ne* can also refer to the stall in which animals are kept. (Compare Lu 13:15, where this Greek word is rendered "stall.") In this context, it appears to refer to a feeding place, though the Bible does not specify whether this manger was an outdoor or an indoor trough or one connected with a stall.

lodging place: The Greek word could also be rendered "guest room," as at Mr 14:14 and Lu 22:11.

See  Gallery, image 98, Jesus in the Manger.

2:8 shepherds: A large number of sheep were regularly needed for offerings at Jerusalem's temple, so it is quite possible that some of the sheep raised around Bethlehem were intended for this purpose.

living out of doors: The Greek expression comes from a verb that combines *a-gros'* ("field") and *au-le'* ("place open to the air"), so the word means "to live in the fields, to live under the open sky," and implies spending the night outdoors. Sheep may be led out to pasture during the daytime in any season of the year. However, the shepherds were spending the night out in the fields with their flocks. So this indicates the time of Jesus' birth. The rainy season in Israel begins about mid-October and lasts several months.

By December, Bethlehem, like Jerusalem, frequently experiences frost at night. The fact that Bethlehem's shepherds were in the fields at night points to a season prior to the start of the rains.—See  App. B15.

2:9 Jehovah's angel: See study note on Lu 1:11 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 2:9.

Jehovah's glory: The first two chapters of Luke's account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions from the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the corresponding Hebrew expression for "glory" occurs along with the Tetragrammaton more than 30 times. Some examples are found at Ex 16:7; 40:34; Le 9:6, 23; Nu 14:10; 16:19; 20:6; 1Ki 8:11; 2Ch 5:14; 7:1; Ps 104:31; 138:5; Isa 35:2; 40:5; 60:1; Eze 1:28; 3:12; 10:4; 43:4; Hab 2:14.—See study notes on Lu 1:6; 1:9 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 2:9.

2:11 who is Christ: The angel's use of this title was evidently prophetic, since the outpouring of holy spirit at the time of Jesus' baptism marked the time of his becoming in actual fact the Messiah, or Christ.—Mt 3:16, 17; Mr 1:9-11; Lu 3:21, 22.

Christ the Lord: The Greek expression here rendered "Christ the Lord" (*khri-stos' ky'ri-os*, lit., "Christ Lord") occurs only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. The angel's use of these titles was evidently prophetic, and the clause could therefore be rendered "who is to be Christ the

Lord." (See study note on **who is Christ** in this verse.) Under inspiration, Peter explains at Ac 2:36 that God had made Jesus "both Lord and Christ." However, the expression rendered "Christ the Lord" has also been understood in other ways. Some scholars have suggested the rendering "the anointed Lord." Others have considered this combination of titles to mean "the Lord's Christ," which is the reading found in a few Latin and Syriac translations of Lu 2:11. Along these lines, some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J⁵⁻⁸, ¹⁰ in  App. C) use the rendering *ma-shi'ach Yeho-wah'*, that is, "Jehovah's Christ." For these and other reasons, some have understood the term at Lu 2:11 in a way similar to the Greek expression rendered "the Christ of Jehovah" at Lu 2:26.

of the heavenly army,^{*a} praising God and saying: **14** “Glory in the heights above to God, and on earth peace^b among men of goodwill.”

15 So when the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another: “Let us by all means go over to Beth’le-hem and see what has taken place, which Jehovah has made known to us.” **16** And they went quickly and found Mary as well as Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. **17** When they saw this, they made known the message that they had been told concerning this young child. **18** And all who heard were astonished at what the shepherds told them, **19** but Mary began to preserve all these sayings, drawing conclusions in her heart.^c **20** Then the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.

Jesus Circumcised and Presented at the Temple

21 After eight days, when it was time to circumcise him,^d he was named Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived.^e

CHAP. 2

- a Ps 103:20, 21
Da 7:10
Re 5:11
- b Mt 10:13
Ac 10:36
Col 1:19, 20
- c Lu 2:33, 51
- d Ge 17:10
Ge 17:12
Le 12:2, 3
- e Mt 1:20, 21
Lu 1:30, 31

FOOTNOTES

2:13 *Or “host.”

STUDY NOTES

2:14 and on earth peace among men of goodwill: Some manuscripts have readings that could be rendered “and on earth peace, goodwill toward men,” and this wording is reflected in some Bible translations. But the reading employed by the *New World Translation* has much stronger manuscript support. This angelic announcement did not refer to an expression of God’s goodwill toward all humans regardless of their attitudes and actions. Rather, it refers to those who will receive his goodwill because they display genuine faith in him and become followers of his Son.—See study note on **men of goodwill** in this verse.

men of goodwill: The “goodwill” referred to in this angelic statement is evidently that displayed by God, not by humans. The Greek word *eu-do-ki’a* can also be rendered “favor; good pleasure; approval.” The related verb *eu-do-ke’o* is used at

Mt 3:17; Mr 1:11; and Lu 3:22 (see study notes on Mt 3:17; Mr 1:11), where God addresses his Son right after his baptism. It conveys the basic meaning, “to approve; to be well-pleased with; to regard favorably; to take delight in.” In line with this usage, the expression “men of goodwill” (*an-thro’pois eu-do-ki’as*) refers to people who have God’s approval and goodwill, and it could also be rendered “people whom he approves; people with whom he is well-pleased.” So this angelic statement was referring to God’s goodwill, not toward men in general, but toward those who would please him by their genuine faith in him and by becoming followers of his Son. Although the Greek word *eu-do-ki’a* in some contexts can refer to the goodwill of humans (Ro 10:1; Php 1:15), it is frequently used with regard to God’s goodwill, or good pleasure, or to the way approved by him (Mt 11:26; Lu 10:21; Eph 1:5, 9; Php 2:13; 2Th 1:11). In the *Septuagint* at Ps 51:18 (50:20, LXX), the word is used about the “goodwill” of God.

2:15 which Jehovah has made known to us: The angels conveyed the message,

but the shepherds recognized the source as being Jehovah God. In the *Septuagint*, the Greek verb rendered “has made known” is used to translate a corresponding Hebrew verb in contexts where Jehovah communicates his will to humans or where humans want to know his will. In such scriptures, the original Hebrew text often uses the Tetragrammaton. (Ps 25:4; 39:4; 98:2; 103:6, 7) Therefore, it would be natural to connect the divine name with what the Jewish shepherds are here saying.—See study note on Lu 1:6 and  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Lu 2:15.

2:21 Jesus: See study note on Mt 1:21.

2:22 the time . . . for purifying them: That is, the time for them to be ceremonially cleansed for worship. The Mosaic Law required that a mother undergo purification for 40 days after giving birth to a male. (Le 12:1-4) This law evidently taught, not a demeaning view of women and childbirth, but a vital spiritual truth: Through the process of childbirth, the sin of Adam is transmitted from one generation to the next. Mary was no exception, contrary to claims made by religious

CHAP. 2

- a Le 12:2, 4, 6
 b Ex 13:2, 12
 Ex 22:29
 Ex 34:19
 Nu 3:13
 Nu 8:17
 c Le 12:8
 d Isa 40:1
 Isa 49:13

22 Also, when the time came for purifying them according to the Law of Moses,^a they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to Jehovah, **23** just as it is written in Jehovah's Law: "Every firstborn male* must be called holy to Jehovah."^b **24** And they offered a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of Jehovah: "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."^c

Simeon Sees the Christ

25 And look! there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for Israel's consolation,^d and holy spirit was upon him. **26** Furthermore, it had been divinely revealed to him by the holy spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Christ of

FOOTNOTES

2:23 *Lit., "Every male opening the womb."

STUDY NOTES

scholars. (Ro 5:12) Luke would not have used the pronoun "them" in this verse to include Jesus, for he knew that holy spirit had shielded Jesus from the sinful condition of his imperfect human mother, so he did not need cleansing. (Lu 1:34, 35) Because Joseph arranged for the trip and as family head was responsible for seeing that the sacrifice was offered, Luke may have included Jesus' adoptive father in the word "them."

to present him to Jehovah: As the following verse shows, Jesus' being brought to the temple after his birth is in accord with Jehovah's words to Moses at Ex 13:1, 2, 12, where parents were commanded to "devote to Jehovah every firstborn male." Also, the expression "to present him to Jehovah" is similar to what is described at 1Sa 1:22-28, where young Samuel is presented "before Jehovah" and dedicated to His service.—See study notes on Lu 1:6; 2:23 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 2:22.

2:23 Jehovah's Law: The expression "Jehovah's Law," as well as "the Law of Jehovah," occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for "law" and the Tetragrammaton. (For example: Ex 13:9; 2Ki 10:31;

1Ch 16:40; 22:12; 2Ch 17:9; 31:3; Ne 9:3; Ps 1:2; 119:1; Isa 5:24; Jer 8:8; Am 2:4.) The expression **just as it is written** is a common introduction to Hebrew Scripture quotes in the Christian Greek Scriptures.—Mr 1:2; Ac 7:42; 15:15; Ro 1:17; 10:15; see study note on Lu 1:6 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 2:23.

Every firstborn male: The passage at Lu 2:22-24 refers not only to the sacrifice made at the time of Mary's purification (see study notes on Lu 2:22; 2:24) but also to the requirement in the Law that a couple pay five silver shekels at the birth of their firstborn. As the firstborn son, Jesus was sanctified to God and belonged to him. For this reason, the Law required that Jesus be redeemed by his parents, Joseph and Mary. (Ex 13:1, 2; Nu 18:15, 16) The payment was to be made when the child was "a month old *and up*." So Joseph would have been allowed to pay the five shekels at the same time that Mary made her purification offering, that is, 40 days after Jesus' birth.

Jehovah: The quote in this verse is based on Ex 13:2, 12, where the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

2:24 they offered a sacrifice: Under the Mosaic Law, a woman remained ceremonially unclean for a set length of time after giving birth. Once the time had elapsed, a burnt offering and a sin offering were made for her.—Le 12:1-8.

the Law of Jehovah: See study note on Lu 2:23 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 2:24.

a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons: The Law allowed for women of little means to offer birds instead of a sheep, which would have been far costlier. (Le 12:6, 8) Clearly, Joseph and Mary were poor at this time, which shows that the astrologers came, not when Jesus was a newborn, but when he was older. (Mt 2:9-11) If Joseph and Mary had already received the costly gifts that those men brought, the couple could readily have afforded a sheep for sacrifice when they went to the temple.

See  Gallery, image 99, Turtledove and Pigeon.

2:25 Simeon: This name comes from a Hebrew verb meaning "to hear; to listen." Like Zechariah and Elizabeth, Simeon is described as **righteous**. (Lu 1:5, 6) He is also called **devout**, a rendering of the Greek word *eu-la-bes'*, which is used in the Christian Greek Scriptures to denote being careful and conscientious in matters of worship.—Ac 2:5; 8:2; 22:12.

2:26 the Christ: Or "the Anointed One; the Messiah." The title "Christ" is derived from the Greek word *Khri-stos'* and is equivalent to the title "Messiah" (from Hebrew *ma-shi'ach*), both meaning "Anointed One."—See study note on Mt 1:1 and on **the Christ of Jehovah** in this verse.

Jehovah.^a **27** Under the power of the spirit, he now came into the temple, and as the parents brought the young child Jesus in to do for him according to the customary practice of the Law,^b **28** he took the child into his arms and praised God and said: **29** “Now, Sovereign Lord, you are letting your slave go in peace^c according to your declaration, **30** because my eyes have seen your means of salvation^{*d} **31** that you have prepared in the sight of all the peoples,^e **32** a light^f for removing the veil from the nations^g and a glory of your people Israel.” **33** And the child’s father and mother continued wondering at the things being spoken about him. **34** Also, Sim’e-on blessed them and said to Mary, the child’s mother: “Look! This child is appointed for the falling^h and the rising again of many in Israelⁱ and for a sign to be spoken against^j **35** (yes, a long sword will be run through you),^k in order that the reasonings of many hearts may be revealed.”

^k Joh 19:25.

CHAP. 2

- a Lu 9:20
 b Le 12:6, 7
 c Ge 46:30
 d Isa 52:10
 Lu 3:4
 Lu 3:6
 Ac 4:12
 e Isa 40:5
 f Isa 9:2
 Mt 4:16
 Joh 1:4-9
 Joh 8:12
 Joh 9:5
 Joh 12:46
 g Isa 11:10
 Isa 25:7
 Isa 42:6
 Isa 49:6
 Ac 13:47
 Ac 26:23
 h Isa 8:14
 i 1Co 1:23, 24
 j Ac 28:22
 1Pe 2:7, 8

FOOTNOTES

2:30 *Or “the way you will bring salvation; the salvation by you.”

STUDY NOTES

2:26 the Christ of Jehovah: There are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts literally read “the Christ of Lord” (*ton khri-ston’ Ky-ri’ou*). In existing copies of the *Septuagint*, this expression corresponds to the Hebrew term *ma-shi’ach YHWH*, that is, “anointed (one) of Jehovah,” used 11 times in the Hebrew Scriptures.—1Sa 24:6 (twice), 10; 26:9, 11, 16, 23; 2Sa 1:14, 16; 19:21; La 4:20; see  App. C3 introduction; Lu 2:26.

2:29 Sovereign Lord: The Greek word *de-spo’tes* has the basic meaning “lord; master; owner.” (1Ti 6:1; Tit 2:9; 1Pe 2:18) When used in direct address to God, as here and at Ac 4:24 and Re 6:10, it is rendered “Sovereign Lord” to denote the excellence of his lordship. Other translations have used such terms as “Lord,” “Master,” “Sovereign,” or “Ruler of all.” Many translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Hebrew term *’Adho-nai’* (Sovereign Lord), but at least two such translations (referred to

as J9, 18 in  App. C) here use the divine name, Jehovah.

letting your slave go: The Greek word for “to let go” literally means “to set free; to release; to dismiss.” Here it is used as a euphemism for “to let die.” For a person to die **in peace** could mean his dying a tranquil death after having enjoyed a full life or after the realization of a cherished hope. (Compare Ge 15:15; 1Ki 2:6.) God’s promise to Simeon had now been fulfilled; he had seen the promised “Christ of Jehovah,” God’s means of salvation. Simeon could now feel an inner peace and tranquility and be content with sleeping in death until the resurrection.—Lu 2:26.

2:32 for removing the veil from the nations: Or “for revelation to the nations.” The Greek term *a-po-ka’ly-psis*, rendered “removing the veil,” denotes “an uncovering” or “a disclosure” and is often used regarding revelations of spiritual matters or of God’s will and purposes. (Ro 16:25; Eph 3:3; Re 1:1) Aged Simeon here referred to the child Jesus as **a light**, and he indicated that spiritual enlightenment was also to benefit the non-Jewish **nations**, not just the natural Jews and proselytes. Simeon’s prophetic words were in agreement with prophecies

in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as those recorded at Isa 42:6 and 49:6.

2:34 the rising again: The Greek word *a-na’sta-sis* used here is usually rendered “resurrection” in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (See study note on Mt 22:23.) Simeon’s words in this verse indicate that people would react to Jesus in different ways, uncovering the reasonings of their hearts. (Lu 2:35) To unbelievers, Jesus would be **a sign to be spoken against**, or an object of contempt. Such faithless ones would reject him, stumble over him, and fall. As foretold, Jesus proved to be a stone of stumbling to many Jews. (Isa 8:14) Others, however, would put faith in Jesus. (Isa 28:16) They would be figuratively resurrected, or raised up, from a state of being “dead in [their] trespasses and sins” and would come to enjoy a righteous standing with God.—Eph 2:1.

2:35 a long sword: Since there is no Scriptural indication that Mary had an actual sword run through her, this expression evidently refers to the pain, suffering, and sorrow that Mary would undergo in connection with her son’s death on a torture stake.—Joh 19:25.

you: Or “your own soul; your life.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

CHAP. 2

Anna Speaks About the Child

- a Isa 52:9
Mr 15:43
Lu 2:25
Lu 3:15
- b Le 12:6
- c Mt 2:23
Lu 1:26
- d Lu 2:52
- e Ex 23:14, 15
De 16:16

36 Now there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phan' u-el, of Ash'er's tribe. This woman was well along in years and had lived with her husband for seven years after they were married,* **37** and she was a widow now 84 years old. She was never missing from the temple, rendering sacred service night and day with fasting and supplications. **38** In that very hour she came near and began giving thanks to God and speaking about the child to all who were waiting for Jerusalem's deliverance.^a

Return to Nazareth

39 So when they had carried out all the things according to the Law of Jehovah,^b they went back into Gal'i-lee to their own city, Naz'a-reth.^c **40** And the young child continued growing and getting strong, being filled with wisdom, and God's favor continued upon him.^d

Twelve-Year-Old Jesus at the Temple

41 Now his parents were accustomed to go from year to year to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover.^e **42** And when

FOOTNOTES

2:36 * Lit., "from her virginity."

STUDY NOTES

2:36 Anna: The Greek form of the Hebrew name Hannah, meaning "Favor; Grace." By speaking about young Jesus to all those waiting for Jerusalem's deliverance, she acted as **a prophetess**. The basic sense of the term "prophesying" is the declaring of inspired messages from God, the revealing of the divine will.—See study note on Ac 2:17.

2:37 never missing from the temple: Anna was constantly at the temple, possibly from the time the temple gates were opened in the morning until they were closed in the evening. Her **sacred service** included **fasting and supplications**, indicating that she mourned over the prevailing conditions and longed for change, like other faithful servants of God. (Ezr 10:1; Ne 1:4; La 1:16) For centuries the Jews had been subject to foreign powers, and deteriorating religious conditions had reached even to the temple and its priest-

hood. Those conditions could well explain why Anna and others were earnestly "waiting for Jerusalem's deliverance."—Lu 2:38.

rendering sacred service: Or "worshiping."—See study note on Lu 1:74.

2:38 God: The earliest Greek manuscripts here use *The-os'* (God). However, other Greek manuscripts and translations into Latin and Syriac use the term for "the Lord." A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J5, 7-17, 28 in  App. C) use the divine name, and the phrase can be rendered "giving thanks to Jehovah."

2:39 the Law of Jehovah: This expression, as well as "Jehovah's Law," occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for "law" and the Tetragrammaton.—Ex 13:9; 2Ki 10:31; 1Ch 16:40; 22:12; 2Ch 17:9; 31:3; Ne 9:3; Ps 1:2; 119:1; Isa 5:24; Jer 8:8; Am 2:4; see study notes on Lu 1:6; 2:23 and  App. C3 introduction; Lu 2:39.

they went back into Galilee: Although this statement may seem to indicate that

Joseph and Mary went straight to Nazareth after presenting Jesus at the temple, Luke's account is highly condensed. Matthew's account (2:1-23) provides additional details regarding the visit of the astrologers, Joseph and Mary's flight to Egypt to escape King Herod's murderous plan, Herod's death, and the family's return to Nazareth.

2:41 his parents were accustomed:

The Law did not require women to attend the Passover celebration. Yet, it was Mary's custom to accompany Joseph on the annual journey to Jerusalem for the festival. (Ex 23:17; 34:23) Each year, they made the trip with their growing family. It may have been a round-trip of nearly 300 km (190 mi) through hilly terrain.

he was 12 years old, they went up according to the custom of the festival.^a **43** When the days of the festival were over and they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, and his parents did not notice it. **44** Assuming that he was in the group traveling together, they went a day's journey and then began to search for him among the relatives and acquaintances. **45** But not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem and made a diligent search for him. **46** Well, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers and listening to them and asking them questions. **47** But all those listening to him were in constant amazement at his understanding and his answers.^b **48** Now when his parents saw him, they were astounded, and his mother said to him: "Child, why did you treat us this way? Here your father and I have been frantically looking for you." **49** But he said to them: "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must

CHAP. 2

a Ex 34:23
 b Ps 119:99
 Mt 7:28
 Mr 1:22
 Joh 7:15

STUDY NOTES

2:42 went up: That is, they went up to Jerusalem, a journey that involved ascending through hilly and mountainous terrain.—See study note on Lu 2:4.

2:46 asking them questions: As shown by the reaction of those listening to Jesus, his questions were not merely those of a boy seeking to satisfy his curiosity. (Lu 2:47) The Greek word rendered "asking . . . questions" could in some contexts refer to the type of questioning and counterquestioning used in a judicial examination. (Mt 27:11; Mr 14:60, 61; 15:2, 4; Ac 5:27) Historians say that some of the foremost religious leaders would customarily remain at the temple after festivals and teach at one of the spacious porches there. People could sit at the feet of those men to listen and to ask questions.

2:47 were in constant amazement: Here the form of the Greek verb for "be amazed" may denote continued or repeated astonishment.

2:49 he said to them: The words that follow are Jesus' first words recorded in the Bible. As a young boy, Jesus was evidently not fully aware of his prehuman existence. (See study notes on Mt 3:16; Lu 3:21.) Yet, it seems reasonable that his

mother and his adoptive father had passed on to him the information received during angelic visitations as well as through the prophecies of Simeon and Anna, spoken during the family's trip to Jerusalem 40 days after Jesus' birth. (Mt 1:20-25; 2:13, 14, 19-21; Lu 1:26-38; 2:8-38) Jesus' reply indicates that he to some extent understood the miraculous nature of his birth and his special personal relationship with his heavenly Father, Jehovah.

I must be in the house of my Father:

The Greek expression for "in the house of my Father" is literally rendered "in the [things] of my Father." The context shows that Joseph and Mary were concerned about Jesus' whereabouts, so it is most natural to understand these words to refer to a location, or place, that is, "the house [or "dwelling; courts"] of my Father." (Lu 2:44-46) Later, during his ministry, Jesus specifically referred to the temple as "the house of my Father." (Joh 2:16) According to some scholars, though, this expression could also be understood more broadly as, "I need to be concerned [or, "busy"] with the things of my Father."

2:51 he went down: Jerusalem was about 750 m (2,500 ft) above sea level. The term 'go down' is used here of leaving

Jerusalem.—Lu 10:30, 31; Ac 24:1; 25:7; compare study notes on Mt 20:17; Lu 2:4, 42.

continued subject: Or "remained in subjection; remained obedient." The continuous form of the Greek verb indicates that after impressing the teachers at the temple with his knowledge of God's Word, Jesus went home and humbly subjected himself to his parents. This obedience was more significant than that of any other child; it was part of his fulfilling the Mosaic Law in every detail.—Ex 20:12; Ga 4:4.

sayings: Or "things."—See study note on Lu 1:37.

See  Gallery, image 87, View of the Valley of Jezreel.

3:1 the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius: Caesar Augustus died on August 17, 14 C.E. (Gregorian calendar). On September 15, Tiberius allowed the Roman Senate to proclaim him emperor. If the years were counted from the death of Augustus, the 15th year of Tiberius' reign ran from August 28 C.E. to August 29 C.E. If counted from when he was formally proclaimed emperor, the 15th year ran from September 28 C.E. to September 29 C.E. John evidently began his ministry in the spring (in the northern hemisphere) of 29 C.E., which is within the 15th year of

CHAP. 2

- a Joh 2:16
 b Ex 20:12
 De 5:16
 Eph 6:1
 Col 3:20
 c Lu 2:19

be in the house of my Father?”^a **50** However, they did not understand what he was saying to them.

Jesus Returns to Nazareth With His Parents

51 Then he went down with them and returned to Naz'a-reth, and he continued subject to them.^b Also, his mother carefully kept all these sayings in her heart.^c **52** And Jesus went on progressing in wisdom and in physical growth and in favor with God and men.

CHAP. 3

- d Mt 27:1, 2
 Lu 13:1
 e Mt 14:1-3
 Lu 13:31, 32
 Lu 23:6, 7

Starting Point of John's Ministry

3 In the 15th year of the reign of Ti-be'ri-us Caesar,* when Pontius Pilate^d was governor of Ju-de'a, Herod^e was district ruler of Gal'i-lee, Philip his brother was district ruler of the country of It-u-rae'a and Trach-o-ni'tis, and Ly-sa'ni-as was district ruler of Ab-i-le'ne, **2** in the days of chief priest An'nas and

FOOTNOTES

3:1 *Or “of Emperor Tiberius.”

STUDY NOTES

the reign of Tiberius. In Tiberius' 15th year, John would have been about 30 years old, which was the age when the Levite priests began their service at the temple. (Nu 4:2, 3) Similarly, when Jesus was baptized by John and “began his work,” according to Lu 3:21-23, “he was about 30 years old.” Jesus' death took place in the spring month of Nisan, so his three-and-a-half-year ministry evidently began in the fall, about the month of Ethanim (September/October). John was likely six months older than Jesus and evidently began his ministry six months before Jesus did. (Lu, chap. 1) Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that John began his ministry in the spring of 29 C.E.—See study notes on Lu 3:23; Joh 2:13.

Herod: That is, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great.—See  Glossary.

was district ruler: Lit., “was tetrarch,” that is, a minor district ruler or territorial prince ruling only with the approval of the Roman authorities.—See study notes on Mt 14:1; Mr 6:14.

Philip his brother: That is, a half brother of Herod Antipas. Philip was a son of Herod the Great by his wife Cleopatra of Jerusalem. He is sometimes referred to as Philip the tetrarch to distinguish him from his half brother also named Philip (sometimes called Herod Philip), mentioned at Mt 14:3 and Mr 6:17.—See also study note on Mt 16:13.

Ituraea: A small territory of varying and undefined boundaries located NE of the Sea of Galilee, evidently in the vicinity of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountain ranges.—See  App. B10.

Trachonitis: The name comes from a Greek root meaning “rough,” probably a reference to the roughness of the terrain in that area. Trachonitis was part of the territory previously known as Bashan (De 3:3-14) located E of Ituraea, and it measured only about 900 sq km (350 sq mi) in area. The northern limits of this territory reached to some 40 km (25 mi) SE of Damascus.

Lysanias: According to Luke's account, Lysanias “was district ruler [lit., “was tetrarch”]” of the Roman district of Abilene at the time when John the Baptist began his ministry. An inscription found at Abila, the capital of Abilene, near Damascus of

Syria (see  App. B10), confirms that a tetrarch named Lysanias ruled at the same time as the Roman Emperor Tiberius. This finding refuted the claim made by some critics who had insisted that Luke confused this Lysanias with a king named Lysanias, who ruled in nearby Chalcis and was put to death about 34 B.C.E., decades earlier than the time Luke mentions.

Abilene: A Roman district, or tetrarchy, named after its capital Abila and located in the region of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains N of Mount Hermon.—See  Glossary, “Lebanon Mountain range.”
 See  Gallery, image 70, Tiberius Caesar.
 See  Gallery, image 56, Coin Made by Herod Antipas.

of Ca'ia-phas,^a God's declaration came to John^b the son of Zech-a-ri'ah^c in the wilderness.^d

John Preaches Baptism

3 So he went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching baptism in symbol of repentance for forgiveness of sins,^e **4** just as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of Jehovah! Make his roads straight.'^f **5** Every valley must be filled up, and every mountain and hill leveled; the crooked ways must become straight, and the rough ways smooth; **6** and all flesh* will see the salvation of God."^g

7 So he began to say to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him: "You offspring of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the coming wrath?^h **8** Therefore, produce fruits that befit repentance. Do not start saying to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. **9** Indeed, the ax is already lying at the root of the trees. Every tree, then, that does not produce fine fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."ⁱ

CHAP. 3

a Mt 26:57
Joh 18:13
Joh 18:24
Ac 4:5, 6

b Joh 1:6

c Lu 1:5

d Lu 1:80

e Mal 4:5, 6
Mt 3:1, 2
Mr 1:4
Lu 1:76, 77

f Mt 3:3
Mr 1:3
Joh 1:23

g Isa 40:3-5
Isa 52:10
Lu 2:30, 31
Ac 28:28

h Mt 3:7-10
Mt 23:33

i Mt 7:19

FOOTNOTES

3:6 *Or "all humans; all humanity."

#Or "the saving means of God; the salvation by God."

STUDY NOTES

3:2 chief priest Annas and . . . Caia-phas: When pinpointing the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist, Luke refers to **the days** when the Jewish priesthood was being dominated by two powerful men. Annas was appointed high priest about 6 or 7 C.E. by Quirinius, the Roman governor of Syria, and served until about 15 C.E. Even after Annas was deposed by the Romans and no longer held the official title of high priest, he evidently continued to exercise great power and influence as high priest emeritus and the predominant voice of the Jewish hierarchy. Five of his sons held the office of high priest, and his son-in-law Caiaphas served as high priest from about 18 C.E. to about 36 C.E. So although Caiaphas served as high priest in 29 C.E.,

Annas could rightly be designated a "chief priest" because of his dominant position.—Joh 18:13, 24; Ac 4:6.

John: Only in Luke's account is John introduced as **the son of Zechariah**. (See study note on Lu 1:5.) Also, Luke alone mentions that **God's declaration came** to John, using wording similar to that found in the *Septuagint* regarding the prophet Elijah (1Ki 17:2; 20:28; 21:28), who pictured John. (Mt 11:14; 17:10-13) All three synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) locate John **in the wilderness**, but Matthew specifies it as "the wilderness of Judea," that is, the generally uninhabited, barren eastern slope of the Judean mountains stretching down—a drop of some 1,200 m (3,900 ft)—toward the western bank of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea.—See study note on Mt 3:1.

See  Gallery, image 9, The Wilderness.

3:3 baptism in symbol of repentance: See study note on Mr 1:4.

3:4 Jehovah: At Isa 40:3, quoted here, the divine name, represented by four He-

brew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text. (See  App. C.) Luke applies this prophecy to John the Baptist. John would **prepare the way of Jehovah** in that he would be the forerunner of Jesus, who would represent his Father and come in his Father's name. (Joh 5:43; 8:29) In the apostle John's Gospel, John the Baptist applies this prophecy to himself.—Joh 1:23.

Make his roads straight: See study note on Mt 3:3.

3:7 baptized: Or "immersed; dipped."
—See study note on Mt 3:11.

You offspring of vipers: See study note on Mt 3:7.

3:8 fruits that befit repentance: The plural form of the Greek word for "fruit; fruitage" (*kar-pos*) is here used figuratively to refer to evidence and actions that would indicate a change of mind or attitude on the part of those listening to John.—Mt 3:8; Ac 26:20; see study notes on Mt 3:2, 11 and  Glossary, "Repentance."

CHAP. 3

- a Ac 10:1, 2
2Co 8:14
1Ti 6:18
Jas 2:15, 16
1Jo 3:17
- b Mt 21:32
Lu 7:29
- c Lu 19:2, 8
1Co 6:10
- d Ex 23:1
Ex 23:7
Le 19:11
- e Joh 1:25
- f Joh 1:26, 27
- g Mt 3:11, 12
Mr 1:7, 8
Ac 2:1
Ac 2:4

10 And the crowds were asking him: “What, then, should we do?” **11** In reply he said to them: “Let the man who has two garments* share with the man who has none, and let the one who has something to eat do the same.”^a **12** Even tax collectors came to be baptized,^b and they said to him: “Teacher, what should we do?” **13** He said to them: “Do not demand* anything more than the tax rate.”^c **14** Also, those in military service were asking him: “What should we do?” And he said to them: “Do not harass* anybody or accuse anybody falsely,^d but be satisfied with your provisions.”

15 Now the people were in expectation and all of them were reasoning in their hearts about John, “May he perhaps be the Christ?”^e **16** John gave the answer, saying to all: “I, for my part, baptize you with water, but the one stronger than I am is coming, the lace of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.^f He will baptize you with holy spirit and with fire.^g **17** His winnowing shovel is in his hand to clean up his threshing floor

FOOTNOTES

3:11 *Or “an extra garment.” **3:13** *Or “collect.” **3:14** *Or “extort by violence from; intimidate; bully.”

STUDY NOTES

3:12 tax collectors: See study note on Mt 5:46.

3:14 those in military service: These were evidently native Jewish soldiers who may have been engaged in a type of police inspection, collecting customs or other taxes. Jewish soldiers were in a covenant relationship with Jehovah God. If they desired to be baptized in symbol of repentance of sins, they were obliged to change their conduct and no longer be guilty of extortion and other crimes for which soldiers were notorious.—Mt 3:8.

accuse anybody falsely: The Greek term translated “accuse . . . falsely” (*sy-ko-phan-te'o*) used here is rendered “extorted” or “extorted by false accusation” at Lu 19:8. (See study note on Lu 19:8.) The literal meaning of the verb has been explained to be “to take by fig-showing.” There are various explanations of the origin of this word. One is that in ancient Athens, the exporting of figs

from the province was prohibited. Therefore, someone who denounced others by accusing them of attempting to export figs was termed a “fig-shower.” The term came to designate a person who accused others falsely for the sake of gain, or a blackmailer.

provisions: Or “wages; pay.” The expression is used here as a military technical term, referring to a soldier’s pay, ration money, or allowance. Originally, food and other provisions may have been included as part of a soldier’s allowance. The Jewish soldiers who came to John were possibly engaged in a type of police inspection, especially in connection with customs, or the collection of taxes. John may have given this counsel because the pay given to most soldiers was low, and there evidently was a tendency for soldiers to abuse their power in order to supplement their income. The term is also used in the expression “at his own expense” at 1Co 9:7, where Paul refers to the pay to which a Christian “soldier” is entitled.

3:15 were in expectation: Or “were waiting expectantly.” Such anticipation may have resulted from the angels’ announcement of Jesus’ birth and the shepherds’

subsequent proclamation of that message. (Lu 2:8-11, 17, 18) Thereafter, at the temple, the prophetess Anna spoke freely about the child. (Lu 2:36-38) Also, the astrologers’ statement that they had come to do obeisance to “the one born king of the Jews” had an impact on Herod, the chief priests, the scribes, and all in Jerusalem.—Mt 2:1-4.

3:16 baptize you: See study note on Mt 3:11.

sandals: See study note on Mt 3:11. See  Gallery, image 15, Sandals.

3:17 winnowing shovel: See study note on Mt 3:12.

completely and to gather the wheat into his storehouse, but the chaff he will burn up with fire that cannot be put out.”

18 He also gave many other exhortations and continued declaring good news to the people. **19** But Herod the district ruler, because of being reproved by John concerning He-ro'di-as the wife of his brother and concerning all the wicked deeds that Herod had done, **20** added this also to all those deeds: He locked John up in prison.^a

The Baptism of Jesus

21 Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus too was baptized.^b As he was praying, the heaven was opened up,^c **22** and the holy spirit in bodily form like a dove came down upon him, and a voice came out of heaven: “You are my Son, the beloved; I have approved you.”^d

Genealogy of Jesus Christ

23 When Jesus^e began his work, he was about 30 years old,^f being the son, as the opinion was, of Joseph,^g son of He'li,

CHAP. 3

- a Mt 4:12
Mt 14:3-5
Mr 1:14
Mr 6:17-20
- b Mt 3:13
- c Mt 3:16
Mr 1:9, 10
- d Ps 2:7
Mt 3:17
Mt 17:5
Mr 1:11
Joh 1:32-34
- e Mt 1:1-17
- f Nu 4:2, 3
- g Mt 1:16
Mt 13:55
Lu 4:22
Joh 6:42

STUDY NOTES

3:17 chaff: See study note on Mt 3:12.

fire that cannot be put out: See study note on Mt 3:12.

See  Gallery, image 17, Threshing Tools.

3:19 district ruler: See study note on Mt 14:1.

3:21 As he was praying: In his Gospel, Luke gives the matter of prayer special attention. Only Luke mentions a number of Jesus' prayers. For example, here Luke adds the detail that Jesus was praying at the time of his baptism. Some of the significant words that he used in his prayer on that occasion were apparently later recorded by Paul. (Heb 10:5-9) Other instances in which Luke alone mentions Jesus' praying are Lu 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 11:1; 23:46.

the heaven: See study note on Mt 3:16.

the heaven was opened up: God evidently caused Jesus to perceive heavenly matters, which may well have included the memory of his prehuman life. Jesus' own

expressions after his baptism, particularly his intimate prayer on Passover night, 33 C.E., show that he knew of his prehuman existence, recalled the things he heard and saw his Father say and do, and remembered the glory that he himself had enjoyed in heaven. (Joh 6:46; 7:28, 29; 8:26, 28, 38; 14:2; 17:5) These memories may have been restored to Jesus at the time of his baptism and anointing.

3:22 like a dove: Doves had both a sacred use and a symbolic meaning. They were offered as sacrifices. (Mr 11:15; Joh 2:14-16) They symbolized innocence and purity. (Mt 10:16) A dove released by Noah brought an olive leaf back to the ark, indicating that the floodwaters were receding (Ge 8:11) and that a time of rest and peace was at hand (Ge 5:29). Thus, at Jesus' baptism, Jehovah may have used the dove to call attention to the role of Jesus as the Messiah, the pure and sinless Son of God who would sacrifice his life for mankind and lay the basis for a period of rest and peace during his rule as King. The way that God's **holy spirit**,

or active force, **came down upon** Jesus at his baptism may have looked like the fluttering of a dove as it nears its perch.

a voice came out of heaven: The first of three instances in the Gospel accounts where Jehovah is reported as speaking audibly to humans.—See study notes on Lu 9:35; Joh 12:28.

You are my Son: See study note on Mr 1:11.

I have approved you: See study note on Mr 1:11.

3:23 began his work: Or “began his ministry; started to teach.” Lit., “began; started.” Luke uses the same Greek expression at Ac 1:21, 22 and 10:37, 38 when referring to the start of Jesus' earthly ministry. His public ministry involved preaching, teaching, and disciple-making.

as the opinion was: Or possibly, “as it was established by law.” This rendering has been suggested by a few scholars, since the Greek term allows for this idea.

CHAP. 3

a Ezr 3:2

b 1Ch 3:17
Mt 1:12

- 24 son of Mat'that,
son of Le'vi,
son of Mel'chi,
son of Jan'na-i,
son of Joseph,
- 25 son of Mat-ta-thi'as,
son of A'mos,
son of Na'hum,
son of Es'li,
son of Nag'ga-i,
- 26 son of Ma'ath,
son of Mat-ta-thi'as,
son of Sem'e-in,
son of Jo'sech,
son of Jo'da,
- 27 son of Jo-an'an,
son of Rhe'sa,
son of Ze-rub'ba-bel,^a
son of She-al'ti-el,^b
son of Ne'ri,

 STUDY NOTES

In this context, that rendering would convey the thought of being legally established according to genealogical reckonings available at the time. However, the rendering in the main text of the *New World Translation* is supported by most scholars.

being the son, as the opinion was, of Joseph: Joseph was actually Jesus' adoptive father, since Jesus was begotten by holy spirit. However, the people in Nazareth saw Joseph and Mary raise Jesus, so they naturally considered him to be Joseph's son. This is indicated by other scriptures, such as Mt 13:55 and Lu 4:22, where the inhabitants of Nazareth refer to Jesus as "the carpenter's son" and "a son of Joseph." On one occasion, people who stumbled at Jesus remarked: "Is this not Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" (Joh 6:42) Also, Philip told Nathanael: "We have found . . . Jesus, the son of Joseph." (Joh 1:45) Luke's account here confirms that Jesus'

being called "the son of Joseph" was simply current opinion.

Joseph, son of Heli: According to Mt 1:16, "Jacob became father to Joseph the husband of Mary." In Luke's account, Joseph is called the "son of Heli," evidently meaning that he is Heli's son-in-law. (For a similar case, see the study note on Lu 3:27.) When tracing the bloodline from a grandfather to a grandson through a daughter, it was customary for the Jews to focus on the men in the genealogies, which may be why Luke omits the daughter's name and lists her husband as a son. Luke evidently traces Jesus' descent through Mary, so it would seem that Heli was Mary's father and the maternal grandfather of Jesus.—See study notes on Mt 1:1, 16; Lu 3:27.

3:27 Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel: Although Zerubbabel is frequently called "the son of Shealtiel" (Ezr 3:2, 8; 5:2; Ne 12:1; Hag 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 23; Mt 1:12), he is once identified as one of "the sons of Pedaiah," a brother of Shealtiel.

(1Ch 3:17-19) Zerubbabel was likely the natural son of Pedaiah, but it seems that he was legally reckoned as the son of Shealtiel. If Pedaiah died when his son Zerubbabel was a boy, Pedaiah's oldest brother, Shealtiel, might have raised Zerubbabel as his own son. Or if Shealtiel died childless and Pedaiah performed levirate marriage on his behalf, the son of Pedaiah by Shealtiel's wife would have been reckoned as Shealtiel's legal heir.

Shealtiel, son of Neri: According to 1Ch 3:17 and Mt 1:12, Shealtiel was the son of Jeconiah, not Neri. Perhaps Shealtiel married Neri's daughter, thus becoming his son-in-law, and could therefore be called the "son of Neri." It was not uncommon in Hebrew genealogical listings to speak of a son-in-law as a son. In a similar way, Luke apparently called Joseph "son of Heli," Mary's father.—See study note on Lu 3:23.

- 28 son of Mel'chi,
son of Ad'di,
son of Co'sam,
son of El·ma'dam,
son of Er,
- 29 son of Jesus,
son of E·li·e'zer,
son of Jo'rim,
son of Mat'that,
son of Le'vi,
- 30 son of Sym'e-on,
son of Judas,
son of Joseph,
son of Jo'nam,
son of E·li'a·kim,
- 31 son of Me'le-a,
son of Men'na,
son of Mat'ta·tha,
son of Nathan,^a
son of David,^b
- 32 son of Jes'se,^c
son of O'bed,^d
son of Bo'az,^e
son of Sal'mon,^f
son of Nah'shon,^g
- 33 son of Am·min'a·dab,^h
son of Ar'ni,

CHAP. 3

a 2Sa 5:13, 14
1Ch 3:5

b 1Sa 16:13
1Sa 17:58
Mt 1:6

c Isa 11:1

d Ru 4:17

e Ru 4:13

f Ru 4:21

g Nu 1:4, 7

Nu 2:3
1Ch 2:11

h 1Ch 2:10

 STUDY NOTES

3:29 Jesus: Or "Joshua (Jeshua)." Some ancient manuscripts here read "Jose(s)." —See study note on Mt 1:21.

3:31 Nathan: The son of David by Bathsheba from whom Mary descended. (2Sa 5:13, 14; 1Ch 3:5) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, he is mentioned only here. Luke's genealogy of Jesus differs from Matthew's, but the difference in nearly all the names in Luke's account can be resolved when realizing that Luke traced the line through David's son *Nathan*, whereas Matthew traced the line through David's son *Solomon*. (Mt 1:6, 7) Luke apparently

follows the ancestry of Mary, thus showing Jesus' *natural* descent from David, while Matthew shows Jesus' *legal* right to the throne of David by descent from Solomon through Joseph, who was *legally* Jesus' father. Both Matthew and Luke indicate that Joseph was Jesus' adoptive father.—See study notes on Mt 1:1, 16; Lu 3:23.

3:32 Salomon: The Greek spelling is "Sala" in some ancient manuscripts and "Salmon" in others. Salmon married Rahab of Jericho, by whom he fathered Boaz. (Ru 4:20-22; Mt 1:4, 5) 1Ch 2:11 uses a different Hebrew spelling of his name. It says: "Salma became father to Boaz."

3:33 Arni: This is a variant form of the name Ram (Greek, *A-ram'*) found at Mt 1:3, 4. At 1Ch 2:9, Ram is listed as one of "the sons of Hezron," and Ru 4:19 says: "Hezron became father to Ram." Some manuscripts use "Ram" here in Luke's account, but there is good manuscript support for using the variant form "Arni."

3:36 son of Cainan: A few ancient manuscripts omit "son of Cainan" here. This omission is in harmony with the Masoretic text of Ge 10:24; 11:12, 13; and 1Ch 1:18, where Shelah is listed as the son of Arpachshad. However, the name Cainan appears in these genealogical lists in existing copies of the Greek *Septuagint*,

CHAP. 3

a Ge 46:12

b Ru 4:12
Ru 4:18, 19
1Ch 2:4, 5c Ge 29:35
1Ch 2:1

d Ge 25:26

e Ge 21:2, 3

f 1Ch 1:28

g Ge 11:24
Ge 11:26, 27

h Ge 11:22

i Ge 11:20

j Ge 11:18

k Ge 11:16

l Ge 11:14
1Ch 1:25

m Ge 11:12

n Ge 11:10

o Ge 5:32

p Ge 5:29

q Ge 5:25

r Ge 5:21

s Ge 5:18
Jude 14

t Ge 5:19

u Ge 5:12
Ge 5:16v Ge 5:9
1Ch 1:2w Ge 4:26
Ge 5:10

x Ge 5:7

y Ge 5:1
Ge 5:4
1Ch 1:1son of Hez'ron,^ason of Pe'rez,^bson of Judah,^c**34** son of Jacob,^dson of Isaac,^eson of Abraham,^fson of Te'rah,^gson of Na'hor,^h**35** son of Se'rug,ⁱson of Re'u,^json of Pe'leg,^kson of E'ber,^lson of She'lah,^m**36** son of Ca'i'nan,son of Ar-pach'shad,ⁿson of Shem,^oson of Noah,^pson of La'mech,^q**37** son of Me-thu'se-lah,^rson of E'noch,^sson of Ja'red,^tson of Ma-ha'la-le-el,^uson of Ca'i'nan,^v**38** son of E'nosh,^wson of Seth,^xson of Adam,^y

son of God.

 STUDY NOTES

such as the Codex Alexandrinus of the fifth century C.E. A large number of manuscripts of the Gospel of Luke support the inclusion of the expression “son of Cainan,” so it is retained in most Bible translations.

3:38 son of Adam: Luke traces Jesus' genealogy back to Adam, the forefather of all mankind. This is in line with Luke's intent to write good news for all people, addressing both Jews and non-Jews. Matthew, on the other hand, who seems to have written his Gospel especially for the Jews, traces Jesus' genealogy back to

Abraham. The universal appeal of Luke's Gospel can also be seen in his recording that Christ's message and works could bring good no matter what a person's background—a Samaritan leper, a rich tax collector, and even a condemned thief dying on a stake.—Lu 17:11-19; 19:2-10; 23:39-43.

Adam, son of God: This reference goes back to the origin of mankind and agrees with the Genesis account that the first man was created by God and in God's image. (Ge 1:26, 27; 2:7) This statement also sheds light on other inspired statements, such as Ro 5:12; 8:20, 21; and 1Co 15:22, 45.

Jesus Rejects the Devil's Temptations

4 Then Jesus, full of holy spirit, turned away from the Jordan, and he was led about by the spirit in the wilderness^a **2** for 40 days, being tempted by the Devil.^b And he ate nothing in those days, so when they had ended, he felt hungry. **3** At this the Devil said to him: “If you are a son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread.” **4** But Jesus answered him: “It is written, ‘Man must not live on bread alone.’”^c

5 So he brought him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the inhabited earth in an instant of time.^d **6** Then the Devil said to him: “I will give you all this authority and their glory, because it has been handed over to me,^e and I give it to whomever I wish.^f **7** If you, therefore, do an act of worship before me, it will all be yours.” **8** In reply Jesus said to him: “It is written, ‘It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.’”^g

9 He then led him into Jerusalem and stationed him on the battlement of the temple and said to him: “If you are a son of God, throw yourself down from here,^h **10** for it is written, ‘He

CHAP. 4

- a Mt 4:1-4
Mr 1:12, 13
- b Heb 2:18
- c De 8:3
- d Mt 4:8-10
- e Joh 12:31
Joh 14:30
Eph 2:2
- f Re 13:2
- g Ex 20:3
De 6:13
De 10:20
- h Mt 4:5-7

FOOTNOTES

4:8 * Or “and you must serve only him.”

STUDY NOTES

4:1 led about by the spirit: The Greek word *pneuma* refers here to God’s spirit, which can act as a driving force, moving and impelling a person to do things in accord with God’s will.—Mr 1:12; see  Glossary, “Spirit.”

See  Gallery, image 8, The Wilderness of Judea, West of the Jordan River.

See  Gallery, image 9, The Wilderness.

4:2 Devil: See study note on Mt 4:1.

4:4 Man must not live on bread alone: In recording Jesus’ quote from the Hebrew Scriptures, Luke cites a shorter portion of De 8:3 than Matthew does. Some ancient Greek manuscripts and translations, however, complete the quote and add “but by every word of God,” making Luke’s record similar to the parallel account at Mt 4:4. However, the shorter reading in Luke’s account has earlier manuscript support. Even so, it is worth noting that a number of translations of the Christian Greek

Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17 in  App. C) that have the longer reading use the Tetragrammaton. They could be rendered “but by everything proceeding from Jehovah’s mouth.”

4:5 So he brought him up: The parallel account at Mt 4:8 adds the detail that the Devil took Jesus to “an unusually high mountain.” Luke here records the temptations in an order different from that of Matthew, but in this case, the order of events presented by Matthew is likely the correct one. (Mt 4:1-11) It seems reasonable to assume that Satan introduced the first two temptations with the subtle phrase “if you are a son of God” and then concluded with a blatant temptation to break the first of the Ten Commandments. (Ex 20:2, 3) It also seems fitting that Jesus would say: “Go away, Satan!” when replying to the last of the three tests. (Mt 4:10) And while the evidence is not conclusive, scholars have also noted that Mt 4:5 introduces the second temptation with a Greek word rendered “then.” Therefore, the wording of Matthew’s account may be slightly more specific as to time sequence than the Greek word rendered

“so” here at Lu 4:5. While it is true that Luke followed a “logical order,” it was not necessarily a strict chronological order.—See study note on Lu 1:3.

showed him: See study note on Mt 4:8.

kingdoms: See study note on Mt 4:8.

4:7 do an act of worship: See study note on Mt 4:9.

4:8 Jehovah: In this quote from De 6:13, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

4:9 battlement of the temple: See study note on Mt 4:5.

See  Gallery, image 19, Battlement of the Temple.

4:12 Jehovah: In this quote from De 6:16, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

4:15 synagogues: See  Glossary, “Synagogue.”

CHAP. 4

- a Ps 91:11, 12
 b De 6:16
 1Co 10:9
 c Mt 4:11
 Heb 4:15
 d Mt 4:12
 Joh 4:3
 Ac 10:37, 38
 e Mt 2:23
 Lu 2:39
 f Ac 13:13, 14
 Ac 17:1, 2

will give his angels a command concerning you, to preserve you,’ **11** and, ‘They will carry you on their hands, so that you may not strike your foot against a stone.’^a **12** In answer Jesus said to him: “It is said, ‘You must not put Jehovah your God to the test.’”^b **13** So the Devil, having finished all the temptation, departed from him until another convenient time.^c

Jesus Begins Preaching in Galilee

14 Now Jesus returned in the power of the spirit* into Galilee.^d And good reports about him spread throughout all the surrounding country. **15** Also, he began to teach in their synagogues, and he was held in honor by all.

Jesus Rejected in Nazareth

16 He then went to Naz’a-reth,^e where he had been brought up, and according to his custom on the Sabbath day, he entered the synagogue^f and stood up to read. **17** So the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him, and he opened the scroll and found the place where it was written: **18** “Jehovah’s spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news to

FOOTNOTES

4:14 * Or “filled with the power of the spirit.”

STUDY NOTES

4:16 according to his custom on the Sabbath day: There is no evidence that the Jews gathered in synagogues to observe the Sabbath at any point before the Babylonian exile. However, likely from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the custom of doing so developed. Fittingly, Jesus observed this spiritually beneficial custom. Throughout Jesus’ early life, his family was accustomed to going to the synagogue in Nazareth. In time, a similar practice of gathering for worship was instituted in the Christian congregation.

stood up to read: Scholars note that this is the earliest known description of a synagogue service. According to Jewish tradition, the service usually began with private prayers as the congregants entered the building, after which the words of De 6:4-9 and 11:13-21 were recited. Public prayers followed, after which a portion of the Pentateuch was read aloud

according to a schedule. Ac 15:21 states that in the first century C.E., such reading was done “on every Sabbath.” The next portion of the service, which seems to be the focus of this verse, was a reading from the prophets along with a lesson based on the reading. The reader customarily stood, and he may have had some freedom to choose his prophetic passage.—See study note on Ac 13:15.

4:17 the scroll of the prophet Isaiah: The Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah is composed of 17 parchment strips attached one to another, making up a roll measuring 7.3 m (24 ft) in length with 54 columns. The scroll used in the synagogue in Nazareth may have been of similar length. Without the help of chapter and verse numbers, which did not exist in the first century, Jesus would have had to locate the passage he wanted to read. But the fact that he **found the place** where the prophetic words were written demonstrates his thorough familiarity with God’s Word.

See  Gallery, image 100, The Great Isaiah Scroll.

4:18 Jehovah’s: In this quote from Isa 61:1, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

he anointed: Luke here quotes from the *Septuagint* version of Isaiah’s prophecy, which reads “he anointed.” However, Jesus would have read from the Hebrew text of Isaiah’s prophecy (61:1, 2), where the verb for “anointed” is used along with the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH). A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J7, 8, 10, 14, 15 in  App. C) use the divine name here and read “Jehovah anointed.”

the poor. He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and a recovery of sight to the blind, to send the crushed ones away free,^a **19** to preach Jehovah's acceptable year."^b **20** With that he rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were intently fixed on him. **21** Then he began to say to them: "Today this scripture that you just heard* is fulfilled."^c

22 And they all began to give favorable witness about him and to be amazed at the gracious words coming out of his mouth,^d and they were saying: "This is a son of Joseph, is it not?"^e **23** At this he said to them: "No doubt you will apply this saying to me, 'Physician, cure yourself. Do also here in your home territory the things we have heard were done in Ca-per'na-um.'"^f **24** So he said: "Truly I tell you that no prophet is accepted in his home territory.^g **25** For instance, I tell you in truth: There were many widows in Israel in the days of E-li-jah when heaven was shut up for three years and six months, and a great famine came on all the land.^h **26** Yet E-li'jah was sent to none of those women, but only to a widow in Zar'e-phath in the land of Si'don.ⁱ **27** Also, there were many lepers in Israel in the time of E-li'sha the prophet; yet not one of them was

CHAP. 4

a Isa 42:1-4

Mt 12:20

b Isa 61:1, 2

c Mt 5:17

d Ps 45:2

Isa 50:4

e Mt 13:54

Mr 6:2

Joh 6:42

f Mt 4:13

Joh 4:46-48

g Mt 13:57

Mr 6:4

Joh 4:44

h 1Ki 18:1

i 1Ki 17:9, 10

FOOTNOTES

4:21 *Lit., "this scripture in your ears."

STUDY NOTES

4:18 to proclaim liberty to the captives:

Here Jesus quotes Isaiah's prophecy, which some Jews might have applied literally. (Isa 61:1) However, Jesus' ministry focused on releasing people from spiritual bondage. Therefore, the liberation that Jesus announced was a spiritual one. This prophecy and Jesus' application of it to his ministry are evidently allusions to the Jubilee, which was to be celebrated every 50th year. During the Jubilee year, liberty was to be proclaimed throughout the land.—Le 25:8-12.

4:19 Jehovah's: In this quote from Isa 61:2, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

Jehovah's acceptable year: Or "the year of Jehovah's favor." Here Jesus quotes

from Isa 61:1, 2. Luke's Greek text uses "acceptable year," which follows the *Septuagint* rendering of the Hebrew expression "year of . . . goodwill [or, "favor," *ftn.*]." Jesus applied this verse to himself, indicating that his ministry of salvation marked the beginning of this "year" that was "acceptable" to Jehovah for showing his goodwill and accepting people. Jesus' reading stopped short of Isaiah's next words concerning God's relatively short "day of vengeance," apparently to keep the focus on that longer "acceptable year," during which God would show favor to those turning to him for salvation.—Lu 19:9, 10; Joh 12:47.

4:20 and sat down: Jesus thereby signaled that he was about to speak. It was the custom in the synagogue that the one who read before the congregation did not go back to his former seat but sat down to teach where "all in the synagogue" could see him.—Compare study note on Mt 5:1.

4:23 saying: Or "proverb; parable; illustration." The Greek word *pa-ra-bo-le'*,

which literally means "a placing beside (together)," may refer to a parable, a proverb, a saying, or an illustration.—See study note on Mt 13:3.

your home territory: Lit., "your father's place," that is, Nazareth, the hometown of Jesus. In this context, the Greek word rendered "home territory" (*pa-tris'*) apparently refers to a relatively restricted area—the hometown of Jesus and his immediate family. However, this term may also be used of a larger geographical area, such as one's native land, or country. In the context of Joh 4:43, 44, this Greek word apparently refers to all of Galilee, so it is rendered "homeland."

4:25 for three years and six months:

According to 1Ki 18:1, Elijah announced the end of the drought "in the third year." Some have therefore claimed that Jesus contradicts the account in 1 Kings. However, the Hebrew Scripture account does not suggest that the drought lasted less than three years. The phrase "in the third year" evidently applies to the period that

CHAP. 4

- a 2Ki 5:1
2Ki 5:14
- b Lu 2:34
- c Joh 8:59
Joh 10:39
- d Mr 1:21, 22
- e Mt 7:28
Joh 7:46
- f Mr 1:23-28
- g Mt 2:23
- h Mt 8:29
Lu 4:41
Lu 8:28
Jas 2:19
- i Lu 5:15

cleansed, only Na'a-man the Syrian.”^a **28** Now all those hearing these things in the synagogue became filled with anger,^b **29** and they rose up and rushed him outside the city, and they led him to the brow of the mountain* on which their city had been built, in order to throw him down headlong. **30** But he went right through their midst and continued on his way.^c

Teaching in the Synagogue in Capernaum

31 He then went down to Ca-per'na-um, a city of Gal'i-lee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath,^d **32** and they were astounded at his way of teaching,^e because he spoke with authority. **33** Now in the synagogue there was a man with a spirit, an unclean demon, and he shouted with a loud voice:^f **34** “Ah! What have we to do with you, Jesus the Naz-a-rene?”^g Did you come to destroy us? I know exactly who you are, the Holy One of God.”^h **35** But Jesus rebuked it, saying: “Be silent, and come out of him.” So after throwing the man down in their midst, the demon came out of him without hurting him. **36** At this they were all astonished and began to say to one another: “What kind of speech is this? For with authority and power he orders the unclean spirits, and out they come!” **37** So the news about him kept spreading into every corner of the surrounding country.ⁱ

FOOTNOTES

4:29 *Or “hill.”

STUDY NOTES

began when Elijah first announced the drought to Ahab. (1Ki 17:1) That announcement likely took place when the dry season—which typically lasts for up to six months but which may have lasted longer than usual—was already in progress. Further, the drought did not end immediately when Elijah again appeared before Ahab, “in the third year,” but only after the subsequent fire test on Mount Carmel. (1Ki 18:18-45) Hence, Jesus’ words recorded here, as well as the similar words of Christ’s half brother, recorded at Jas 5:17, harmonize well with the chronology suggested at 1Ki 18:1.

4:26 Zarephath: This Phoenician town was located on the Mediterranean Coast between the cities of Sidon and Tyre, that is, in non-Israelite territory. Its Greek

name was Sarepta. The Hebrew name is mentioned at 1Ki 17:9, 10 and Ob 20. The name is preserved in that of Sarafand in modern-day Lebanon, located about 13 km (8 mi) SSW of Sidon, though the ancient site may have been a short distance away on the Mediterranean Coast.—See  App. B10.

4:27 cleansed: Or “healed,” here referring to Naaman’s being cured of leprosy. (2Ki 5:3-10, 14) According to the Mosaic Law, this disease made a person ceremonially unclean. (Le 13:1-59) Thus, the Greek term is often used regarding the healing of lepers.—Mt 8:3; 10:8; Mr 1:40, 41.

4:29 in order to throw him down headlong: According to a Jewish tradition later recorded in the Talmud, a condemned man was sometimes thrown down from a precipice; then he was pelted with stones to ensure that he was dead. Whether the mob here in Nazareth had such a plan in mind or not, they certainly intended to kill Jesus.

4:31 Capernaum: From a Hebrew name meaning “Village of Nahum” or “Village of Comforting.” (Na 1:1, ftn.) A city of major importance in Jesus’ earthly ministry, it was located at the NW shore of the Sea of Galilee and was called “his own city” at Mt 9:1. Since Capernaum was over 200 m (650 ft) below sea level and Nazareth was located some 360 m (1,200 ft) above sea level, the account correctly says that Jesus **went down** to Capernaum.

See  Gallery, image 88, Synagogue in Capernaum.

4:33 with a spirit, an unclean demon: Or “with an unclean demon spirit.”—See  Glossary, “Spirit.”

4:34 What have we to do with you, . . . ?: See study note on Mt 8:29.

Simon's Mother-in-Law and Others Healed

38 After leaving the synagogue, he entered into Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering with a high fever, and they asked him to help her.^a **39** So he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Instantly she got up and began ministering to them.

40 But when the sun was setting, all those who had people sick with various diseases brought them to him. By laying his hands on each one of them, he cured them.^b **41** Demons also came out of many, crying out and saying: "You are the Son of God."^c But rebuking them, he would not permit them to speak,^d for they knew him to be the Christ.^e

Crowds Find Jesus in an Isolated Place

42 However, at daybreak he departed and went to an isolated place.^f But the crowds began searching* for him and came to where he was, and they tried to keep him from going away from them. **43** But he said to them: "I must also declare the good news of the Kingdom of God to other cities, because for this I was sent."^g **44** So he went on preaching in the synagogues of Ju-de'a.

Miraculous Catch of Fish; First Disciples

5 On one occasion when the crowd was pressing in on him and listening to the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gen-nes'a-ret.^h **2** And he saw two boats docked at the lakeside, but the fishermen had got out of them and were washing off their nets.ⁱ **3** Going aboard one of the boats, which was

CHAP. 4

- a Mt 8:14, 15
Mr 1:29-31
- b Mt 8:16, 17
Mr 1:32-34
- c Mt 8:28, 29
Mr 3:11
Ac 19:15
- d Ac 16:17, 18
- e Mr 1:23-25
Mr 3:11, 12
Lu 4:33-35
- f Mr 1:35-38
- g Mt 4:23
Lu 8:1
Joh 9:4
Ac 10:38
Ro 15:8

CHAP. 5

- h Mt 4:18
Mr 1:16
- i Mt 4:21

FOOTNOTES

4:42 *Or "hunting."

STUDY NOTES

4:38 Simon's mother-in-law: That is, the mother-in-law of Peter, also called Cephas. (Joh 1:42) This statement agrees with Paul's words at 1Co 9:5, where Cephas is referred to as a married man. Peter's mother-in-law evidently lived in his home, one he shared with his brother Andrew.—Mr 1:29-31; see study note on Mt 10:2, where the apostle's different names are explained.

suffering with a high fever: Matthew and Mark describe Peter's mother-in-law as "lying down and sick with fever." (Mt 8:14; Mr 1:30) Only Luke, apparently because he was a physician, draws attention to the seriousness of her condition, classifying it as "a high fever."—See "Introduction to Luke."

4:43 declare the good news: The Greek verb used here, *eu-ag-ge-li'zo-mai* ("to declare good news"), appears 54 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It is frequently found in Luke's writings. (Lu 1:19; 2:10; 3:18; 4:18; 8:1; 9:6; 20:1; Ac 5:42; 8:4; 10:36; 11:20; 13:32; 14:15, 21; 15:35;

16:10; 17:18) There is a difference between the term *ke-rys'so*, "to preach; to proclaim" (Mt 3:1; 4:17; 24:14; Lu 4:18, 19; 8:1, 39; 9:2; 24:47; Ac 8:5; 28:31; Re 5:2), and *eu-ag-ge-li'zo-mai*, "to declare good news." The former stresses the *manner* of the proclamation, that it is a public, authorized pronouncement. The latter stresses the *content* thereof, the declaring or bringing of "the good news." The related noun *eu-ag-ge-li-on* ("good news") appears 76 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures.—See study notes on Mt 4:23; 24:14 and 📖 Glossary, "Good news, the."

CHAP. 5

- a Joh 21:3
 b Joh 21:6
 c Mt 4:21
 Mr 1:19
 d Mt 4:19
 Mr 1:17
 e Mt 4:20, 22
 Mt 6:33
 Mt 19:27
 Mr 1:18, 20
 Lu 18:28
 Php 3:8

Simon's, he asked him to pull away a bit from land. Then he sat down, and he began teaching the crowds from the boat. **4** When he stopped speaking, he said to Simon: "Pull out to where it is deep, and let down your nets for a catch." **5** But in reply Simon said: "Instructor, we toiled all night and caught nothing,^a but at your word I will lower the nets." **6** Well, when they did this, they caught a great number of fish. In fact, their nets began ripping apart.^b **7** So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and assist them, and they came and filled both boats, so that these began to sink. **8** Seeing this, Simon Peter fell down at the knees of Jesus, saying: "Depart from me, Lord,* because I am a sinful man." **9** For both he and those with him were overwhelmed with astonishment at the catch of fish they had taken, **10** and the same was true of both James and John, Zeb'e-dee's sons,^c who were partners with Simon. But Jesus said to Simon: "Stop being afraid. From now on you will be catching men* alive."^d **11** So they brought the boats back to land and abandoned everything and followed him.^e

A Leper Healed

12 On another occasion while he was in one of the cities, look! there was a man full of leprosy! When he caught sight of

FOOTNOTES

5:8 *Or "Master." **5:10** *Or "people."

STUDY NOTES

4:43 the Kingdom of God: Throughout the Christian Greek Scriptures, **the good news** is closely linked with God's Kingdom, the theme of Jesus' preaching and teaching. The expression "the Kingdom of God" appears 32 times in Luke's Gospel, 14 times in Mark's Gospel, and 4 times in Matthew's Gospel. However, Matthew used the synonymous expression "the Kingdom of the heavens" some 30 times.—See study notes on Mt 3:2; 24:14; Mr 1:15.

5:1 the lake of Gennesaret: Another name for the Sea of Galilee, a freshwater inland lake in northern Israel. (Mt 4:18) It has also been called the Sea of Chinnereth (Nu 34:11) and the Sea of Tiberias.

(See study note on Joh 6:1.) It lies on average 210 m (700 ft) below sea level. It is 21 km (13 mi) long from N to S and 12 km (8 mi) wide from E to W, and its greatest depth is about 48 m (160 ft). **Gennesaret** is the name of a small plain bordering the NW shore of the lake. Some scholars believe that Gennesaret is probably the Greek form for the early Hebrew name Chinnereth.—See study note on Mt 14:34 and  App. A7, Map 3B, "Activity at the Sea of Galilee."

5:3 teaching the crowds from the boat: See study note on Mt 13:2.

See  Gallery, image 25, Remains of a Galilean Fishing Boat.

5:6 caught: Lit., "enclosed," as in a net.

See  Gallery, image 22, Fish of the Sea of Galilee.

5:7 See  Gallery, image 24, First-Century Fishing Boat.

5:12 a man full of leprosy: The leprosy referred to in the Bible was a serious skin disease, but it was not restricted to the disease known by that name today. Anyone diagnosed with leprosy became an outcast from society until he was cured. (Le 13:2, fn., 45, 46; see  Glossary, "Leprosy; Leper.") When the Gospel writers Matthew and Mark describe the same incident, they simply call the man "a leper." (Mt 8:2; Mr 1:40) But the physician Luke recognized that there are different stages of the condition. (Col 4:14) In this case, Luke describes the man as being "full of leprosy," evidently referring to an advanced stage of the disease.—See study note on Lu 4:38, where Luke marks the degree of another illness.

Jesus, he fell facedown and begged him: “Lord, if you just want to, you can make me clean.”^a **13** So stretching out his hand, he touched him, saying: “I want to! Be made clean.” Immediately the leprosy vanished from him.^b **14** Then he gave the man orders to tell no one:^c “But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses directed,^d for a witness to them.”^e **15** But the news about him just kept spreading, and large crowds would gather together to listen and to be cured of their sicknesses.^f **16** However, he often went into the desolate areas to pray.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

17 On one of those days while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the Law who had come out of every village of Gal’i-lee and Ju-de’a and from Jerusalem were sitting there; and Jehovah’s power was with him to do healing.^g **18** And look! men were carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher, and they were trying to bring him in and place him before Jesus.^h **19** So not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they climbed up to the roof, and they lowered him on the stretcher through the tiling, right among those in front of Jesus. **20** When he saw their faith, he said: “Man, your sins are forgiven.”ⁱ **21** Then the scribes and the Pharisees started to reason, saying: “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins except God alone?”^j **22** But Jesus, discerning their reasoning, said in answer to them: “What are you reasoning in your hearts? **23** Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? **24** But in order for you

CHAP. 5

- a Mt 8:2
Mr 1:40-45
- b Mt 8:3
Mr 1:41
- c Mr 7:36
Lu 8:56
- d Le 14:2-4
Le 14:10
Le 14:20
- e Mt 8:4
- f Mt 4:24, 25
Mr 3:7, 8
Joh 6:2
- g Ps 103:2, 3
Mr 2:1, 2
- h Mt 9:2
Mr 2:3-12
- i Mt 9:2-8
- j Ps 103:2, 3
Ps 130:3, 4
Isa 43:25

STUDY NOTES

5:13 he touched him: See study note on Mt 8:3.

I want to: See study note on Mt 8:3.

5:14 show yourself to the priest: See study note on Mr 1:44.

5:16 he often went into the desolate areas to pray: This is one of several instances in which Luke alone mentions that Jesus was praying. (See study notes on Lu 3:21; 9:28.) The forms of the Greek verbs used in this verse convey the idea that prayer was an ongoing habit for Jesus. The Greek word rendered “desolate areas” (*e’re-mos*) often refers to a desert or wilderness but can also refer to an

“isolated place” in general. (Mt 14:13; Mr 1:45; 6:31; Lu 4:42; 8:29) Jesus was not a recluse; he loved the company of others. (Mt 9:35, 36; Lu 8:1; 19:7-10; Joh 11:5) However, he frequently sought solitude because he loved even more the company of his Father. He wanted to be alone with Jehovah to speak freely with him in prayer.—Mt 14:23; Mr 1:35.

5:17 Jehovah’s power: Although Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The context clearly shows that *Ky’ri-os* is used with reference to God, and the Greek word *dy’na-mis*, which could be rendered “power” or “strength,” appears in the

Septuagint where the Hebrew text refers to Jehovah’s power, or strength, and uses the Tetragrammaton in the context.—Ps 21:1, 13; 93:1; 118:15; see **☞** App. C3 introduction; Lu 5:17.

5:19 through the tiling: The account about Jesus healing a paralytic man is recorded in the Gospels of Matthew (9:1-8), Mark (2:1-12), and Luke. The three accounts are complementary. Matthew mentions nothing about the man’s being lowered through the roof, while Mark explains that the man’s friends removed the roof and dug an opening through which they lowered the man on a stretcher. Luke says that the man was lowered “through the tiling.” (See study note on

CHAP. 5

- a Joh 5:6-9
 b Mr 5:42
 Ac 3:9, 10
 c Mt 9:9
 Mr 2:14
 d Lu 5:11
 e Mt 9:10-13
 Mr 2:15-17
 f Lu 15:1, 2
 g Isa 53:4
 Mt 9:12
 Mr 2:17
 h Mt 9:13
 1Ti 1:15
 i Mr 9:14, 15
 Mr 2:18-20
 Lu 7:34

to know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins—” he said to the paralyzed man: “I say to you, Get up, pick up your stretcher, and go to your home.”^a **25** At that he stood up before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went to his home, glorifying God. **26** Then one and all were seized with amazement,^b and they began to glorify God, and they became filled with awe, saying: “We have seen wonderful things today!”

Jesus Calls Levi

27 Now after this, he went out and saw a tax collector named Le’vi sitting at the tax office, and he said to him: “Be my follower.”^c **28** And leaving everything behind, he rose up and began to follow him.^d **29** Then Le’vi spread a big reception feast for him in his house, and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others who were dining with them.^e **30** At this the Pharisees and their scribes began murmuring to his disciples, saying: “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”^f **31** In reply Jesus said to them: “Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but those who are ill do.”^g **32** I have come to call, not righteous people, but sinners to repentance.”^h

Question About Fasting

33 They said to him: “John’s disciples fast frequently and offer supplications, and so do those of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink.”ⁱ **34** Jesus said to them: “You cannot make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with

STUDY NOTES

Mr 2:4.) The Greek word rendered “tiling” (*ke’ra-mos*) can refer to “clay,” the material that the tiles were made of, but here the plural form of the Greek word seems to refer to “roof tiles.” There is evidence that tiled roofs were used in ancient Israel. While it is not possible to say exactly what kind of roof the accounts of Mark and Luke describe, the individual tiles may have been put on the mud roof or somehow embedded in it. In any case, the accounts clearly convey that the friends of the paralyzed man went to great lengths to put him before Jesus. These acts no doubt showed the depth of their faith, for all three accounts mention that Jesus “saw their faith.”—Lu 5:20.

5:20 saw their faith: See study note on Mt 9:2.

5:24 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

to forgive sins—: See study note on Mt 9:6.

5:27 Levi: In the parallel account at Mt 9:9, this disciple is called Matthew. When referring to him as a former tax collector, Mark and Luke use the name Levi (Mr 2:14), but they use the name Matthew when mentioning him as one of the apostles (Mr 3:18; Lu 6:15; Ac 1:13). The Scriptures do not reveal whether Levi already had the name Matthew before becoming a disciple of Jesus.—See study note on Mr 2:14.

tax office: See study note on Mr 2:14.

Be my follower: See study note on Mr 2:14.

5:29 tax collectors: See study note on Mt 5:46.

dining: See study note on Mr 2:15.

5:33 fast: See study note on Mt 6:16.

5:34 friends of the bridegroom: See study note on Mt 9:15.

them, can you? **35** But days will come when the bridegroom^a will indeed be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days.”^b

36 He also gave an illustration to them: “Nobody cuts a patch from a new outer garment and sews it on an old garment. If he does, then the new patch tears away and the patch from the new garment does not match the old.^c **37** Also, no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the wineskins and it will be spilled out and the wineskins will be ruined. **38** But new wine must be put into new wineskins. **39** No one after drinking old wine wants new, for he says, ‘The old is nice.’”

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

6 Now on a sabbath he was passing through grainfields, and his disciples were plucking and eating the heads of grain,^d rubbing them with their hands.^e **2** At this some of the Pharisees said: “Why are you doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?”^f **3** But in reply Jesus said to them: “Have you never read what David did when he and the men with him were hungry?^g **4** How he entered into the house of God and received the loaves of presentation and ate and gave some to the men with him, which it is not lawful for anyone to eat but for the priests only?”^h **5** Then he said to them: “The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath.”ⁱ

Man With a Withered Hand Healed

6 On another sabbath^j he entered the synagogue and began teaching. And a man was there whose right hand was withered.^{*k} **7** The scribes and the Pharisees were now watching Jesus closely to see whether he would cure on the Sabbath, in

CHAP. 5

a Mt 22:2
2Co 11:2
Re 19:7

b Lu 17:22
Joh 16:19, 20

c Mt 9:16, 17
Mr 2:21, 22

CHAP. 6

d De 23:25

e Mt 12:1-8
Mr 2:23-28

f Ex 20:9, 10
De 5:13, 14
Joh 5:9, 10

g 1Sa 21:1-6

h Le 24:5-9

i Mt 12:8
Mr 2:27, 28

j Lu 13:14
Joh 9:16

k Mt 12:9-14
Mr 3:1-6

FOOTNOTES

6:6, 8 *Or “paralyzed.”

STUDY NOTES

5:37 wine into . . . wineskins: See study note on Mt 9:17.

5:39 nice: Or possibly, “nicer,” according to some manuscripts.

6:1 sabbath: See  Glossary.

through grainfields: See study note on Mt 12:1.

6:2 what is not lawful: See study note on Mt 12:2.

6:4 house of God: See study note on Mr 2:26.

loaves of presentation: See study note on Mt 12:4.

6:5 Lord of the Sabbath: See study note on Mt 12:8.

6:6 whose right hand was withered: Three Gospel writers describe Jesus’ healing of this man on a sabbath, but only Luke mentions the detail that it was the

man’s right hand that was withered, or paralyzed. (Mt 12:10; Mr 3:1) Luke often supplies medical details that Matthew and Mark do not. For a similar example, compare Mt 26:51 and Mr 14:47 with Lu 22:50, 51.—See “Introduction to Luke.”

6:8 knew their reasoning: Luke records that Jesus knew what the scribes and Pharisees were thinking, whereas Matthew and Mark omit this detail.—Compare the parallel accounts at Mt 12:10-13; Mr 3:1-3.

CHAP. 6

- a Lu 14:1-3
 b Lu 5:22
 Joh 2:24, 25
 c Mt 12:11
 Mr 3:4
 Joh 7:23
 d Mt 6:6
 Mr 3:13
 e Mt 14:23
 f Mt 10:2-4
 Mr 3:14-19
 Ac 1:13
 g Joh 14:8
 h Joh 11:16
 i Mt 4:24, 25
 Mr 3:7, 8

order to find some way to accuse him.^a **8** He, however, knew their reasoning,^b so he said to the man with the withered* hand: “Get up and stand in the center.” And he rose and stood there. **9** Then Jesus said to them: “I ask you men, Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to destroy it?”^c **10** After looking around at them all, he said to the man: “Stretch out your hand.” He did so, and his hand was restored. **11** But they flew into a senseless rage, and they began to talk over with one another what they might do to Jesus.

The 12 Apostles

12 On one of those days he went out to the mountain to pray,^d and he spent the whole night in prayer to God.^e **13** And when it became day, he called his disciples to him and chose from among them 12, whom he also named apostles:^f **14** Simon, whom he also named Peter, Andrew his brother, James, John, Philip,^g Bar-thol’o-mew, **15** Matthew, Thomas,^h James the son of Al-phae’us, Simon who is called “the zealous one,” **16** Judas the son of James, and Judas Is-car’i-ot, who turned traitor.

Jesus Teaches and Heals

17 And he came down with them and stood on a level place, and there was a large crowd of his disciples, and a great multitude of people from all Ju-de’a and Jerusalem and the coast-al region of Tyre and Si’don, who came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses.ⁱ **18** Even those troubled with

STUDY NOTES

6:9 life: Or “soul.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

6:13 apostles: See study note on Mt 10:2.

6:15 the zealous one: A designation distinguishing the apostle Simon from the apostle Simon Peter. (Lu 6:14) The Greek word used here and at Ac 1:13, *ze-lo-tes’*, means “zealot; enthusiast.” The parallel accounts at Mt 10:4 and Mr 3:18 use the designation “the Cananaean,” a term thought to be of Hebrew or Aramaic origin that likewise means “Zealot; Enthusiast.” While it is possible that Simon once belonged to the Zealots, a Jewish party opposed to the Romans, he may have been given this designation because of his zeal and enthusiasm.

6:16 who turned traitor: Or “who became a traitor.” The phrase is of interest because it suggests that Judas underwent a change. He was not a traitor when he became a disciple; nor was he a traitor when Jesus appointed him to be an apostle. He was not predestined to be a traitor. Rather, by the misuse of his own free will, he “turned traitor” sometime after his appointment. From the moment the change began to take place, Jesus was aware of it, as suggested at Joh 6:64.

6:17 and stood on a level place: As shown by the context, Jesus came down from a mountain where he had prayed all night before choosing his 12 apostles. (Lu 6:12, 13) He finds a level place on the mountainside, perhaps not far from his center of activity in Capernaum. Great crowds of people gather, and Jesus heals

them all. According to the parallel account at Mt 5:1, 2, he “went up on the mountain . . . and began teaching.” This expression may refer to an elevation above the level place on the mountainside. Taken together, the accounts of Matthew and Luke evidently describe how Jesus stopped his descent at a level place, found a slight elevation on the mountainside, and began to speak. Or Mt 5:1 may be a summary that does not mention what Luke explains in more detail.

See  Gallery, image 20, North Shore of the Sea of Galilee, Looking Northwest.

unclean spirits were cured. **19** And all the crowd were seeking to touch him,^a because power was going out of him^b and healing them all.

Happinesses and Woes

20 And he looked up at his disciples and began to say:

“Happy are you who are poor,^c for yours is the Kingdom of God.^d

21 “Happy are you who hunger now, for you will be filled.^{*e}

“Happy are you who weep now, for you will laugh.^f

22 “Happy are you whenever men hate you,^g and when they exclude you^h and reproach* you and denounce# your name as wicked for the sake of the Son of man.ⁱ **23** Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for look! your reward is great in heaven, for those are the same things their forefathers used to do to the prophets.^j

24 “But woe to you who are rich,^k for you are having your consolation in full.^l

25 “Woe to you who are filled up now, for you will go hungry.

“Woe, you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.^m

26 “Woe whenever all men speak well of you,ⁿ for this is what their forefathers did to the false prophets.

CHAP. 6

a Mt 14:35, 36

b Mr 5:30

c Isa 57:15

Mt 11:5

Lu 4:18

d Mt 5:2, 3

Jas 2:5

e Ps 107:9

Isa 55:1

Jer 31:25

Mt 5:6

f Isa 61:3

Re 21:4

g Joh 17:14

1Pe 3:14

h Joh 16:2

i Mt 5:10, 11

j 2Ch 36:16

Mt 5:12

Lu 11:47

Ac 7:52

k Jas 5:1

l Mt 6:2

Lu 16:25

m Isa 65:13

n Joh 15:19

Jas 4:4

1Jo 4:5

FOOTNOTES

6:21 * Or “satisfied.” **6:22** * Or “insult.” # Or “cast out.”

STUDY NOTES

6:20 his disciples: The Greek word for “disciple,” *ma·the·tes*, refers to a learner, or one who is taught, and implies a personal attachment to a teacher, an attachment that shapes the disciple’s whole life. Although large crowds gathered to listen to Jesus, it seems that he spoke mainly for the benefit of his disciples, who sat closest to him.—Mt 5:1, 2; 7:28, 29.

and began to say: The Sermon on the Mount is recorded both by Matthew (chapters 5-7) and by Luke (6:20-49). Luke recorded an abbreviated account of this sermon, whereas Matthew’s account is about four times longer and includes all but a few verses that appear in Luke’s

presentation. The two accounts begin alike and end alike, often use identical expressions, and are generally similar in content and in the order that the subjects are presented. Where the two accounts run parallel, the wording sometimes differs considerably. Even so, the accounts are harmonious. It is worth noting that several large portions of the sermon that do not appear in Luke’s account are repeated by Jesus on other occasions. For instance, while delivering the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke about prayer (Mt 6:9-13) and about a proper view of material things (Mt 6:25-34). About a year and a half later, it seems that he repeated these statements, which were recorded by Luke. (Lu 11:2-4; 12:22-31) Moreover, since Luke was generally writing for Christians from all backgrounds, he may have omitted portions of the sermon that may have been of special interest to Jews.—Mt 5:17-27; 6:1-18.

Happy: See study notes on Mt 5:3; Ro 4:7.

you who are poor: The Greek expression rendered “poor” denotes being “needy; destitute; a beggar.” Luke’s version of this first happiness in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount varies somewhat from what is stated at Mt 5:3. Matthew also uses the Greek word “poor” but adds the word for “spirit,” making the whole expression literally read “poor ones (beggars) as to the spirit.” (See study notes on Mt 5:3; Lu 16:20.) This phrase conveys the idea of a strong awareness of one’s spiritual poverty and dependence on God. Luke’s account simply refers to the poor, which harmonizes with Matthew’s account in that those who are poor and downtrodden are often more inclined to recognize their spiritual need and are more fully aware of their dependence on God. In fact, Jesus said that an important reason for his coming as the

CHAP. 6

Love for Enemies; Golden Rule

- a Ex 23:4
Pr 25:21
Mt 5:44
Ro 12:20
- b Lu 23:34
Ac 7:59, 60
Ro 12:14
1Pe 2:21, 23
- c Mt 5:39, 40
1Co 6:7
- d De 15:7, 8
Pr 3:27
Pr 21:26
Mt 5:42
- e Mt 7:12
- f Mt 5:46, 47
- g Le 25:35, 36
De 15:7, 8
Mt 5:42
- h Ex 22:25
Le 25:37
De 23:20
Ps 37:25, 26
- i Mt 5:45
Ac 14:17
- j Mt 5:48
Eph 5:1, 2
Jas 2:13
- k Mt 7:1, 2
Ro 14:10, 13

27 “But I say to you who are listening: Continue to love your enemies, to do good to those hating you,^a **28** to bless those cursing you, to pray for those who are insulting you.^b **29** To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your outer garment, do not withhold the inner garment either.^c **30** Give to everyone asking you,^d and from the one taking your things away, do not ask them back.

31 “Also, just as you want men to do to you, do* the same way to them.^e

32 “If you love those loving you, of what credit is it to you? For even the sinners love those loving them.^f **33** And if you do good to those doing good to you, of what credit is it to you? Even the sinners do the same. **34** Also, if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, of what credit is it to you?^g Even sinners lend to sinners so that they may get back as much. **35** On the contrary, continue to love your enemies and to do good and to lend without hoping for anything back;^h and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind toward the unthankful and wicked.ⁱ **36** Continue being merciful, just as your Father is merciful.^j

Stop Judging

37 “Moreover, stop judging, and you will by no means be judged;^k and stop condemning, and you will by no means be

FOOTNOTES

6:31 *Or “keep doing.”

STUDY NOTES

Messiah was “to declare good news to the poor.” (Lu 4:18) Those who followed Jesus and were given the hope of sharing in the blessings of **the Kingdom of God** were primarily drawn from among the poor or common people. (1Co 1:26-29; Jas 2:5) But Matthew’s account makes it clear that simply being poor does not automatically result in having God’s favor. So the introductory statements in the two accounts of the Sermon on the Mount complement each other.

6:24 **having your consolation in full:** The Greek term *a-pe'kho*, meaning “to have in full,” often appeared on business receipts, with the sense of “paid in full.” Jesus spoke of the **woe**, that is, the pain, sorrow, and adverse consequences, that the **rich** might experience. This is not simply because they have a comfortable, or good, life. Rather, he warned that people who cherish material riches may neglect service to God and miss out on gaining true happiness. Such people would be “paid in full,” experiencing all the **consolation**, or comforts, that they are going to get. God will not give them anything more.—See study note on Mt 6:2.

6:27 **Continue to love your enemies:** See study note on Mt 5:44.

6:34 **lend:** That is, lend without interest. The Law forbade the Israelites from charging interest on loans to a needy fellow Jew (Ex 22:25), and it encouraged them to lend generously to the poor.—De 15:7, 8; Mt 25:27.

condemned. Keep on forgiving,* and you will be forgiven.^{#a}

38 Practice giving,^b and people will give to you.^c They will pour into your laps a fine measure, pressed down, shaken together, and overflowing. For with the measure that you are measuring out, they will measure out to you in return.”

39 Then he also told them an illustration: “A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Both will fall into a pit,* will they not?^d **40** A student* is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly instructed will be like his teacher. **41** Why, then, do you look at the straw in your brother’s eye but do not notice the rafter in your own eye?^e **42** How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, allow me to remove the straw that is in your eye,’ while you yourself do not see the rafter in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the rafter from your own eye, and then you will see clearly how to remove the straw that is in your brother’s eye.^f

CHAP. 6

- a Mt 6:14
Mr 11:25
- b Ac 20:35
- c Pr 19:17
- d Mt 15:14
- e Mt 7:3-5
- f Ro 2:21
- g Mt 7:16-18
- h Mt 12:33
- i Mt 12:34, 35
- j Mt 7:21
Lu 13:24
Ro 2:13
Jas 1:22
- k Mt 7:24-27

Tree Known by Its Fruit

43 “For no fine tree produces rotten fruit, and no rotten tree produces fine fruit.^g **44** For each tree is known by its own fruit.^h For example, people do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they cut grapes off a thornbush. **45** A good man brings good out of the good treasure of his heart, but a wicked man brings what is wicked out of his wicked treasure; for out of the heart’s abundance his mouth speaks.ⁱ

Well-Built House Versus House Without Solid Foundation

46 “Why, then, do you call me ‘Lord! Lord!’ but do not do the things I say?^j **47** Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you whom he is like:^k **48** He

FOOTNOTES

6:37 *Or “releasing.” #Or “released.”
6:39 *Or “ditch.” **6:40** *Or “disciple.”

STUDY NOTES

6:37 **Keep on forgiving, and you will be forgiven:** Or “Keep on releasing, and you will be released.” The Greek term rendered “to forgive” literally means “to let go free; to send away; to release (for example, a prisoner).” In this context, when used in contrast with judging and condemning, it

conveys the idea of acquitting and forgiving, even when punishment or retribution might seem warranted.

6:38 **Practice giving:** Or “Keep giving.” The form of the Greek verb used here for “to give” denotes continuous action.

your laps: The Greek word literally means “your bosom (chest),” but in this context it likely refers to the fold formed over the belt by the loose-fitting cloth of the outer garment. ‘Pouring into the lap’ may refer to a custom of some vendors to fill this

fold with the goods that had been purchased.

See  Gallery, image 101, Upper Fold of a Garment.

6:39 **an illustration:** Or “a parable.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

6:41 **straw . . . rafter:** See study note on Mt 7:3.

6:42 **Hypocrite!:** The Greek word *hy-po-kri-tes* originally referred to Greek (and later Roman) stage actors who wore large

CHAP. 6

- a Ps 125:1
Ac 14:22
2Ti 3:12
b Jas 1:23, 24

CHAP. 7

- c Mt 8:5, 6
d Mt 8:8, 9
e Mt 8:10
f Mt 8:13

is like a man who in building a house dug and went down deep and laid a foundation on the rock. Consequently, when a flood came, the river dashed against that house but was not strong enough to shake it, for it was well-built.^a **49** On the other hand, whoever hears and does nothing^b is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The river dashed against it, and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great.”

Faith of an Army Officer

7 When he had completed what he had to say to the people, he entered Ca-per’na-um. **2** Now an army officer’s slave, who was dear to him, was seriously ill and about to pass away.^c **3** When he heard about Jesus, he sent some elders of the Jews to him to ask him to come and make his slave well. **4** They came up to Jesus and began to plead with him earnestly, saying: “He is worthy of your granting him this, **5** for he loves our nation and he himself built our synagogue.” **6** So Jesus went with them. But when he was not far from the house, the army officer had already sent friends to say to him: “Sir, do not bother, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof.^d **7** That is why I did not consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. **8** For I too am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me, and I say to this one, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come!’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.” **9** When Jesus heard these things, he was amazed at him, and he turned to the crowd following him and said: “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found so great a faith.”^e **10** And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.^f

STUDY NOTES

masks designed to disguise the identity of the actor and to amplify the voice. The term came to be used in a metaphoric sense. It was applied to someone who hid his real intentions or personality by putting on a pretense. At Mt 6:5, 16, Jesus refers to the Jewish religious leaders as “hypocrites.” Here (Lu 6:42) he uses the term to address any disciple who focuses on another’s faults while ignoring his own.

6:44 See  Gallery, image 35, Fig Tree, Grapevine, and Thornbush.

6:48 a flood: Sudden winter storms are not uncommon in Israel, especially during the month of Tebeth, that is, December/January. They bring high winds, torrential rains, and destructive flash floods.—See  App. B15.

7:1 Capernaum: See study note on Mt 4:13.

7:2 an army officer’s: Or “a centurion’s.”

A centurion was in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army.

7:3 he sent some elders of the Jews:

The parallel account at Mt 8:5 says that “an army officer came to him [Jesus].” The Jewish elders were apparently acting as intermediaries on behalf of the army officer. Only Luke mentions this detail.

Jesus Resurrects a Widow's Son in Nain

11 Soon afterward he traveled to a city called Na'in, and his disciples and a large crowd were traveling with him. **12** As he got near the gate of the city, why look! there was a dead man being carried out, the only son of his mother.^a Besides, she was a widow. A considerable crowd from the city was also with her. **13** When the Lord caught sight of her, he was moved with pity for her,^b and he said to her: "Stop weeping."^c **14** With that he approached and touched the bier,^{*} and the bearers stood still. Then he said: "Young man, I say to you, get up!"^{#d} **15** And the dead man sat up and started to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.^e **16** Now fear seized them all, and they began to glorify God, saying: "A great prophet has been raised up among us,"^f and, "God has turned his attention to his people."^g **17** And this news concerning him spread out into all Ju-de'a and all the surrounding country.

CHAP. 7

- a 1Ki 17:17
Lu 8:41, 42
Lu 9:38
b Heb 4:15
c Lu 8:52
Joh 11:33
d 1Ki 17:21, 22
Lu 8:52-54
Joh 11:43
Ac 9:40
e 1Ki 17:23
2Ki 4:36
f De 18:15
Lu 24:19
Joh 4:19
Joh 6:14
Joh 7:40
g Lu 1:68
h Mt 11:2-6
Joh 3:26
i Ps 40:7
Ps 118:26
Zec 9:9
Mt 3:11

John the Baptist Asks About "the Coming One"

18 Now John's disciples reported to him all these things.^h **19** So John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord to ask: "Are you the Coming One,ⁱ or are we to expect a different one?" **20** When they came to him, the men said: "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the Coming One, or are we to expect another?'" **21** In that hour he cured

FOOTNOTES

7:14 *Or "funeral stretcher." #Or "wake up!"

STUDY NOTES

7:11 **Soon afterward:** Some ancient manuscripts read "On the following day," but the main text reading used here has stronger manuscript support.

Nain: A Galilean city about 35 km (22 mi) SW of Capernaum, evidently the city that Jesus was coming from. (Lu 7:1-10) Nain, mentioned only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures, is identified with the modern-day village of Nein on the NW side of the hill of Moreh, about 10 km (6 mi) SSE of Nazareth. Today the village is quite small, but ruins in the area show that it was larger in earlier centuries. Overlooking the Plain of Jezreel and

located in an attractive natural setting, Nain was the scene of the first of the three recorded resurrections that Jesus performed—the others were at Capernaum and at Bethany. (Lu 8:49-56; Joh 11:1-44) Some 900 years earlier, in the nearby town of Shunem, the prophet Elisha resurrected the son of a Shunammite woman.—2Ki 4:8-37.

7:12 **the gate of the city:** The Greek word *po'lis* ("city") is used three times with regard to Nain. While this term usually denotes a walled city, it is uncertain whether a wall surrounded Nain. If there was no city wall, the "gate" may simply have been an opening between the houses by which a road entered Nain. However, some archaeologists believe that a wall surrounded Nain. In either case, Jesus and his disciples may have met the funeral procession at a "gate" at Nain's eastern

entrance, which was in the direction of the hillside tombs lying to the SE of the modern-day village of Nein.

only: The Greek word *mo-no-ge-nes'*, traditionally rendered "only-begotten," has been defined as "the only one of its kind; one and only; the only one or member of a class or kind; unique." The term is used in describing the relation of both sons and daughters to their parents. In this context, it is used in the sense of an only child. The same Greek word is also used of Jairus' "only" daughter and of a man's "only" son, whom Jesus healed. (Lu 8:41, 42; 9:38) The Greek *Septuagint* uses *mo-no-ge-nes'* when speaking of Jephthah's daughter, concerning whom it is written: "Now she was his one and only child. Besides her, he had neither son nor daughter." (Jg 11:34) In the apostle John's writings, *mo-no-ge-nes'* is used five times

CHAP. 7

- a Isa 53:4
 b Isa 42:7
 c Isa 29:18
 Isa 35:5, 6
 d Isa 61:1
 Lu 4:18
 Jas 2:5
 e Isa 8:14
 Lu 2:34
 Joh 6:60, 66
 f Mt 11:7-11
 g Mr 1:6
 h Mr 1:2
 Lu 1:67
 Lu 1:76
 i Isa 40:3
 Mal 3:1
 Lu 1:16, 17
 Joh 1:23
 j Mt 11:11
 Lu 1:13, 15
 k Mt 3:5, 6
 Lu 3:12
 l Ac 13:46
 Ro 10:2, 3
 m Mt 11:16-19

many people of sicknesses,^a serious diseases, and wicked spirits, and he granted many blind people the gift of sight. **22** In reply he said to them: “Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind are now seeing,^b the lame are walking, the lepers are being cleansed, the deaf are hearing,^c the dead are being raised up, and the poor are being told the good news.^d **23** Happy is the one who finds no cause for stumbling in me.”^e

John the Baptist Praised

24 When the messengers of John had gone away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed being tossed by the wind?^f

25 What, then, did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft garments?^g Why, those wearing splendid dress and living in luxury are in royal houses. **26** Really, then, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and far more than a prophet.^h

27 This is the one about whom it is written: ‘Look! I am sending my messenger ahead of you,^{*} who will prepare your way ahead of you.’ⁱ **28** I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John, but a lesser person in the Kingdom of God is greater than he is.”^j **29** (When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, they declared God to be righteous, for they had been baptized with the baptism of John.^k **30** But the Pharisees and those versed in the Law disregarded the counsel^{*} of God to them,^l since they had not been baptized by him.)

Unresponsive Generation Condemned

31 “With whom, therefore, should I compare the men of this generation, and whom are they like?^m **32** They are like young

FOOTNOTES

7:25 *Or “fine clothing.” **7:27** *Lit., “before your face.” **7:30** *Or “direction; guidance.”

STUDY NOTES

in reference to Jesus.—For the meaning of the term when used about Jesus, see study notes on Joh 1:14; 3:16.

7:13 **moved with pity:** Or “felt compassion.” The Greek verb *splag-khni'zo-mai* used for this expression is related to the word for “intestines” (*splag'khna*), denot-

ing a deeply felt, intense emotion. It is one of the strongest words in Greek for the feeling of compassion.

7:19 **two of his disciples:** The parallel account at Mt 11:2, 3 simply says that John the Baptist sent “his disciples.” Luke adds the detail about the number of disciples.

7:22 **lepers:** See study note on Mt 8:2 and  Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

7:25 See  Gallery, image 45, Royal Houses.

7:29 **baptism:** The Greek word *ba'pti-sma* means “immersion; dipping.”—See study notes on Mt 3:11; Mr 1:4.

children sitting in a marketplace and calling out to one another, saying: ‘We played the flute for you, but you did not dance; we wailed, but you did not weep.’ **33** Likewise, John the Baptist has come neither eating bread nor drinking wine,^a but you say: ‘He has a demon.’ **34** The Son of man has come eating and drinking, but you say: ‘Look! A man who is a glutton and is given to drinking wine, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’^b **35** All the same, wisdom is proved righteous* by all its children.”^c

CHAP. 7

a Nu 6:2, 3

Mt 3:4

Lu 1:13

Lu 1:15

b Mt 11:19

Lu 5:30

c Joh 10:37, 38

d Lu 14:1

e Mt 26:6, 7

Mr 14:3

Joh 12:3

f Mt 9:11

Lu 15:2

A Sinful Woman Forgiven

36 Now one of the Pharisees kept asking him to dine with him. So he entered the house of the Pharisee and reclined at the table.^d **37** And look! a woman who was known in the city to be a sinner learned that he was dining* in the house of the Pharisee, and she brought an alabaster jar of perfumed oil.^e **38** Taking a position behind him at his feet, she wept and began to wet his feet with her tears, and she wiped them off with the hair of her head. Also, she tenderly kissed his feet and poured the perfumed oil on them. **39** Seeing this, the Pharisee who had invited him said to himself: “If this man were really a prophet, he would know who and what kind of woman it is who is touching him, that she is a sinner.”^f **40** But in reply Jesus said to him: “Simon, I have something to say to you.” He said: “Teacher, say it!”

FOOTNOTES

7:35 *Or “is vindicated.” **7:37** *Or “reclining at the table.”

STUDY NOTES

7:32 See  Gallery, image 46, The Marketplace.

See  Gallery, image 43, Bone Flute.

7:33 **neither eating bread nor drinking wine:** See study note on Mt 11:18.

7:34 **tax collectors:** See study note on Mt 5:46.

7:35 **its children:** Or “its results.” Here **wisdom** is personified and depicted as having children. In the parallel account at Mt 11:19, wisdom is depicted as having “works.” Wisdom’s children, or works—that is, the evidence produced by John

the Baptist and Jesus—prove that the accusations against them are false. Jesus is, in effect, saying: ‘Look at the righteous works and conduct, and you will know that the charge is false.’

7:36 **entered the house of the Pharisee:**

Of the four Gospel writers, only Luke mentions that Jesus received and accepted invitations from Pharisees to dine with them. Other instances are mentioned at Lu 11:37; 14:1.

7:37 **a woman who was known . . . to be a sinner:**

The Bible shows that all humans are sinners. (2Ch 6:36; Ro 3:23; 5:12) Therefore, the term “sinner” is here used in a more specific way, evidently referring to those who had a reputation for practicing sin, perhaps of a moral or a criminal nature. (Lu 19:7, 8) Only Luke records this account about the sinful woman, perhaps

a prostitute, pouring oil on Jesus’ feet. The Greek expression rendered “who was known . . . to be” is literally “who was,” but as used in this context, it likely refers to a characteristic quality or character of a person or to a class to which an individual belongs.

See  Gallery, image 81, Alabaster Jar.

7:41 **Two men were debtors:** Jews living in the first century C.E. were familiar with the relationship between creditors and debtors, and Jesus at times drew on this knowledge for his illustrations. (Mt 18:23-35; Lu 16:1-8) Only Luke records this illustration of the two debtors, one of whom owed ten times as much as the other. Jesus gave the illustration because of the attitude that his host, Simon, had toward the woman who came in and poured perfumed oil on Jesus’ feet. (Lu 7:36-40)

CHAP. 7

- a Ge 18:4
Ge 24:32
1Sa 25:41
- b Ps 32:1
Ps 51:1
Ps 103:2, 3
Isa 1:18
Isa 43:25
Isa 44:22
- c Lu 7:41, 42
1Ti 1:13, 14
- d Mt 9:2
Mr 2:5
- e Mt 9:3–7
Mr 2:7
Lu 5:21
- f Mt 9:22
Lu 8:48
Lu 17:19

CHAP. 8

- g Mt 9:35
Lu 4:43

41 “Two men were debtors to a certain lender; the one was in debt for 500 de·nar’i·i, but the other for 50. **42** When they did not have anything to pay him back with, he freely forgave them both. Therefore, which one of them will love him more?” **43** In answer Simon said: “I suppose it is the one whom he forgave more.” He said to him: “You judged correctly.” **44** With that he turned to the woman and said to Simon: “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet. But this woman wet my feet^a with her tears and wiped them off with her hair. **45** You gave me no kiss, but this woman, from the hour that I came in, did not stop tenderly kissing my feet. **46** You did not pour oil on my head, but this woman poured perfumed oil on my feet. **47** Because of this, I tell you, her sins, many* though they are, are forgiven,^b because she loved much.^c But the one who is forgiven little, loves little.” **48** Then he said to her: “Your sins are forgiven.”^d **49** Those reclining at the table with him started to say among themselves: “Who is this man who even forgives sins?”^e **50** But he said to the woman: “Your faith has saved you;^f go in peace.”

Women Accompanying Jesus

8 Shortly afterward he traveled from city to city and from village to village, preaching and declaring the good news of the Kingdom of God.^g And the Twelve were with him, **2** as were certain women who had been cured of wicked spirits and

FOOTNOTES

7:47 *Or “great.”

STUDY NOTES

Jesus likens sin to a debt too big to be repaid and highlights the principle: “The one who is forgiven little, loves little.”—Lu 7:47; see study notes on Mt 6:12; 18:27; Lu 11:4.

denarii: A denarius was a Roman silver coin that weighed about 3.85 g (0.124 oz t) and bore an image of Caesar on one side. As Mt 20:2 shows, agricultural laborers in Jesus’ day commonly received a denarius for a 12-hour workday.—See  Glossary, “Denarius,” and  App. B14.

7:44 water for my feet: In ancient times, as in many parts of the earth today, walk-

ing was the main way of traveling. Some of the common people went barefoot, but many wore sandals consisting of little more than a sole and some leather straps. On entering a house, a person removed his sandals. An essential mark of hospitality was that of washing the feet of a guest. This service was performed either by the householder or by a servant. At the very least, water was provided for that purpose.—Ge 18:4; 24:32; 1Sa 25:41; Lu 7:37, 38.

7:45 You gave me no kiss: In Bible times, a kiss served as a token of affection or respect. The act of kissing might have included touching one’s lips to those of another (Pr 24:26), kissing another person’s cheek or, in an exceptional case, even kissing his feet (Lu 7:37, 38). Kissing was common not only between male and female relatives (Ge 29:11; 31:28) but

also between male relatives (Ge 27:26, 27; 45:15; Ex 18:7; 2Sa 14:33). It was likewise a gesture of affection between close friends.—1Sa 20:41, 42; 2Sa 19:39.

8:1 preaching: See study note on Mt 3:1.

sicknesses: Mary who was called Mag'da-lene,^a from whom seven demons had come out; **3** Jo-an'na^b the wife of Chu'za, Herod's man in charge; Su-san'na; and many other women, who were ministering to them from their belongings.^c

Illustration of the Sower

4 Now when a large crowd had gathered together with those who went to him from city to city, he spoke by means of an illustration:^d **5** "A sower went out to sow his seed. As he was sowing, some of them fell alongside the road and were trampled on, and the birds of heaven ate them up.^e **6** Some landed on the rock, and after sprouting, they dried up because they had no moisture.^f **7** Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns that grew up with them choked them.^g **8** But others fell on the good soil, and after sprouting, they produced 100 times more fruit."^h As he said these things, he called out: "Let the one who has ears to listen, listen."ⁱ

Why Jesus Used Illustrations; Illustration of the Sower Explained

9 But his disciples asked him what this illustration meant.^j **10** He said: "To you it is granted* to understand the sacred secrets of the Kingdom of God, but for the rest it is in illustrations^k so that, though looking, they may look in vain, and though hearing, they may not get the sense.^l **11** Now the illustration means this: The seed is the word of God.^m **12** Those alongside the road are the ones who have heard, and then the Devil comes and takes the word away from their hearts so that they may not believe and be saved.ⁿ **13** Those on the rock are the ones who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy, but

CHAP. 8

- a Joh 19:25
Joh 20:18
- b Lu 24:9, 10
- c Mt 27:55, 56
Mr 15:40, 41
- d Mt 13:1-3
Mr 4:1, 2
- e Mt 13:3-9
Mr 4:3-9
Lu 8:12
- f Lu 8:13
- g Lu 8:14
- h Lu 8:15
- i Mt 11:15
Mt 13:9, 43
Mr 4:9, 23
- j Mt 13:10
Mr 4:10
- k Ps 78:2
Mt 13:34, 35
Mr 4:34
- l Isa 6:9, 10
Mt 13:11, 13
Mr 4:11, 12
- m Mt 13:18-23
Mr 4:14-20
1Pe 1:25
- n Mt 13:19
Mr 4:15
1Co 1:21
2Co 2:11
2Co 4:3, 4
1Pe 5:8

FOOTNOTES

8:10 * Or "You have been allowed (permitted)."

STUDY NOTES

8:2 Mary who was called Magdalene:

The woman often called Mary Magdalene is first mentioned here in the account of Jesus' second year of preaching. Her distinguishing name, Magdalene (meaning "Of, or Belonging to, Magdala"), likely stems from the town of Magdala. This town was located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, about halfway be-

tween Capernaum and Tiberias. It has been suggested that Magdala was this Mary's hometown or place of residence. Mary Magdalene is mentioned most prominently in connection with the death and resurrection of Jesus.—Mt 27:55, 56, 61; Mr 15:40; Lu 24:10; Joh 19:25.

8:3 Joanna: This is a shortened feminine form of the Hebrew name Jehohanan, meaning "Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious." Joanna, one of the women who had been cured by Jesus, is mentioned only twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures and only in Luke's Gospel account.—Lu 24:10.

Chuzza: Herod Antipas' **man in charge**, or steward, possibly of domestic affairs.

were ministering to them: Or "were supporting (providing for) them." The Greek word *di-a-ko-ne'o* can refer to caring for the physical needs of others by obtaining, cooking, and serving food, and so forth. It is used in a similar sense at Lu 10:40 ("attend to things"), Lu 12:37 ("minister"), Lu 17:8 ("serve"), and Ac 6:2 ("distribute food"), but it can also refer to all other services of a similar personal nature. Here it describes how the women mentioned in verses 2 and 3 supported Jesus and his disciples, helping them to complete

CHAP. 8

- a Mt 13:20, 21
Mr 4:16, 17
- b Mt 19:23
1Ti 6:9
- c 2Ti 4:10
- d Mt 13:22
Mr 4:18, 19
- e Ac 16:14
- f Mt 13:23
Mr 4:20
Heb 10:36
- g Mt 5:15
Mr 4:21
Lu 11:33
Php 2:15
- h Mt 10:26
Mr 4:22
Lu 12:2
- i Mt 25:23
- j Mt 13:12
Mt 25:29
Mr 4:24, 25
Lu 19:26
- k Mt 13:55
Joh 7:5
Ac 1:14
- l Mt 12:46, 47
Mr 3:31, 32
- m Mt 12:48-50
Mr 3:33-35
Joh 15:14
- n Mt 8:18, 23
Mr 4:35, 36

these have no root. They believe for a while, but in a season of testing, they fall away.^a **14** As for that which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, but by being carried away by anxieties, riches,^b and pleasures of this life,^c they are completely choked and bring nothing to maturity.^d **15** As for that on the fine soil, these are the ones who, after hearing the word with a fine and good heart,^e retain it and bear fruit with endurance.^f

Lamp Not to Be Covered

16 “No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a vessel or puts it underneath a bed, but he puts it on a lampstand so that those who come in may see the light.^g **17** For there is nothing hidden that will not become manifest, nor anything carefully concealed that will never become known and not come out in the open.^h **18** Therefore, pay attention to how you listen, for whoever has will be given more,ⁱ but whoever does not have, even what he imagines he has will be taken away from him.”^j

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

19 Now his mother and brothers^k came to him, but they were unable to get near him because of the crowd.^l **20** So it was reported to him: “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.” **21** In reply he said to them: “My mother and my brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”^m

Jesus Calms a Storm

22 One day he and his disciples got into a boat, and he said to them: “Let us cross to the other side of the lake.” So they set sail.ⁿ **23** But as they were sailing along, he fell asleep.

STUDY NOTES

their God-given assignment. By doing so, these women glorified God, who showed his appreciation by preserving in the Bible a record of their merciful generosity for all future generations to read. (Pr 19:17; Heb 6:10) The same Greek term is used about women at Mt 27:55; Mr 15:41.—See study note on Lu 22:26, where the related noun *di-a'ko-nos* is discussed.

8:4 an illustration: See study note on Mt 13:3.

8:6 on the rock: See study note on Mt 13:5.

8:7 among the thorns: See study note on Mt 13:7.

8:10 sacred secrets: See study note on Mt 13:11.

8:16 a lamp: See study note on Mt 5:15. See  Gallery, image 29, Domestic Lampstand.

8:19 brothers: See study note on Mt 12:46.

8:21 My mother and my brothers: Jesus here makes a distinction between his natural brothers, some of whom apparently

lacked faith in him (Joh 7:5), and his spiritual brothers, his disciples. He shows that regardless of how precious the ties are that bind him to his relatives, his relationship with those **who hear the word of God and do it** is even more precious.

8:22 the other side: That is, the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

See  Gallery, image 24, First-Century Fishing Boat.

See  Gallery, image 25, Remains of a Galilean Fishing Boat.

And a violent windstorm descended on the lake, and their boat began to fill up with water and to be in danger.^a **24** So they went and woke him up, saying: “Instructor, Instructor, we are about to perish!” With that he got up and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and they subsided, and a calm set in.^b **25** Then he said to them: “Where is your faith?” But they were filled with fear and were astounded, saying to one another: “Who really is this? For he orders even the winds and the water, and they obey him.”^c

CHAP. 8

a Mt 8:24-27
Mr 4:37-41

b Ps 89:9

c Mt 8:27
Mr 4:41

d Mr 5:1

e Mt 8:28, 29
Mr 5:2-10

f Mr 1:23, 24
Lu 4:33, 34

g Mr 9:20, 21

Jesus Allows Demons to Enter Swine

26 And they put in to shore in the region of the Ger'a-senes,^d which is on the side opposite Gal'i-lee. **27** As Jesus got out onto land, a demon-possessed man from the city met him. For a considerable time he had not worn clothing, and he was staying, not in a house, but among the tombs.^{*e} **28** At the sight of Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and with a loud voice, he said: “What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me.”^f **29** (For Jesus had been ordering the unclean spirit to come out of the man. It had seized him on many occasions,^{*g} and he was repeatedly bound with chains and fetters and kept under guard, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the

FOOTNOTES

8:27 *Or “memorial tombs.” **8:29** *Or possibly, “Over a long time, it had held him fast.”

STUDY NOTES

8:23 a violent windstorm: This expression renders two Greek words that could literally be translated “a hurricane of wind.” (See study note on Mr 4:37.) Such storms are common on the Sea of Galilee. Its surface is about 210 m (690 ft) below sea level, and the air temperature is warmer on the sea than in the surrounding plateaus and mountains. Those conditions result in atmospheric disturbances and strong winds that can quickly whip up waves.

8:26 region of the Gerasenes: A region on the side opposite, that is, the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The exact limits of this region are unknown today,

and its identification is uncertain. Some link “the region of the Gerasenes” with the area around Kursi, near the steep slopes on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Others think that it was the large district radiating from the city of Gerasa (Jarash), which was 55 km (34 mi) SSE of the Sea of Galilee. Mt 8:28 calls it “the region of the Gadarenes.” (See study notes on Mt 8:28; Mr 5:1.) Although different names are used, they refer to the general area of the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and the regions may have been overlapping. Thus, there is no contradiction between the accounts.—See also  App. A7, Map 3B, “Activity at the Sea of Galilee,” and  App. B10.

Gerasenes: See study note on Mr 5:1.

See  Gallery, image 38, Cliffs on the Eastern Side of the Sea of Galilee.

8:27 a demon-possessed man: Matthew (8:28) mentions two men, but Mark (5:2)

and Luke refer to one. Mark and Luke evidently drew attention to just one demon-possessed man because Jesus spoke to him and because his case was more outstanding. Possibly, that man was more violent or had suffered under demon control for a longer time. It could also be that after the two men were healed, only one of them wanted to accompany Jesus.—Lu 8:37-39.

tombs: See study note on Mt 8:28.

8:28 What have I to do with you, . . . ?: See study note on Mr 5:7.

torment me: A related Greek term is used of “the jailers” at Mt 18:34. So in this context, the “torment” would seem to refer to a restraining or a confining to “the abyss” mentioned at Lu 8:31.—See study note on Mt 18:34.

CHAP. 8

a Re 20:2, 3

b Le 11:7, 8
De 14:8c Mt 8:30-34
Mr 5:11-17d Lu 10:39
Ac 22:3

e Mr 5:18-20

isolated places.) **30** Jesus asked him: “What is your name?” He said: “Legion,” for many demons had entered into him. **31** And they kept pleading with him not to order them to go away into the abyss.^a **32** Now a large herd of swine^b was feeding there on the mountain, so they pleaded with him to permit them to enter into the swine, and he gave them permission.^c **33** With that the demons came out of the man and went into the swine, and the herd rushed over the precipice* into the lake and drowned. **34** But when the herders saw what had happened, they fled and reported it in the city and in the countryside.

35 Then people went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had come out, clothed and in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus,^d and they grew fearful. **36** Those who had seen it reported to them how the demon-possessed man had been made well.* **37** Then a great number from the surrounding region of the Ger’a-senes asked Jesus to go away from them, because they were gripped by great fear. Then he went aboard the boat to depart. **38** However, the man from whom the demons had gone out kept begging to continue with him, but he sent the man away, saying:^e **39** “Go back home, and keep on relating what God did for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city what Jesus had done for him.

FOOTNOTES

8:33 * Or “steep bank.” **8:36** * Or “had been saved.”

STUDY NOTES

8:30 **Legion:** See study note on Mr 5:9.

8:31 **the abyss:** Or “the deep.” The Greek word *a’bys-sos*, meaning “exceedingly deep” or “unfathomable; boundless,” refers to a place or condition of confinement or imprisonment. It occurs nine times in the Christian Greek Scriptures—here, at Ro 10:7, and seven times in the book of Revelation. The account at Re 20:1-3 describes the future casting of Satan into the abyss for a thousand years. The legion of demons who entreated Jesus not to send them “into the abyss” may have had that future event in mind. In verse 28, one of the demons asked Jesus not to “torment” him. In the

parallel account at Mt 8:29, the demons asked Jesus: “Did you come here to torment us before the appointed time?” So the “torment” the demons feared would seem to refer to their being confined or imprisoned in “the abyss.”—See  Glossary and study note on Mt 8:29.

8:32 **swine:** Pigs were unclean according to the Law (Le 11:7), but there was a market for pork among the many non-Jews living in the Decapolis region. Both Greeks and Romans considered pork a delicacy. The account does not state whether “the herders” were Jews who were violating the Law.—Lu 8:34.

8:39 **keep on relating what God did for you:** In contrast with Jesus’ usual instructions not to publicize his miracles (Mr 1:44; 3:12; 7:36; Lu 5:14), he instructed this man to tell his relatives what had happened. This may have been because Jesus was asked to leave the region

and would not personally give them a witness. The man’s testimony would also serve to counteract unfavorable reports that might circulate over the loss of the swine.

the whole city: The parallel account at Mr 5:20 says “in the Decapolis.” So the city mentioned here apparently refers to one of the cities in the Decapolis region.—See  Glossary, “Decapolis.”

Jairus' Daughter Resurrected; a Woman Touches Jesus' Outer Garment

40 When Jesus returned, the crowd received him kindly, for they were all expecting him.^a **41** But look! a man named Jairus came; this man was a presiding officer of the synagogue. And he fell at the feet of Jesus and began to plead with him to come to his house,^b **42** because his only daughter, who was about 12 years old, was dying.

As Jesus was going, the crowds pressed in on him. **43** Now there was a woman who had a flow of blood^c for 12 years, and she had not been able to get a cure from anyone.^d **44** She approached from behind and touched the fringe^e of his outer garment,^e and immediately her flow of blood stopped. **45** So Jesus said: “Who touched me?” When they were all denying it, Peter said: “Instructor, the crowds are hemming you in and pressing against you.”^f **46** But Jesus said: “Someone touched me, for I know^g that power^g went out of me.” **47** Seeing that she had not escaped notice, the woman came trembling and fell down before him and declared before all the people why she touched him and how she was healed immediately. **48** But he said to her: “Daughter, your faith has made you well.^{*} Go in peace.”^h

49 While he was yet speaking, a representative of the presiding officer of the synagogue came, saying: “Your daughter has died; do not bother the Teacher any longer.”ⁱ **50** On hearing this, Jesus answered him: “Have no fear, only have faith, and she will be saved.”^j **51** When he reached the house, he did

CHAP. 8

- a Mr 5:21
- b Mt 9:18, 19
Mr 5:22-24
- c Le 15:25
- d Mt 9:20-22
Mr 5:25-29
- e Nu 15:38, 39
- f Mr 5:30-34
- g Lu 5:17
- h Mt 9:22
Lu 7:50
- i Mr 5:35-37
- j Joh 11:25
Ro 4:17

FOOTNOTES

8:44 *Or “edge; border; tassel.” **8:46**
*Or “perceived.” **8:48** *Or “has saved you.”

STUDY NOTES

8:42 only: The Greek word *mo-no-ge-nes'*, traditionally rendered “only-begotten,” has been defined as “the only one of its kind; one and only; the only one or member of a class or kind; unique.” The term is used in describing the relation of both sons and daughters to their parents. In this context, it is used in the sense of an only child. The same Greek word is also used of the “only” son of a widow in Nain and of a man’s “only” son whom

Jesus cured of a demon. (Lu 7:12; 9:38) The Greek *Septuagint* uses *mo-no-ge-nes'* when speaking of Jephthah’s daughter, concerning whom it is written: “Now she was his one and only child. Besides her, he had neither son nor daughter.” (Jg 11:34) In the apostle John’s writings, *mo-no-ge-nes'* is used five times with reference to Jesus.—For the meaning of the term when used about Jesus, see study notes on Joh 1:14; 3:16.

8:43 flow of blood: See study note on Mt 9:20.

8:47 See  Gallery, image 3, Jesus Heals a Woman.

8:48 Daughter: See study note on Mr 5:34.

Go in peace: See study note on Mr 5:34.

8:52 did not die but is sleeping: See study note on Mr 5:39.

8:55 spirit: Or “life force; breath.” The Greek word *pneu'ma* here likely refers to the life force that is active in an earthly creature or simply to breath.—See study note on Mt 27:50.

9:3 Carry nothing for the trip: When sending out his apostles on a preaching tour to proclaim “the Kingdom of God” (Lu 9:2), Jesus gave instructions on how to carry out this all-important work. His instructions are recorded in all three synoptic Gospels. (Mt 10:8-10; Mr 6:8, 9; Lu 9:3) Although there are some differences in wording, the instructions all convey the

CHAP. 8

- a Lu 7:12, 13
 b Mt 9:23-26
 Mr 5:38-43
 Joh 11:11
 Ac 7:60
 Ac 13:36
 c Mr 5:41
 Lu 7:14
 Joh 11:43
 d Ge 2:7
 Ec 3:19
 Isa 42:5
 e Mr 5:42
 f Mr 7:35, 36
 Lu 5:14

not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, James, and the girl's father and mother. **52** But people were all weeping and beating themselves in grief for her. So he said: "Stop weeping,^a for she did not die but is sleeping."^b **53** At this they began to laugh at him scornfully, because they knew she had died. **54** But he took her by the hand and called to her: "Child, get up!"^{*c} **55** And her spirit^d returned, and she rose immediately,^e and he ordered that something be given her to eat. **56** Well, her parents were beside themselves, but he instructed them to tell no one what had happened.^f

CHAP. 9

- g Mr 6:7
 h Mt 10:1
 Mr 3:14, 15
 i Mt 10:9, 10
 Mr 6:8, 9
 Lu 10:4
 j Mt 10:11
 Mr 6:10
 Lu 10:5
 Lu 10:7
 k Mt 10:14
 Mr 6:11
 Lu 10:10, 11
 Ac 13:50, 51
 l Mt 11:1
 Mr 6:12, 13

The Twelve Instructed for the Ministry

9 Then he called the Twelve together and gave them power and authority over all the demons^g and to cure diseases.^h **2** And he sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal, **3** and he said to them: "Carry nothing for the trip, neither staff nor food pouch nor bread nor money; neither have two garments."ⁱ **4** But wherever you enter into a home, stay there and leave from there.^j **5** And wherever people do not receive you, on going out of that city, shake the dust off your feet for a witness against them."^k **6** Then starting out, they went through the territory from village to village, declaring the good news and performing cures everywhere.^l

FOOTNOTES

8:54 *Or "wake up!" **9:3** *Or "an extra garment."

STUDY NOTES

message that the apostles should not be distracted by acquiring extra provisions, since Jehovah would provide for them. All three accounts state that the apostles were not to "acquire [or "wear" or "have"] **two garments,**" that is, "an extra garment" (ftn.) in addition to what they were wearing. Carrying a traveler's staff seems to have been the custom of the Hebrews (Ge 32:10), and Mr 6:8 says: "Carry nothing for the trip *except a staff.*" Therefore, the instruction here at Lu 9:3 ("carry nothing . . . , **neither staff**") could be understood to mean that rather than go without a staff, they should not acquire or carry a staff in addition to the one they had. So Jesus was telling his disciples to

travel light and to avoid carrying extra items as luggage that would burden them, since Jehovah would provide for them on their journey.—See study note on Lu 10:4, where Jesus gives similar instructions to the 70 disciples sent out on another occasion.

money: Lit., "silver," that is, silver used as money.

See  Gallery, image 40, Staff and Food Pouch.

9:4 stay there: See study note on Mr 6:10.

9:5 shake the dust off your feet: Pious Jews who had traveled through Gentile country would shake what was perceived to be unclean dust off their sandals before reentering Jewish territory. However, Jesus evidently had a different meaning in mind when giving these instructions to his disciples. This gesture would signify that the disciples disclaimed responsibili-

ty for the consequences that would come from God. A similar expression occurs at Mt 10:14 and Mr 6:11. Mark adds the expression "for a witness to them," whereas Luke adds **for a witness against them.** Paul and Barnabas applied this instruction in Pisidian Antioch. (Ac 13:51) When Paul did something similar in Corinth by shaking out his garments, he added the explanatory words: "Let your blood be on your own heads. I am clean."—Ac 18:6.

Herod Perplexed by Jesus

7 Now Herod the district ruler heard about everything that was happening, and he was greatly perplexed because some were saying that John had been raised up from the dead,^a **8** but others were saying that E-li'jah had appeared, and still others that one of the ancient prophets had risen.^b **9** Herod said: "John I beheaded.^c Who, then, is this about whom I am hearing such things?" So he was trying to see him.^d

Jesus Feeds About 5,000 Men

10 When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus all they had done.^e With that he took them along and withdrew privately into a city called Beth-sa'i-da.^f **11** But the crowds, getting to know it, followed him. And he received them kindly and began to speak to them about the Kingdom of God, and he healed those needing a cure.^g **12** Then the day was coming to a close. The Twelve now came up and said to him: "Send the crowd away, so that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and provisions, because out here we are in an isolated place."^h **13** But he said to them: "You give them something to eat."ⁱ They said: "We have nothing more than five loaves and two fish, unless perhaps we ourselves go and buy food for all these people." **14** There were, in fact, about 5,000 men. But he said to his disciples: "Have them sit down in groups of about 50 each." **15** And they did so and had them all sit down. **16** Taking now the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed them. Then he broke them up and began giving them to the disciples to set

CHAP. 9

- a Mt 14:1, 2
Mr 6:14-16
- b Mt 16:13, 14
Mr 8:27, 28
Lu 9:18, 19
- c Mt 14:3
Mt 14:10
- d Lu 23:8
- e Mr 6:30
- f Mt 14:13
Joh 6:1, 2
- g Mt 14:14
Mr 6:34
- h Mt 14:15-21
Mr 6:35-44
Joh 6:5-13
- i 2Ki 4:42-44

STUDY NOTES

9:7 Herod: See study note on Mt 14:1.

district ruler: See study note on Mt 14:1.

See  Gallery, image 56, Coin Made by Herod Antipas.

9:13 You give them something to eat: This is the only miracle of Jesus that is recorded in all four Gospels.—Mt 14:15-21; Mr 6:35-44; Lu 9:10-17; Joh 6:1-13.

9:16 he broke them up: Bread was often made in flat loaves that were baked hard and thin. Therefore, people had the custom of breaking the loaves before eating them.—Mt 14:19; 15:36; 26:26; Mr 6:41; 8:6.

9:17 baskets: See study note on Mt 14:20.

See  Gallery, image 59, Baskets.

9:18 he was praying alone: This occurred near Caesarea Philippi. (Mt 16:13; Mr 8:27) Only Luke reports that Jesus was praying alone.—See study note on Lu 3:21.

9:19 John the Baptist: See study note on Mt 3:1.

Elijah: See study note on Mt 11:14.

9:20 The Christ of God: Peter identifies Jesus as "the Christ of God" (Greek, *ho khri-stos' tou The-ou*). "The Christ" is equivalent to "the Messiah" (from Hebrew

ma-shi'ach), both titles meaning "Anointed One." Here "Christ" is preceded by the definite article in Greek, evidently as a way of emphasizing Jesus' appointment, or office, as the Messiah.—See study notes on Mt 1:1; 2:4.

9:22 elders: Lit., "older men." In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. Although the term sometimes refers to physical age (as at Lu 15:25; Ac 2:17), it is not limited to those who are elderly. Here it refers to the leaders of the Jewish nation, who are often mentioned together with chief priests and scribes. The Sanhedrin was made up

CHAP. 9

- a Mt 14:20
Mr 6:43
Joh 6:13
- b Mt 16:13-16
Mr 8:27-30
- c Lu 9:7, 8
- d Mt 16:16
Mr 8:29
Joh 1:41
Joh 6:68, 69
- e Mt 16:20
- f Isa 53:5
Isa 53:8
Lu 17:25
- g Mt 16:21
Mr 8:31
- h Php 3:7, 8
- i Mt 10:38
Mt 16:24
Mr 8:34
Lu 14:27
- j Mt 10:39
Mt 16:25
Mr 8:35
Lu 17:33
Joh 12:25
Ac 20:24
Re 2:10
- k Ps 49:6, 7
Mt 16:26
Mr 8:36
- l Mt 10:33
Mr 8:38
Lu 12:9
2Ti 2:12

before the crowd. **17** So they all ate and were satisfied, and they took up the leftovers, 12 baskets of fragments.^a

Peter Identifies Jesus as the Christ; Jesus Foretells His Own Death and Resurrection

18 Later, while he was praying alone, the disciples came to him,* and he questioned them, saying: “Who are the crowds saying that I am?”^b **19** In reply they said: “John the Baptist, but others say E-li’jah, and still others say that one of the ancient prophets has risen.”^c **20** Then he said to them: “You, though, who do you say I am?” Peter answered: “The Christ of God.”^d **21** Then in a stern talk to them, he instructed them not to tell this to anybody,^e **22** but he said: “The Son of man must undergo many sufferings and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed,^f and on the third day be raised up.”^g

Requirements of True Discipleship

23 Then he went on to say to all: “If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself^h and pick up his torture stake day after day and keep following me.ⁱ **24** For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake is the one who will save it.^j **25** Really, what good will it do a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own self or suffers ruin?^k **26** For whoever becomes ashamed of me and of my words, the Son of man will be ashamed of that person when he comes in his glory and that of the Father and of the holy angels.^l **27** But I tell you truly, there are some of those standing

FOOTNOTES

9:18 *Or possibly, “joined him; were together with him.”

STUDY NOTES

of men from these three groups.—Lu 20:1; 22:52, 66; see  Glossary, “Elder; Older man.”

chief priests: See study note on Mt 2:4 and  Glossary, “Chief priest.”

scribes: See study note on Mt 2:4 and  Glossary, “Scribe.”

9:23 let him disown himself: Or “let him give up all right to himself.” This indicates a person’s willingness to deny himself utterly or to relinquish ownership of himself

to God. The Greek phrase can be rendered “he must say no to himself,” which is fitting because it may involve saying no to personal desires, ambitions, or convenience. (2Co 5:14, 15) The same Greek verb and a related one are used by Luke when describing Peter’s denial that he knew Jesus.—Lu 22:34, 57, 61; see study note on Mt 16:24.

torture stake: See study note on Mt 16:24.

9:24 life: Or “soul.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

9:25 the whole world: The basic meaning of the Greek term *ko’smos*, most often rendered “world,” is “order” or “arrangement.” In secular Greek litera-

ture, it may refer to the world of mankind, and it is often used in this sense in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (See study notes on Joh 1:9, 10; 3:16.) However, the term *ko’smos* is not just a synonym for mankind. In the Bible, it retains its original sense of “order” or “arrangement,” since the world of mankind reflects a certain structure, being composed of various cultures, tribes, nations, and economic systems. (1Jo 3:17; Re 7:9; 14:6) That is the meaning of the term “world” in this and some other contexts. Over the centuries, the framework of things that surround and affect human life has grown in size and complexity as mankind has grown in population.—See study note on Joh 16:21.

here who will not taste death at all until first they see the Kingdom of God.”^a

Jesus’ Transfiguration

28 In fact, about eight days after saying these words, he took Peter, John, and James along and climbed up the mountain to pray.^b **29** And as he was praying, the appearance of his face changed and his clothing became glitteringly white.* **30** And look! two men were conversing with him; they were Moses and E-li’jah. **31** These appeared with glory and began talking about his departure, which he was about to fulfill at Jerusalem.^c **32** Now Peter and those with him were weighed down with sleep, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory^d and the two men standing with him. **33** And as these were departing from him, Peter said to Jesus: “Instructor, it is fine for us to be here. So let us erect three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for E-li’jah.” He did not realize what he was saying. **34** But as he was saying these things, a cloud formed and began to overshadow them.^e As they entered into the cloud, they became afraid. **35** Then a voice^f came out of the cloud, saying: “This is my Son, the one who has been chosen.^g Listen to him.”^h **36** As the voice spoke, Jesus was found alone. But they kept quiet and did not report to anyone in those days any of the things they saw.ⁱ

Demon-Possessed Boy Healed

37 The following day when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him.^j **38** And look! a man called out from the crowd, saying: “Teacher, I beg you to take a look at

CHAP. 9

- a Mt 16:28
Mr 9:1
- b Mt 17:1-8
Mr 9:2-8
- c Lu 9:22
Lu 13:33
- d 2Pe 1:16
- e Ex 40:34, 35
- f Lu 3:22
Joh 12:28
- g Ps 2:7
Isa 42:1
Mt 3:17
2Pe 1:17, 18
- h De 18:15
Mt 17:5
Mr 9:7
Ac 3:22, 23
- i Mt 17:9
Mr 9:9
- j Mr 9:14, 15

FOOTNOTES

9:29 * Or “as bright as a flash of lightning.”

STUDY NOTES

9:28 **about eight days after saying these words:** The accounts of Matthew and Mark say “six days later.” (Mt 17:1; Mr 9:2) Luke reports the number of days from a different perspective than that of Matthew and Mark, apparently including the day when Jesus made the promise (Lu 9:27) and the day when the transfiguration took place. Matthew and Mark count six whole days as the intervening

time. It is noteworthy that Luke gives the period in an approximate number—“about eight days.”

to pray: Only Luke adds this detail about prayer in connection with Jesus’ transfiguration. The next verse also mentions that Jesus “was praying.” (Lu 9:29) Other instances in which Luke alone mentions Jesus’ praying are Lu 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 11:1; 23:46.

See  Gallery, image 60, Mount Hermon.

See  Gallery, image 61, Mount Hermon As Seen From the Hula Valley Nature Reserve.

9:31 **his departure:** The Greek word *e’xo-dos* used here also occurs at 2Pe 1:15 (departure) and at Heb 11:22 (exodus). Jesus’ departure, or exodus, evidently involved both his death and his subsequent resurrection to spirit life.

9:35 **a voice came out of the cloud:** The second of three instances in the Gospel accounts when Jehovah is reported as speaking directly to humans.—See study notes on Lu 3:22; Joh 12:28.

9:38 **only:** The Greek word *mo-no-ge-nes’*, traditionally rendered “only-begotten,” has been defined as “the only one of its kind; one and only; the only one or

CHAP. 9

a Mt 17:14-16
Mr 9:17, 18

b Mr 1:26

c De 32:5

d Mt 17:17, 18
Mr 9:19-27

e Ps 147:5

f Mt 17:22, 23
Mr 9:31, 32
Lu 18:31-33

g Mt 18:1-5
Mr 9:33-37
Lu 22:24

h Mt 10:40
Mr 9:37
Lu 10:16
Joh 12:44

i Pr 18:12
Mt 18:4, 5
Mt 20:26, 27
Mt 23:11, 12
Mr 10:43, 44
Lu 22:26
Ro 12:10

my son, because he is my only one.^a **39** And look! a spirit seizes him, and suddenly he cries out, and it throws him into convulsions with foaming at the mouth, and only with difficulty does it leave him after bruising him.^b **40** I begged your disciples to expel it, but they could not.” **41** In response Jesus said: “O faithless and twisted* generation,^c how long must I continue with you and put up with you? Bring your son over here.”^d **42** But even as he was approaching, the demon hurled him to the ground and violently threw him into a convulsion. However, Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy and gave him back to his father. **43** And they were all astounded at the majestic power of God.^e

Jesus Foretells His Betrayal

While they were all astonished at all the things he was doing, he said to his disciples: **44** “Listen carefully and remember these words, for the Son of man is going to be betrayed* into men’s hands.”^f **45** But they did not understand what he was saying. In fact, it was concealed from them so that they might not grasp it, and they were afraid to question him about this saying.

Disciples Argue About Who Is Greatest

46 Then a dispute arose among them about which one of them was the greatest.^g **47** Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a young child, stood him beside him, **48** and said to them: “Whoever receives this young child on the basis of my name receives me also; and whoever receives me also receives the One who sent me.^h For the one who conducts himself as a lesser one among all of you is the one who is great.”ⁱ

Anyone Not Against Us Is for Us

49 In response John said: “Instructor, we saw someone expelling demons by using your name, and we tried to prevent

FOOTNOTES

9:41 *Or “corrupt; perverse.” **9:44**

*Or “handed over.”

STUDY NOTES

member of a class or kind; unique.” The term is used when describing the relation of sons and daughters to their parents. In this context, it is used in the sense of an

only child. The same Greek word is also used of the “only” son of a widow in Nain and of Jairus’ “only” daughter. (Lu 7:12; 8:41, 42) The Greek *Septuagint* uses *mo-no-ge-nes*’ when speaking of Jephthah’s daughter, concerning whom it is written: “Now she was his one and only child. Besides her, he had neither son nor daughter.” (Jg 11:34) In the apostle John’s writings, *mo-no-ge-nes*’ is used five times

with reference to Jesus.—For the meaning of the term when used about Jesus, see study notes on Joh 1:14; 3:16.

9:43 majestic power of God: Or “greatness (majesty) of God.” When curing people, Jesus did not direct attention to himself as the healer. Instead, he attributed these miracles to God’s power.

him, because he is not following with us.”*^a **50** But Jesus said to him: “Do not try to prevent him, for whoever is not against you is for you.”

A Samaritan Village Rejects Jesus

51 As the days were drawing near* for him to be taken up,^b he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem.^c **52** So he sent messengers ahead of him. And they went and entered a village of Sa-mar'i-tans to make preparations for him. **53** But they did not receive him,^d because he was determined to go to Jerusalem. **54** When the disciples James and John^e saw this, they said: “Lord,* do you want us to call fire down from heaven and annihilate them?”^f **55** But he turned and rebuked them. **56** So they went to a different village.

Requirements for Following Jesus

57 Now as they were going along the road, someone said to him: “I will follow you wherever you go.”^g **58** But Jesus said to him: “Foxes have dens and birds of heaven have nests, but the

CHAP. 9

a Nu 11:26-29
Mr 9:38-40

b Ac 1:1, 2
1Ti 3:16

c Mr 10:33, 34
Lu 18:31

d Joh 4:9

e Mr 3:17

f 2Ki 1:10

g Mt 8:19

FOOTNOTES

9:49 *Or “he is not a follower along with us.” **9:51** *Lit., “were coming to the full; were being fulfilled.” **9:54** *Or “Master.”

STUDY NOTES

9:51 for him to be taken up: The Greek term *a-na'lem-opsis* occurs only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It is usually understood to refer to Jesus' ascension to heaven. The related verb is used at Ac 1:2, 11, 22, where it is rendered “was taken up.”

9:53 he was determined to go to: Lit., “his face was going to [or “set toward”].” (Compare Lu 9:51.) Similar expressions can be found in the Hebrew Scriptures with the sense of looking toward some goal, purpose, or desire (1Ki 2:15, ftn.; 2Ki 12:17, ftn.) and carrying the thought of strong intention and determination. —2Ch 20:3, ftn.; Da 11:17, ftn.

9:58 nowhere to lay down his head: See study note on Mt 8:20.

See  Gallery, image 37, Foxes' Dens and Birds' Nests.

9:59 Lord: Some manuscripts do not include this word, but it has support in a number of early authoritative manuscripts.

bury my father: The wording likely does not mean that the man had just lost his father in death and was asking only to make funeral arrangements. Had this been the case, it is unlikely that he would have been there talking to Jesus. In the ancient Middle East, a death in the family would be followed very quickly by a funeral, generally on the same day. So the man's father may have been ailing or elderly, not dead. And Jesus would not have told the man to abandon a sick and needy parent, so there must have been other family members who could care for such vital needs. (Mr 7:9-13) The man was saying, in effect, ‘I will follow you, but not as long as my father still lives. Wait until my father dies and I have buried him.’ In Jesus' view, however, the man was missing an opportunity to put the interests of the Kingdom of God first in his life.—Lu 9:60, 62.

9:60 Let the dead bury their dead: As shown in the study note on Lu 9:59, the

father of the man to whom Jesus is talking was likely ailing or elderly, not dead. Therefore, Jesus is evidently saying: ‘Let those who are spiritually dead bury their dead,’ that is, the man should not wait to make his decision to follow Jesus, since other relatives could apparently care for the father until his death. By following Jesus, the man put himself on the way to eternal life, not among those who were spiritually dead before God. In his reply, Jesus shows that putting **the Kingdom of God** first in one's life and declaring it far and wide are essential to remaining spiritually alive.

9:62 who has put his hand to a plow and looks at the things behind: To emphasize the importance of wholehearted discipleship, Jesus here refers to the work of plowing. He describes a man who expresses his desire to be a disciple but stipulates the condition of being permitted first to say goodbye to his household. (Lu 9:61) If a plowman allowed himself to be distracted from the work at hand, he would make crooked furrows, or if he stopped plowing in order to look back, the work in the field would fall behind. Similarly, the person who is invited to

CHAP. 9

- a Mt 8:20
Lu 14:33
b Mt 8:21
c Eph 2:1
d Mt 8:22
e Ge 19:17
f Mt 10:37
Mr 10:29, 30
1Co 9:24
Php 3:13

CHAP. 10

- g Mr 6:7
h Mt 10:5, 6
i Mt 9:37, 38
Joh 4:35, 36
1Co 3:9
2Th 3:1
j Mt 10:16
k Mt 10:9, 10
Lu 9:3
l Mr 6:8, 9

Son of man has nowhere to lay down his head.”^a **59** Then he said to another: “Be my follower.” The man said: “Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.”^b **60** But he said to him: “Let the dead^c bury their dead, but you go and declare abroad the Kingdom of God.”^d **61** And still another said: “I will follow you, Lord, but first permit me to say good-bye to those in my household.”^e **62** Jesus said to him: “No man who has put his hand to a plow and looks at the things behind^e is well-suited for the Kingdom of God.”^f

Jesus Sends Out the 70

10 After these things the Lord designated 70 others and sent them out by twos^g ahead of him into every city and place where he himself was to go.^h **2** Then he said to them: “Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”ⁱ **3** Go! Look! I am sending you out as lambs in among wolves.^j **4** Do not carry a money bag or a food pouch or sandals,^k and do not greet anyone along the road.^l **5** Wherever

FOOTNOTES

9:61 * Or “my house.”

STUDY NOTES

Christian discipleship but who permits himself to be distracted from carrying out the responsibilities would become unfit for God’s Kingdom.

See  Gallery, image 102, Plowing.

10:1 **After these things:** The events recorded from Lu 10:1 to 18:14 are not mentioned in the other Gospels. However, some of the subjects in these chapters were recorded by the other Gospel writers, apparently in connection with earlier occasions during Jesus’ ministry. It seems that the events mentioned by Luke took place after the Festival of Tabernacles (or Booths) in the autumn of 32 C.E. (See  App. A7.) At this time, Jesus apparently moved the focus of his activity southward, to the area in and around Jerusalem and the districts of Judea and Perea. He concentrated his preaching in that area during the last six months of his earthly ministry.

70: Some early manuscripts read “72,” and this reading is reflected in some Bible translations. However, the reading “70” can be found in many other early authoritative manuscripts, including the Codex Sinaiticus of the fourth century C.E. and the Codex Alexandrinus and the Codex Ephraemi Syri rescriptus, both of the fifth century. Bible scholars have offered various explanations, but this minor difference in manuscript readings does not affect the overall message. The abundance of ancient manuscripts and translations agree on all fundamentals, verifying that Jesus did send out a large group of disciples **by twos**, or in pairs, to preach.

70 others: This evidently refers to 70 disciples in addition to the 12 apostles, who were trained and sent out earlier. —Lu 9:1-6.

10:3 See  Gallery, image 34, Wolf.

10:4 sandals: Referring, it seems, to an extra pair because Jesus told them **not** to **carry** sandals. It was common to take along extra sandals on a long journey, as the soles on one pair might wear out or the laces might break. When giving similar

instructions on an earlier occasion, Jesus directed his disciples “to put [or, “bind”] on” the sandals they already owned. (Mr 6:8, 9) And as recorded at Mt 10:9, 10, he instructed them not to “acquire” sandals, that is, not to get some in addition to the ones they already had on.

greet anyone: Or “embrace anyone in greeting.” In certain situations, the Greek word *a-spa’zo-mai* (“to greet”) may have involved more than saying “hello” or “good day.” It could have included the embraces and long conversation that may take place when friends meet. Jesus was not encouraging his disciples to be rude. Rather, he was emphasizing that his followers should avoid unnecessary distractions and make the most of their time. The prophet Elisha once gave similar instructions to his servant Gehazi. (2Ki 4:29) In both cases, the mission was urgent, so there was no time for delay.

See  Gallery, image 40, Staff and Food Pouch.

you enter into a house, say first: ‘May this house have peace.’^a **6** And if a friend of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if there is not, it will return to you. **7** So stay in that house,^b eating and drinking the things they provide,^c for the worker is worthy of his wages.^d Do not keep transferring from house to house.

8 “Also, wherever you enter into a city and they receive you, eat what is set before you **9** and cure the sick ones in it and tell them: ‘The Kingdom of God has come near to you.’^e **10** But wherever you enter into a city and they do not receive you, go out into its main streets and say: **11** ‘We wipe off against you even the dust that sticks to our feet from your city.’^f Nevertheless, know this, that the Kingdom of God has come near.’ **12** I tell you that it will be more enduring for Sod’om in that day than for that city.^g

Woe to Unrepentant Cities

13 “Woe to you, Cho-ra’zin! Woe to you, Beth-sa’i-da! because if the powerful works that have taken place in you^h had taken place in Tyre and Si’don, they would long ago have repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.ⁱ **14** Consequently, it will be more enduring for Tyre and Si’don in the judgment than for you. **15** And you, Ca-per’na-um,^j will you perhaps be exalted to heaven? Down to the Grave you will come!

16 “Whoever listens to you listens to me.^k And whoever disregards you disregards me also. Moreover, whoever disregards me disregards also Him who sent me.”^l

CHAP. 10

- a Mt 10:12, 13
Mr 6:10, 11
Ac 10:36
- b Mt 10:11
Lu 9:4
- c Ga 6:6
- d Mt 10:9, 10
1Co 9:11
1Co 9:14
1Ti 5:18
- e Mt 3:1, 2
Lu 9:2
- f Mt 10:14
Lu 9:5
Ac 13:50, 51
Ac 18:5, 6
- g Mt 11:24
- h Mr 8:22-26
Lu 9:10, 11
Lu 9:16, 17
- i Mt 11:21-23
- j Joh 4:46-54
- k Mt 10:40
Mt 18:5
Mr 9:37
Lu 9:48
Joh 13:20
- l Ex 16:8
Joh 5:23
Joh 12:48
Joh 15:23

STUDY NOTES

10:6 friend of peace: Lit., “son of peace.” Though written in Greek, this wording apparently reflects a Hebrew idiom that conveys the idea of a peace-loving or peaceful person. In this context, it describes someone who desires to be reconciled with God and who listens to and embraces “the good news of peace,” giving him peace with God.—Ac 10:36.

10:7 Do not keep transferring from house to house: On an earlier occasion, Jesus gave similar instructions to the 12 apostles. (Mt 10:11; Mr 6:10; Lu 9:4) He was now instructing the 70 preachers that when they reached a town, they should **stay** in the home where hospitality

was extended to them. By not transferring from house to house, seeking a place that could provide them with more comfort, entertainment, or material things, the disciples would show that those things were of secondary importance when compared to their commission to preach.

10:12 it will be more enduring: Evidently used as a form of hyperbole that Jesus may not have intended to be taken literally. (Compare other graphic hyperboles that Jesus used, such as those at Mt 5:18; Lu 16:17; 21:33.) When Jesus said that it would be “more enduring for Sodom **in that day**,” that is, on Judgment Day (Mt 10:15; 11:22, 24; Lu 10:14), he was not saying that the inhabitants of **Sodom** must be present on that day.

(Compare Jude 7.) He could simply have been emphasizing how unresponsive and culpable most people were in such cities as Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. (Lu 10:13-15) It is worth noting that what happened to ancient Sodom had become proverbial and was often mentioned in connection with God’s anger and judgment.—De 29:23; Isa 1:9; La 4:6.

10:13 Tyre and Sidon: These were non-Jewish cities in Phoenicia, along the Mediterranean Coast.—See  App. B10. See  Gallery, image 47, Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida.

10:15 heaven: See study note on Mt 11:23.

the Grave: See study note on Mt 11:23.

CHAP. 10

The 70 Return; Jesus Praises His Father

- a Lu 9:1
Ac 16:17, 18
- b Joh 12:31
Joh 16:11
Heb 2:14
Re 12:7-9
- c Eze 2:6
- d Ps 91:13
- e Ex 32:32
Da 12:1
Php 4:3
Heb 12:22, 23
Re 3:5
Re 13:8
- f 1Co 1:19
1Co 2:6
- g Mt 11:25, 26
- h Joh 6:46
Joh 10:15
- i Mt 11:27
Joh 1:18
2Co 4:6
- j Mt 13:16, 17
- k 1Pe 1:10, 11
- l Mt 19:16
Mr 10:17
Lu 18:18

17 Then the 70 returned with joy, saying: “Lord,^{*} even the demons are made subject to us by the use of your name.”^a **18** At that he said to them: “I see Satan already fallen^b like lightning from heaven. **19** Look! I have given you the authority to trample underfoot serpents and scorpions,^c and over all the power of the enemy,^d and nothing at all will harm you. **20** Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are made subject to you, but rejoice because your names have been written in the heavens.”^e **21** In that very hour he became overjoyed in the holy spirit and said: “I publicly praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have carefully hidden these things from wise and intellectual ones^f and have revealed them to young children. Yes, O Father, because this is the way you approved.^g **22** All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son^h and anyone to whom the Son is willing to reveal him.”ⁱ

23 With that he turned to the disciples and told them privately: “Happy are the eyes that see the things you are seeing.^j **24** For I say to you, many prophets and kings desired to see the things you are observing but did not see them,^k and to hear the things you are hearing but did not hear them.”

Illustration of the Neighborly Samaritan

25 Now look! a man versed in the Law stood up to test him and said: “Teacher, what do I need to do to inherit everlasting life?”^l **26** He said to him: “What is written in the Law? How do you read?” **27** In answer he said: “You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and

FOOTNOTES

10:17 * Or “Master.”

STUDY NOTES

10:17 **70:** See study note on Lu 10:1.

10:18 **I see Satan already fallen like lightning from heaven:** Jesus is evidently speaking prophetically, seeing the ouster of Satan from heaven as if it had already occurred. Re 12:7-9 describes the battle in heaven and associates Satan’s fall with the birth of the Messianic King-

dom. Jesus was here highlighting the certain defeat of Satan and his demons in that future battle, for God had just empowered those 70 disciples, mere imperfect humans, to expel demons.—Lu 10:17.

10:19 **serpents and scorpions:** In this context, Jesus referred to these creatures in a figurative sense to symbolize injurious things.—Compare Eze 2:6.

10:21 **to young children:** See study note on Mt 11:25.

10:27 **Jehovah:** In De 6:5, quoted here, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

your whole soul: Or “your whole being (life).”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

with your whole strength and with your whole mind^a and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’”^b **28** He said to him: “You answered correctly; keep doing this and you will get life.”^c

29 But wanting to prove himself righteous,^d the man said to Jesus: “Who really is my neighbor?” **30** In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jer*’i*-cho and fell victim to robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went off, leaving him half-dead. **31** Now by coincidence a priest was going down on that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. **32** Likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side. **33** But a certain Sa-mar*’i*-tan^e traveling the road came upon him, and at seeing him, he was moved with pity. **34** So he approached him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. Then he mounted him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. **35** The next day he took out two de-nar*’i*-i, gave them to the innkeeper, and said: ‘Take care of him, and whatever you spend besides this, I will repay you when I return.’ **36** Who of these three seems to you to have made himself neighbor^f to the man who fell victim to the robbers?” **37** He said: “The one who acted mercifully toward him.”^g Jesus then said to him: “Go and do the same yourself.”^h

CHAP. 10

- a De 6:5
De 10:12
Jos 22:5
- b Le 19:18
Mt 19:19
Mt 22:36-39
Mr 12:29-31
Ro 13:9
Ga 5:14
Jas 2:8
- c Le 18:5
Eze 20:11
Joh 17:3
Ro 10:5
Ga 3:12
- d Lu 16:15
- e Joh 4:9
- f Mt 19:19
g Pr 14:21
- h Job 6:14
Ho 6:6
Lu 6:36
Joh 13:17
Ga 6:10
Eph 4:32

STUDY NOTES

10:27 heart . . . soul . . . strength . . .

mind: Here a man who was versed in the Law quotes De 6:5, where the original Hebrew text uses three terms—heart, soul, and strength. However, according to Luke’s account, written in Greek, the man refers to the four concepts of **heart, soul, strength, and mind**. The man’s reply evidently shows that in Jesus’ time, it was commonly accepted that these four Greek concepts were included in the three Hebrew words of the original quotation.—For a more detailed discussion, see study note on Mr 12:30.

your neighbor: See study note on Mt 22:39.

10:30 See  Gallery, image 103, The Road From Jerusalem to Jericho.

10:33 a certain Samaritan: The Jews generally looked down on the Samaritans and refused to have any dealings with them. (Joh 4:9) Some Jews even used

the term “Samaritan” as an expression of contempt and reproach. (Joh 8:48) One rabbi is quoted in the Mishnah as saying: “He that eats the bread of the Samaritans is like to one that eats the flesh of swine.” (*Shebiith* 8:10) Many Jews would not believe the testimony of a Samaritan or accept a service from one. Aware of the scornful attitude generally held by Jews, Jesus made a strong point in this illustration that is often referred to as the parable of the good, or neighborly, Samaritan.

10:34 bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them: The physician Luke here carefully records Jesus’ illustration, describing wound treatment that was consistent with the methods of the day. Both oil and wine were commonly used as household remedies to treat wounds. Oil was sometimes used to soften wounds (compare Isa 1:6), and wine has certain medicinal value as an antiseptic and mild disinfectant. Luke also describes how the

wounds were bandaged, or bound, preventing further aggravation.

an inn: The Greek word literally means “a place where all are received or taken in.” Travelers, along with their animals, could find accommodations at such places. The innkeeper offered basic provisions to travelers and, for a price, might look after those left in his care.

10:35 denarii: See  Glossary, “Denarius,” and  App. B14.

10:37 The one who acted mercifully toward him: The man versed in the Law may have been reluctant to use the word “Samaritan.” In any case, his reply, together with Jesus’ final comment, makes the application of the illustration clear: A true neighbor is someone who shows mercy.

10:38 a certain village: Apparently referring to Bethany, a village on the ESE slope of the Mount of Olives at a distance of about 3 km (2 mi) from Jerusalem.

CHAP. 10

- a Joh 11:1
Joh 12:2
b Mt 6:25, 33
c Mt 4:4

CHAP. 11

- d Le 22:32
De 32:1, 3
Ps 145:21
Isa 5:16
Isa 8:13
Isa 29:23
Eze 36:23
e Da 2:44
Da 7:13, 14
Mt 6:9-13

Jesus Visits Martha and Mary

38 Now as they went on their way, he entered into a certain village. Here a woman named Martha^a received him as a guest in her house. **39** She also had a sister called Mary, who sat down at the feet of the Lord and kept listening to what he was saying.* **40** Martha, on the other hand, was distracted with attending to many duties. So she came to him and said: “Lord, does it not matter to you that my sister has left me alone to attend to things? Tell her to come and help me.” **41** In answer the Lord said to her: “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and disturbed about many things. **42** A few things, though, are needed, or just one.^b For her part, Mary chose the good portion,^c and it will not be taken away from her.”

Jesus Teaches the Model Prayer

11 Now he was in a certain place praying, and when he stopped, one of his disciples said to him: “Lord, teach us how to pray, just as John also taught his disciples.”

2 So he said to them: “Whenever you pray, say: ‘Father, let your name be sanctified.^d Let your Kingdom come.^e **3** Give us

FOOTNOTES

10:39 * Or “to his teaching (message).” Lit., “to his word.”

STUDY NOTES

(See study note on Joh 11:18.) The home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus was located here. Just as Capernaum was Jesus’ home in Galilee (Mr 2:1), Bethany might be called his home in Judea.

Martha: Only Martha is mentioned here in connection with receiving Jesus into her house. Martha generally took the lead (Lu 10:40; Joh 11:20), indicating that she may have been the older sister of Mary. —Lu 10:39.

10:42 **A few things, though, are needed, or just one:** Some ancient manuscripts have a shorter reading that can be rendered: “One thing, though, is necessary.” This reading is reflected in some Bible translations. But the wording used here in the main text has good manuscript support. Whichever manuscript reading is preferred, the overall meaning of Jesus’ advice remains the

same, namely, to put spiritual things first. Jesus then commends Mary for choosing “the good portion” by giving priority to spiritual things.

the good portion: Or “the best portion.” In the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *me-ris*, here rendered “portion,” is used for a portion, or a share, of food (Ge 43:34; De 18:8) and also for a “portion” in a spiritual sense (Ps 16:5; 119:57). In Mary’s case, “the good portion” included the receiving of spiritual nourishment from God’s Son.

11:1 **Lord, teach us how to pray:** Only Luke mentions the disciple’s request. This discussion on prayer occurred approximately 18 months after Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount, in which he taught his disciples the model prayer. (Mt 6:9-13) Possibly this particular disciple was not present at that time, so Jesus kindly repeated the essential points of that model prayer. Prayer was a regular part of Jewish life and worship, and the Hebrew Scriptures contain numerous prayers in the book of Psalms and elsewhere. Therefore, it seems that the disciple was not asking to be taught something that he

knew nothing about or that he had never done. Doubtless, he was also familiar with the formalistic prayers of the religious leaders of Judaism. But he had likely observed Jesus praying and sensed that there was a big difference between the sanctimonious prayers of the rabbis and the way Jesus prayed.—Mt 6:5-8.

11:2 **Whenever you pray, say:** The prayer that follows in verses 2b-4 reflects the substance of the model prayer that Jesus taught about 18 months earlier in the Sermon on the Mount. (Mt 6:9b-13). It is worth noting that he did not repeat the prayer word for word, indicating that he was not giving a liturgical prayer to be recited by rote. Also, later prayers by Jesus and his disciples did not rigidly adhere to the specific words or formula used in this model prayer.

name: See study note on Mt 6:9.

be sanctified: See study note on Mt 6:9.

Let your Kingdom come: See study note on Mt 6:10.

each day our bread according to our daily needs.^a **4** And forgive us our sins,^b for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is in debt to us;^c and do not bring us into temptation.”^d

CHAP. 11

- a Ps 37:25
 b Ps 79:9
 Da 9:19
 c Mr 11:25
 Eph 4:32
 Col 3:13
 d Lu 22:46
 1Co 10:13
 Jas 1:13
 Re 3:10
 e Lu 18:5
 f Ro 12:12
 g Mt 7:7, 8
 h Ps 50:15
 Mr 11:24
 Joh 15:7
 Jas 1:6
 1Jo 3:22
 1Jo 5:14
 i Mt 7:9, 10
 j Mt 7:11
 Jas 1:17

Illustration of the Persistent Friend

5 Then he said to them: “Suppose one of you has a friend and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, **6** because one of my friends has just come to me on a journey and I have nothing to offer him.’ **7** But that one replies from inside: ‘Stop bothering me. The door is already locked, and my young children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.’ **8** I tell you, even if he will not get up and give him anything because of being his friend, certainly because of his bold persistence^e he will get up and give him whatever he needs. **9** So I say to you, keep on asking,^f and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you.^g **10** For everyone asking receives,^h and everyone seeking finds, and to everyone knocking, it will be opened. **11** Indeed, which father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will hand him a serpent instead of a fish?ⁱ **12** Or if he also asks for an egg, will hand him a scorpion? **13** Therefore, if you, although being wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so will the Father in heaven give holy spirit to those asking him!”^j

STUDY NOTES

11:3 our bread according to our daily needs: In many contexts, the Hebrew and Greek words for “bread” simply mean “food.” (Ge 3:19; fn.) Jesus thus indicates that those who serve God can confidently ask him to supply them, not with an excessive amount of provisions, but with adequate food for each day. Jesus’ statement may have reminded his disciples of God’s command to the Israelites to gather the miraculously provided manna, each one “his amount day by day.” (Ex 16:4) The wording of the petition here is similar, but not identical, to what Jesus taught the disciples approximately 18 months earlier in the Sermon on the Mount. (Mt 6:9b-13) This indicates that Jesus did not intend for this prayer to be recited word for word. (Mt 6:7) When Jesus repeated important teachings—as he did here on the subject of prayer—he did

this in a way that would benefit those who had not been present on other occasions. He would remind those who had been present of the key points.

11:4 who is in debt to us: Or “who sins against us.” When sinning against someone, a person incurs a figurative debt to that one, or has an obligation to him, and must therefore seek his forgiveness. In the model prayer that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, he used the term “debts” instead of **sins**. (See study note on Mt 6:12.) The Greek word for **forgive** literally means “to let go,” that is, to let go of a debt by not demanding its repayment.

do not bring us into temptation: See study note on Mt 6:13.

11:5 Friend, lend me three loaves: In Middle Eastern culture, hospitality is a duty in which people love to excel, as

reflected in this illustration. Even though the guest arrived unexpectedly **at midnight**, a detail that may reflect the uncertainties of travel at that time, the host felt strongly compelled to give him something to eat. He even felt obligated to disturb his neighbor at that hour to borrow food.

11:7 Stop bothering me: The neighbor in this illustration was reluctant to help, not because he was unfriendly, but because he had already gone to bed. Homes in those days, especially those of the poor, often consisted of only one large room. If the man of the house were to get up, he would likely disturb the whole family, including sleeping children.

11:8 bold persistence: The Greek word used here can literally be rendered “lack of modesty” or “shamelessness.” However, in this context, it denotes a persistent boldness or insistence. The man in

CHAP. 11

Demons Expelled by God's Finger

- a Mt 12:22
 b Mt 9:32-34
 c Mt 10:25
 Mt 12:24-30
 Mr 3:22-27
 Joh 8:48
 d Mt 12:38
 Mr 8:11
 e Joh 2:24, 25
 f Ex 8:19
 g Mt 12:28
 Lu 17:21
 h Mt 12:30
 i Mt 12:43-45

14 Later he expelled a speechless demon.^a After the demon came out, the speechless man spoke, and the crowds were amazed.^b **15** But some of them said: “He expels the demons by means of Be-el’ze-bub, the ruler of the demons.”^c **16** And others, to test him, began demanding a sign^d out of heaven from him. **17** Knowing their thinking,^e he said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself comes to ruin, and a house divided against itself falls. **18** In the same way, if Satan is also divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say I expel the demons by means of Be-el’ze-bub. **19** If I expel the demons by means of Be-el’ze-bub, by whom do your sons expel them? This is why they will be your judges. **20** But if it is by means of God’s finger^f that I expel the demons, the Kingdom of God has really overtaken you.^{*g} **21** When a strong, well-armed man guards his palace, his belongings remain secure. **22** But when someone stronger than he is comes against him and conquers him, that man takes away all his weapons in which he was trusting, and he divides up the things he took from him. **23** Whoever is not on my side is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.^h

Unclean Spirit Returns

24 “When an unclean spirit comes out of a man, it passes through waterless places in search of a resting-place, and after finding none, it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I moved.’ⁱ **25** And on arriving, it finds the house swept clean and

FOOTNOTES

11:20 * Or “has already come to you; has caught you unawares.”

STUDY NOTES

Jesus’ illustration does not feel ashamed or hold back from asking persistently for what he needs, and Jesus tells his disciples that their prayers should likewise be persistent.—Lu 11:9, 10.

11:9 **keep on asking, . . . seeking, . . . knocking:** See study note on Mt 7:7.

11:12 See  Gallery, image 104, Scorpions.

11:13 **you, although being wicked:** See study note on Mt 7:11.

how much more so: See study note on Mt 7:11.

11:15 **Beelzebub:** Possibly an alteration of Baal-zebul, meaning “Owner (Lord) of the Flies,” the Baal worshipped by the Philistines at Ekron. (2Ki 1:3) Some Greek manuscripts use the alternate forms Beelzeboul or Beezeboul, possibly meaning “Owner (Lord) of the Lofty Abode (Habitation)” or if a play on the non-Biblical Hebrew word *ze’veil* (dung), “Owner (Lord) of the Dung.” As shown at Lu 11:18, “Beelzebub” is a designation applied to Satan—the prince, or ruler, of the demons.

11:17 **house:** See study note on Mr 3:25.

11:20 **God’s finger:** That is, God’s holy spirit, as shown by Matthew’s account of

an earlier, similar conversation. Here in Luke’s account, Jesus refers to expelling demons “by means of God’s finger,” whereas Matthew’s account refers to Jesus’ doing it “by means of God’s spirit,” or active force.—Mt 12:28.

11:25 **swept clean:** Some manuscripts read: “unoccupied, swept clean,” but the current main text reading has strong support in early authoritative manuscripts. Since the Greek word for “unoccupied” occurs at Mt 12:44, where Jesus makes a similar statement, some scholars are of the opinion that it may have been added to Luke’s account by copyists to harmonize with Matthew’s account.

adorned. **26** Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and after getting inside, they dwell there. So the final circumstances of that man become worse than the first.”^a

True Happiness

27 Now as he was saying these things, a woman from the crowd called out to him: “Happy is the womb that carried you and the breasts that nursed you!”^b **28** But he said: “No, rather, happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!”^c

Sign of Jonah; Lamp of the Body

29 When the crowds were massing together, he began to say: “This generation is a wicked generation; it looks for a sign,^{*} but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jo’nah.^d **30** For just as Jo’nah^e became a sign to the Nin’e-vites, so will the Son of man be to this generation. **31** The queen of the south^f will be raised up in the judgment with the men of this generation and will condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Sol’o-mon. But look! something more than Sol’o-mon is here.^g **32** The men of Nin’e-veh will rise in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at what Jo’nah preached.^h But look! something more than Jo’nah is here. **33** After lighting a lamp, a person puts it, not in a hidden place nor under a basket, but on the lampstand,ⁱ so that those who come in may see the light. **34** The lamp of the body is your eye. When your eye is focused, your whole body is also bright;^{*j} but when it is envious, your

CHAP. 11

a 2Pe 2:20

b Lu 1:46-48

c De 29:9

Ps 1:1, 2

Ps 112:1

Ps 119:2

Mt 7:21

Jas 1:25

d Mt 12:38-42

Mt 16:4

Mr 8:12

e Jon 1:17

f 1Ki 10:1

2Ch 9:1

g Mt 12:42

h Jon 3:5

i Mt 5:15

Mr 4:21

Lu 8:16

j Eph 1:18

FOOTNOTES

11:29 *Or “miraculous proof.” **11:34**
*Or “full of light.”

STUDY NOTES

11:29 the sign of Jonah: On an earlier occasion, Jesus used the expression “the sign of Jonah” and explained it as referring to his death and resurrection. (Mt 12:39, 40) Jonah had compared his deliverance from the belly of the fish after “three days and three nights” to being raised from the Grave. (Jon 1:17–2:2) Jesus’ resurrection from the literal grave was to be just as real as Jonah’s deliverance from the belly of the fish. However,

even when Jesus was resurrected after having been dead for parts of three days, his hard-hearted critics still refused to exercise faith in him. Jonah also served as a sign by means of his bold preaching, which moved the Ninevites to repent.—Mt 12:41; Lu 11:32.

11:31 queen of the south: See study note on Mt 12:42.

11:32 look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

11:33 a lamp: See study note on Mt 5:15.

a basket: See study note on Mt 5:15.

See  Gallery, image 29, Domestic Lampstand.

11:34 lamp of the body is your eye: See study note on Mt 6:22.

focused: See study note on Mt 6:22.

envious: See study note on Mt 6:23.

11:38 wash: That is, ceremonially cleanse himself. The Greek word *ba-pti'zo* (to dip; to immerse), a term that most often describes Christian baptism, is here used for a broad range of repeated ritual washings rooted in Jewish tradition.—See study note on Mr 7:4.

11:41 gifts of mercy: See study note on Mt 6:2.

the things that are from within: In view of his emphasis on justice and love in

CHAP. 11

- a Mt 6:22, 23
 b Mt 15:2
 Mr 7:1-5
 c Mt 23:25, 26
 d Jer 4:14
 e Le 27:30
 f Mt 23:23, 24
 Joh 7:24
 g Mt 23:6, 7
 Mr 12:38, 39
 Lu 20:46
 h Mt 23:27, 28

body is also dark.^a **35** Be alert, therefore, that the light that is in you is not darkness. **36** Therefore, if your whole body is bright with no part of it dark, it will all be as bright as when a lamp gives you light by its rays.”

Woes on Religious Hypocrites

37 When he had said this, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him. So he went in and reclined at the table. **38** However, the Pharisee was surprised at seeing that he did not first wash before the dinner.^b **39** But the Lord said to him: “Now you Pharisees, you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greediness* and wickedness.^c **40** Unreasonable ones! The one who made the outside made also the inside, did he not? **41** But give as gifts of mercy the things that are from within, and look! everything about you will be clean.^{*d} **42** But woe to you Pharisees, because you give the tenth of the mint and of the rue and of every other* garden herb,^{#e} but you disregard the justice[^] and the love of God! These things you were under obligation to do, but not to disregard those other things.^f **43** Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the front seats in the synagogues and the greetings in the marketplaces!^g **44** Woe to you, because you are as those graves* that are not clearly visible,^h that men walk on and do not know it!”

FOOTNOTES

11:39 *Or “plunder; robbery.” **11:41** *Or possibly, “everything will be clean for you.” **11:42** *Or “all other kinds of.” #Or possibly, “vegetable.” ^Or “righteous judgment.” **11:44** *Or “memorial tombs.”

STUDY NOTES

the following verse (Lu 11:42), Jesus may here have been referring to qualities of the heart. For a good deed to be an act of true mercy, it must be a gift that comes from inside—from a loving and willing heart.

11:42 tenth of the mint and of the rue and of every other garden herb: Under the Mosaic Law, the Israelites were to pay the tithe, or a tenth, of their crops. (Le 27:30; De 14:22) Although the Law did not explicitly command that they give a tenth of herbs like mint and rue, Jesus did not contradict the tradition. Rather, he re-

proved the scribes and the Pharisees for focusing on minor details of the Law while failing to promote its underlying principles, such as **justice** and **love** for God. When Jesus on a later occasion makes a similar statement, recorded at Mt 23:23, he mentions mint, dill, and cumin.

See  Gallery, image 105, Rue.

11:43 front seats: See study note on Mt 23:6.

marketplaces: See study note on Mt 23:7.

See  Gallery, image 46, The Marketplace.

11:44 graves that are not clearly visible: Or “unmarked graves.” In general, Jewish tombs do not appear to have been ornate or ostentatious. As shown in this verse, some were so inconspicuous that people might have walked on them and become ceremonially unclean without being aware of it. The Law of Moses considered unclean those who had touched

anything belonging to the dead, so a person walking on such unseen graves would become ceremonially unclean for seven days. (Nu 19:16) So that graves could be easily discovered and avoided, the Jews had them whitewashed each year. In this context, Jesus evidently meant that people who mixed freely with Pharisees, believing them to be good men, subconsciously became infected with their corrupt attitudes and unclean thinking. —See study note on Mt 23:27.

45 In reply one of those versed in the Law said to him: “Teacher, in saying these things, you insult us also.” **46** Then he said: “Woe also to you who are versed in the Law, because you load men down with loads hard to carry, but you yourselves do not touch the loads with one of your fingers!^a

47 “Woe to you, because you build the tombs* of the prophets, but your forefathers killed them!^b **48** Certainly you are witnesses of the deeds of your forefathers, and yet you approve of them, for they killed the prophets^c but you are building their tombs. **49** That is why the wisdom of God also said: ‘I will send prophets and apostles to them, and they will kill and persecute some of them,^d **50** so that the blood of all the prophets spilled from the founding of the world may be charged against* this generation,^e **51** from the blood of Abel^f down to the blood of Zech·ari’ah, who was killed between the altar and the house.’^g Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against* this generation.

52 “Woe to you who are versed in the Law, because you took away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not go in, and you hinder those going in!”^h

53 So when he went out from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to put extreme pressure on him and to ply him with many more questions, **54** lying in wait for him to catch him in something he might say.ⁱ

CHAP. 11

- a Mt 23:2
Mt 23:4
b Mt 23:29-31
c Ac 7:52
Heb 11:32
Heb 11:37
d Mt 23:34-36
e Re 18:21
Re 18:24
f Ge 4:8
Ge 4:10
g 2Ch 24:20-22
h Mal 2:7, 8
Mt 23:13
1Th 2:14-16
i Mr 12:13
Lu 20:20

FOOTNOTES

11:47 *Or “memorial tombs.” **11:50**, **51** *Or “required from.”

STUDY NOTES

11:49 **the wisdom of God also said:** Evidently meaning: “God in his wisdom also said.” On a different occasion, Jesus said: “I am sending to you prophets and wise men and public instructors.”—Mt 23:34.

11:50 **founding of the world:** The Greek word for “founding” is rendered “to conceive” at Heb 11:11, where it is used with “offspring.” Here used in the expression “founding of the world,” it apparently refers to the birth of children to Adam and Eve. Jesus associates “the founding of the world” with Abel, evidently the first redeemable human of the world of mankind whose name had been written in the scroll of life “from the founding of the world.”

—Lu 11:51; Re 17:8; see study note on Mt 25:34.

11:51 **from the blood of Abel down to the blood of Zechariah:** See study note on Mt 23:35.

between the altar and the house: The “house,” or temple, refers to the building that accommodated the Holy and the Most Holy. According to 2Ch 24:21, Zechariah was murdered “in the courtyard of Jehovah’s house.” The altar of burnt offering was in the inner courtyard, outside of and in front of the entrance to the temple sanctuary. (See  App. B8.) This would correspond to the location that Jesus mentioned for the incident.

11:52 **the key of knowledge:** In the Bible, those who were given certain keys, whether literal or figurative, were entrusted with a degree of authority. (1Ch 9:26, 27; Isa 22:20-22) So the term “key” came to sym-

bolize authority and responsibility. In this context, it seems that “knowledge” refers to divinely provided knowledge, since Jesus addresses religious leaders who were **versed in the Law**. They were supposed to use their authority and power to give the people accurate knowledge of God by explaining God’s word to them, unlocking its meaning. A comparison of this text with Mt 23:13, where Jesus states that the religious leaders had “shut up the Kingdom of the heavens before men,” indicates that the expression **go in** refers to gaining entrance into that Kingdom. By not giving the people the correct knowledge of God, the religious leaders **took away** the opportunity for many to understand God’s Word correctly and to enter into the Kingdom of God.

11:53 **began to put extreme pressure on him:** This expression can refer to physically crowding around someone, but here

CHAP. 12

- a Mt 16:6, 11
Mr 8:15
- b Mt 10:26, 27
Mr 4:22
Lu 8:17
- c Joh 15:14
- d Ac 20:24
- e Isa 66:24
Mt 10:28
- f Ps 119:120
Isa 8:13
Heb 10:31
1Pe 2:17
Re 14:7
- g De 22:6, 7
Mt 10:29
- h Mt 10:30
Lu 21:18
- i Mt 10:31
Lu 12:24
- j Ro 10:9
- k Mt 10:32, 33
- l Mr 8:38
Lu 9:26
2Ti 2:12
1Jo 2:23

Leaven of the Pharisees; Fear God, Not Men

12 In the meantime, when a crowd of so many thousands had gathered together that they were stepping on one another, he started by saying first to his disciples: “Watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.^a **2** But there is nothing carefully concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing secret that will not become known.^b **3** Therefore, whatever you say in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you whisper* in private rooms will be preached from the housetops. **4** Moreover, I say to you, my friends,^c do not fear those who kill the body and after this are not able to do anything more.^d **5** But I will show you whom to fear: Fear the One who after killing has authority to throw into Ge-hen’na.^e Yes, I tell you, fear this One.^f **6** Five sparrows sell for two coins of small value, do they not? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.^g **7** But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.^h Have no fear; you are worth more than many sparrows.ⁱ

Acknowledging Union With Christ

8 “I say to you, everyone who acknowledges me before men,^j the Son of man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God.^k **9** But whoever disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God.^l **10** And everyone who says a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven him, but

FOOTNOTES

12:3 *Lit., “spoke toward the ear.”

12:6 *Or “is neglected by God; has escaped God’s notice.”

STUDY NOTES

it seems to describe the hostility of the religious leaders as they use intense pressure to try to intimidate Jesus. The Greek verb used here is rendered “nursing a grudge” at Mr 6:19, where it describes Herodias’ relentless hatred for John the Baptist.

12:1 **of so many thousands:** Lit., “of the myriads.” The Greek word literally refers to a group of 10,000, a myriad, but it can also be used of a very large, unspecified number.

leaven: Or “yeast.” Often used in the Bible to denote corruption and sin, “leaven” here refers to corrupt teaching and influence.—Mt 16:6, 11, 12; 1Co 5:6-8.

12:3 **in the light:** That is, in public; openly.

preached from the housetops: See study note on Mt 10:27.

12:5 **Gehenna:** See study note on Mt 5:22.

See  Gallery, image 31, Modern-Day Valley of Hinnom.

12:6 **sparrows:** See study note on Mt 10:29.

for two coins of small value: Lit., “for two assarions.” Earlier, during his third Galilean tour, Jesus said that two sparrows could be bought for one assa-

riation. (Mt 10:29) An assarion was the wage a man earned for 45 minutes’ work. (See  App. B14.) Now, likely about a year later during his ministry in Judea, Jesus makes the statement that Luke records, saying that **five** sparrows could be obtained for two assarions. Comparing these accounts, we learn that sparrows were of such little value that merchants would include the fifth one free of charge.

12:7 **even the hairs of your head are all numbered:** See study note on Mt 10:30.

whoever blasphemes against the holy spirit will not be forgiven.^a **11** When they bring you in before public assemblies, government officials, and authorities, do not become anxious about how or what you will speak in defense or what you will say,^b **12** for the holy spirit will teach you in that very hour the things you should say.”^c

Illustration of the Foolish Rich Man

13 Then someone in the crowd said to him: “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” **14** He said to him: “Man, who appointed me judge or arbitrator between you two?” **15** Then he said to them: “Keep your eyes open and guard against every sort of greed,^d because even when a person has an abundance, his life does not result from the things he possesses.”^e **16** With that he told them an illustration, saying: “The land of a rich man produced well. **17** So he began reasoning within himself, ‘What should I do now that I have nowhere to gather my crops?’ **18** Then he said, ‘I will do this:^f I will tear down my storehouses and build bigger ones, and

CHAP. 12

- a Mt 12:31, 32
Mr 3:28, 29
Heb 6:4, 6
Heb 10:26
1Jo 5:16
- b Mt 10:19, 20
Mr 13:11
Lu 21:14, 15
1Pe 5:6, 7
- c Ex 4:12
Ac 6:8
Ac 6:10
- d Ex 20:17
De 5:21
Col 3:5
- e 1Ti 6:7
- f Jas 4:13-16

STUDY NOTES

12:11 public assemblies: Or possibly, “synagogues.” The Greek noun *sy-na-go-ge'* used here literally means “a bringing together; an assembly.” In most occurrences in the Christian Greek Scriptures, it refers to the building or place where Jews assembled for Scripture reading, instruction, preaching, and prayer. (See  Glossary, “Synagogue.”) The word in this context could refer to “synagogues,” to which local Jewish courts were attached (see study note on Mt 10:17), but it seems to be used here in a broader sense to refer to the type of gatherings that were accessible to the public, Jewish or non-Jewish. These assemblies were organized for the purpose of legally prosecuting a Christian and perhaps even rendering some kind of judicial decision against him because of his faith.

12:13 divide the inheritance with me: The Mosaic Law was quite clear on the matter of dividing an inheritance between siblings. The eldest son received a double portion, for he was to inherit the responsibilities of the family head. (De 21:17) The remainder of the inheritance was to be

divided among the other heirs. It seems likely that the man referred to in this verse greedily wanted more than his legal share. This might explain his inappropriate behavior in interrupting Jesus’ spiritual discussion with a demand about this secular matter. Jesus wisely refused to get involved in the dispute, but he went on to warn against greed.

12:14 arbitrator: Or “divider; apportioner.” Jesus here acknowledges that there was no need for him to get involved in a matter that was clearly defined in the Mosaic Law. Further, that Law designated elders to arbitrate any monetary disputes. Jesus also understood that he was sent to the earth, not to get involved in secular matters, but to preach the good news of God’s Kingdom.

12:15 greed: Or “covetousness.” The Greek word *ple-o-ne-xi'a* literally means “having more” and denotes an insatiable desire to have more. This Greek term is also used at Eph 4:19; 5:3. After mentioning “greediness” at Col 3:5, Paul adds, “which is idolatry.”

12:16 an illustration: See study note on Mt 13:3.

12:19 myself: Or “my soul.” The Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” occurs three times in verses 19 and 20. The meaning of this term has to be determined by the context. (See  Glossary, “Soul.”) Here it refers to the person himself—the material, visible, tangible person—and not to an invisible, untouchable substance inside the human body. Therefore, the expressions “my soul” and “myself” basically mean the same thing.—See study note on **You have** in this verse and study note on Lu 12:20.

You have: Or “Soul, you have.” The foolish man is here addressing himself. As explained in the note on **myself** in this verse, the Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to the person himself.—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

12:20 Unreasonable one: Or “You fool.” Rather than denote a person who is lacking in mental ability, such terms as “unreasonable” or “fool” as used in the Bible generally refer to an individual who rejects reason and follows a morally insensible course, one that is out of harmony with God’s righteous standards.

CHAP. 12

- a Ps 39:6
Ps 49:16-19
Pr 27:1
- b Ec 11:9
Mt 6:20
1Ti 6:17-19
Jas 2:5
- c Mt 6:25-30
Php 4:6
- d Job 38:41
Ps 147:9
- e Mt 6:26
Lu 12:7

there I will gather all my grain and all my goods, **19** and I will say to myself: “You have many good things stored up for many years; take it easy, eat, drink, enjoy yourself.” **20** But God said to him, ‘Unreasonable one, this night they are demanding your life from you. Who, then, is to have the things you stored up?’^a **21** So it goes with the man who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God.”^b

“Stop Being Anxious”

22 Then he said to his disciples: “That is why I say to you, stop being anxious about your lives as to what you will eat or about your bodies as to what you will wear.^c **23** For the life is worth more than food and the body more than clothing. **24** Consider the ravens: They neither sow seed nor reap; they have neither barn nor storehouse; yet God feeds them.^d Are you not worth much more than birds?^e **25** Who of you by being anxious can add a cubit to his life span? **26** If, therefore, you cannot do such a small thing, why be anxious about the

STUDY NOTES

12:20 your life: Or “your soul.” As mentioned in the study note on Lu 12:19, the meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. Here it refers to the life that a person has.—See

 Glossary, “Soul.”

they are demanding your life from you:

In this illustration, reference is not made to any group of humans or angels. The Greek verb for “to demand” is in the third person plural (“they”), simply indicating what was going to happen to the man. Jesus did not specify how the rich man in the illustration would die or who would take his life. The point was that by some means, the man was going to die that night. Therefore, the phrase could also be rendered “your life will be demanded from you.”

12:21 rich toward God: Or “rich in the eyes of God,” that is, rich in the things that are important from God’s perspective.

12:22 stop being anxious: Or “stop worrying.” The tense of the Greek verb *me-ri-mna'o* in this prohibition indicates to stop doing an action already in prog-

ress. The Greek term for “being anxious” can refer to worry that divides a person’s mind and distracts him, robbing him of joy. Luke uses the same Greek word at Lu 12:11, 25, 26. This verb is used by Paul at 1Co 7:32-34 and Php 4:6.—See study note on Mt 6:25.

your lives: Or “your souls.” The Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to a person’s life.—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

12:23 the life: Or “the soul.” As in the preceding verse, the Greek word *psy-khe'* here refers to the life that a person has. In this context, the combination **life** (soul) and **body** represents the entire person.

12:24 ravens: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, this bird is mentioned only here. When Jesus gave similar admonition in the Sermon on the Mount, he did not refer to a specific bird. (Mt 6:26) Luke’s account has its setting during Jesus’ ministry in Judea, about 18 months after he delivered the Sermon on the Mount in Galilee. Here Jesus emphasizes the admonition by pointing to the raven, a bird that was unclean according to the Law covenant. (Le 11:13, 15) Evidently, the lesson is that since God provides for unclean

ravens, we can be certain that he will never forsake people who trust in him.

See  Gallery, image 106, Raven.

12:25 a cubit: See study note on Mt 6:27.

his life span: See study note on Mt 6:27.

12:26 such a small thing: Or “such a very little thing.” Lit., “the smallest thing.” This apparently refers to what is stated in the preceding verse about adding a cubit to one’s life span. If humans cannot extend their life just a little, not even a cubit, why should they be so anxious and concerned about storing a great amount of wealth, food, and clothing and about having many homes and properties?

remaining things?^a **27** Consider how the lilies grow: They neither toil nor spin; but I tell you that not even Sol'o-mon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these.^b **28** Now if this is how God clothes the vegetation in the field that today exists and tomorrow is cast into an oven, how much more will he clothe you, you with little faith! **29** So stop seeking what you will eat and what you will drink, and stop being in anxious suspense;^c **30** for all these are the things the nations of the world are eagerly pursuing, but your Father knows you need these things.^d **31** Instead, keep seeking his Kingdom, and these things will be added to you.^e

“Have No Fear, Little Flock”

32 “Have no fear, little flock,^f for your Father has approved of giving you the Kingdom.^g **33** Sell your belongings and give gifts of mercy.^h Make money pouches that do not wear out, a never-failing treasure in the heavens,ⁱ where no thief gets near and no moth consumes. **34** For where your treasure is, there your hearts will be also.

Watchfulness

35 “Be dressed and ready^j and have your lamps burning,^k **36** and you should be like men waiting for their master to return^{*i} from the marriage,^{#m} so when he comes and knocks, they

CHAP. 12

- a Mt 6:34
 b 1Ki 10:4-7
 2Ch 9:3-6
 c Mt 6:31, 32
 d 2Ch 16:9
 Ps 145:15, 16
 Isa 65:24
 Mt 6:7, 8
 Php 4:19
 e Ps 34:10
 Isa 33:15, 16
 Mt 6:33
 1Ti 4:8
 f Joh 10:14
 g Da 7:27
 Lu 22:28-30
 Heb 12:28
 Jas 2:5
 Re 1:6
 h Mt 19:21
 Lu 18:22
 Ac 2:45
 Ac 4:34, 35
 i Mt 6:20, 21
 Lu 16:9
 1Ti 6:18, 19
 j Eph 6:14
 1Pe 1:13
 k Mt 25:1
 Php 2:15
 l Mr 13:35
 m Mt 25:5

FOOTNOTES

12:36 *Or “depart; break away.” #Or “wedding feast.”

STUDY NOTES

12:27 the lilies: Some identify this flower with the anemone, but it may have included a variety of lilylike flowers, such as tulips, hyacinths, irises, and gladiolus. Some suggest that Jesus referred simply to the many wildflowers growing in the area and therefore translate the Greek word using more general terms, such as “flowers” or “wildflowers.” This may be inferred, since this phrase is used in parallel with “vegetation in the field.”—Lu 12:28; Mt 6:28-30.

See  Gallery, image 33, Lilies of the Field.

12:28 vegetation . . . oven: See study note on Mt 6:30.

you with little faith: See study note on Mt 6:30.

12:29 stop being in anxious suspense: Or “stop worrying.” The Greek word *me-te-o-ri'zo-mai* occurs only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. In classical Greek, it had the meaning “to raise on high; to suspend”; it is even used in this sense with reference to ships being tossed at sea. In this context, however, it is used figuratively for being anxious or unsettled, as if tossed about or wavering because of doubt and anxiety.

12:31 keep seeking: The form of the Greek verb used here indicates continuous action and could be rendered “seek continually.” Jesus’ true followers would not seek the Kingdom for a time and then go on to other things. Rather, they would always make it their chief concern in life. The same counsel by Jesus is recorded at Mt 6:33 as part of his Sermon on the

Mount in Galilee. Luke’s account here records events about a year and a half later, during the concluding part of Jesus’ ministry, likely in Judea. Jesus apparently saw fit to repeat his previous admonition.

12:33 gifts of mercy: See study note on Mt 6:2.

12:35 Be dressed and ready: Lit., “having your loins girded around.” This idiom refers to binding up the ends of a long outer garment with a belt to facilitate physical work, running, and so forth. It came to denote a state of readiness for any activity. Similar expressions occur many times in the Hebrew Scriptures. (For example: Ex 12:11, ftn.; 1Ki 18:46, ftn.; 2Ki 3:21, ftn.; 4:29; Pr 31:17, ftn.; Jer 1:17, ftn.) In this context, the form of the verb indicates a continuous state of readiness for spiritual activity on the part of God’s servants. At Lu 12:37, the same Greek verb is rendered “dress himself for

CHAP. 12

- a Mt 24:43
1Th 5:2
2Pe 3:10
Re 16:15
- b Mt 24:44
Mt 25:13
Re 3:3
- c Mt 24:45-47

may at once open to him. **37** Happy are those slaves whom the master on coming finds watching! Truly I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at the table and will come alongside and minister to them. **38** And if he comes in the second watch, even if in the third, and finds them ready, happy are they! **39** But know this, if the householder had known at what hour the thief would come, he would not have let his house be broken into.^a **40** You also, keep ready, because at an hour that you do not think likely, the Son of man is coming.”^b

The Faithful Steward; Characteristics of an Unfaithful Slave

41 Then Peter said: “Lord, are you telling this illustration just to us or also to everyone?” **42** And the Lord said: “Who really is the faithful steward, the discreet one, whom his master will appoint over his body of attendants to keep giving them their measure of food supplies at the proper time?^c **43** Happy is that slave if his master on coming finds him doing so! **44** I tell you truthfully, he will appoint him over all his belongings. **45** But

STUDY NOTES

service.” At 1Pe 1:13, the expression “brace up your minds for activity” literally means “gird up the loins of your mind.”

12:37 he will dress himself for service: Lit., “he will gird himself.”—See study notes on Lu 12:35; 17:8.

12:38 second watch: That is, from about 9:00 p.m. until midnight. This division is according to the Greek and Roman system of four night watches. The Hebrews formerly divided the night into three watches of about four hours each (Ex 14:24; Jg 7:19), but by the first century C.E., they had adopted the Roman system.—See study notes on Mt 14:25; Mr 13:35.

the third: That is, from midnight to about 3:00 a.m.—See study note on Mr 13:35.

12:42 steward: Or “house manager; house administrator.” The Greek word *oi-ko-no'mos* refers to a person placed over servants, though he himself is a servant. In ancient times, such a position was often filled by a faithful slave who was placed in charge of his master's affairs. Therefore, it was a position of great

trust. Abraham's servant “who was managing all [Abraham] had” was such a steward, or household manager. (Ge 24:2) This was also true of Joseph, as described at Ge 39:4. The “steward” in Jesus' illustration is referred to in the singular, but this does not necessarily mean that the steward represented only one particular person. The Scriptures contain examples of a singular noun referring to a collective group, such as when Jehovah addressed the collective group of the Israelite nation and told them: “You are my witnesses [plural], . . . yes, my servant [singular] whom I have chosen.” (Isa 43:10) Similarly, this illustration refers to a composite steward. In the parallel illustration at Mt 24:45, this steward is called “the faithful and discreet slave.”

the discreet one: Or “the wise one.” The Greek adjective *phro'ni-mos* used here conveys the idea of understanding associated with insight, forethought, discernment, prudence, and wisdom in a practical sense. Luke uses a form of the same Greek word at Lu 16:8, where it is rendered “wiser in a practical way.” The

same Greek word is used at Mt 7:24; 25:2, 4, 8, 9. The *Septuagint* uses this word at Ge 41:33, 39 regarding Joseph.

his body of attendants: Or “his household servants; his household staff.” Like the term “domestics” (Greek, *oi-ke-tei'a*), used at Mt 24:45, this term (Greek, *the-ra-pe'i'a*) refers to all individuals who serve in the master's household. Luke uses a term common in classical Greek with the same general meaning as the term used by Matthew. Luke's use of the term may reflect his education and background.

12:43 that slave: The steward mentioned in verse 42 is here referred to as a “slave.” (See study note on Lu 12:42.) If “that slave” is faithful, he will be rewarded. (Lu 12:44) In the parallel illustration at Mt 24:45-47, this steward is called “the faithful and discreet slave.”—See study note on Lu 12:45.

if ever that slave should say in his heart, ‘My master delays coming,’^a and starts to beat the male and female servants and to eat and drink and get drunk,^b **46** the master of that slave will come on a day that he is not expecting him and at an hour that he does not know, and he will punish him with the greatest severity and assign him a part with the unfaithful ones. **47** Then that slave who understood the will of his master but did not get ready or do what he asked* will be beaten with many strokes.^c **48** But the one who did not understand and yet did things deserving of strokes will be beaten with few. Indeed, everyone to whom much was given, much will be demanded of him, and the one who was put in charge of much will have more than usual demanded of him.^d

CHAP. 12

- a 2Pe 3:3, 4
 b Mt 24:48-51
 c Jas 1:22
 Jas 4:17
 d Mt 25:29
 Joh 15:2
 e Mr 10:38, 39
 f Joh 12:27
 g Mt 10:34-36
 Joh 7:41
 Joh 7:43
 Joh 9:16
 h Mic 7:6

Not Peace, But Division

49 “I came to start a fire on the earth, and what more is there for me to wish if it has already been lit? **50** Indeed, I have a baptism^e with which to be baptized, and how I am distressed until it is finished!^f **51** Do you think I came to give peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.^g **52** For from now on there will be five in one house divided, three against two and two against three. **53** They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”^h

Need to Examine the Times; Settling Disputes

54 Then he also said to the crowds: “When you see a cloud rising in the west, at once you say, ‘A storm* is coming,’ and it happens. **55** And when you see that a south wind is blow-

FOOTNOTES

12:47 *Or “do according to his will.”

12:54 *Or “rainstorm.”

STUDY NOTES

12:45 that slave: The slave mentioned here refers to the steward described at Lu 12:42. If “that slave” is faithful, he will be rewarded. (Lu 12:43, 44) On the other hand, if “that slave” is disloyal, he will be punished “with the greatest severity.” (Lu 12:46) Jesus’ words here are actually a warning directed to the faithful steward.

Similarly, in the parallel illustration at Mt 24:45-51, when saying, “If ever that evil slave says in his heart,” Jesus is neither foretelling nor appointing an “evil slave” but is warning the faithful slave about what would happen if he were to start displaying the characteristics of an evil slave.

12:46 punish him with the greatest severity: See study note on Mt 24:51.

12:49 to start a fire: Symbolically speaking, the coming of Jesus brought a fiery time to the Jews. Jesus started the fire

by raising issues that caused heated controversy and resulted in the consuming of many false teachings and traditions. For example, contrary to the nationalistic expectations of the Jews, while the Messiah was on earth, he did not liberate literal Israel from Roman rule but he suffered a shameful death. By his zealous preaching, Jesus made God’s Kingdom the paramount issue before the people, thus sparking a heated controversy throughout the nation.—1Co 1:23.

CHAP. 12

- ^a Mt 16:2, 3
Lu 19:42
^b Mt 5:25, 26

CHAP. 13

- ^c Ac 3:19
^d Mt 21:19
Mr 11:13

ing, you say, ‘There will be a heat wave,’ and it occurs. **56** Hypocrites, you know how to examine the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to examine this particular time?^a **57** Why do you not judge also for yourselves what is righteous? **58** For example, when you are going with your legal opponent to a ruler, while on the way, get to work to settle the dispute with him so that he may not summon you before the judge, and the judge deliver you to the court officer, and the court officer throw you into prison.^b **59** I tell you, you will certainly not get out of there until you pay over your last small coin.”

Repent or Be Destroyed

13 At that time some who were present reported to him about the Gal-i-le’ans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. **2** In reply he said to them: “Do you think that those Gal-i-le’ans were worse sinners than all other Gal-i-le’ans because they have suffered these things? **3** No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise be destroyed.^c **4** Or those 18 on whom the tower in Si-lo’am fell, killing them—do you think that they had greater guilt than all other men who live in Jerusalem? **5** No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all be destroyed, as they were.”

Illustration of the Barren Fig Tree

6 Then he went on to tell this illustration: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none.^d **7** Then he said to the vinedresser, ‘Here it is three years that I have come looking for fruit on this fig

STUDY NOTES

12:59 your last small coin: Lit., “the last lepton.” The Greek word *le-pton*’ means something small and thin. A lepton was a coin that equaled 1/128 of a denarius and was apparently the smallest copper or bronze coin used in Israel.—See  Glossary, “Lepton,” and  App. B14.

13:4 on whom the tower in Siloam fell: To make his point, Jesus here draws from a recent tragedy or, at least, one that was still alive in common memory. The tower in Siloam was evidently near the pool of Siloam in the SE sector of Jerusalem.—See  App. B12, map “Jerusalem and Surrounding Area.”

13:6 a fig tree planted in his vineyard:

It was common to plant both fig and olive trees in vineyards. In that way, even if the vines suffered a bad year, the figs and olives might still yield some income.

13:7 three years: New trees grown from cuttings usually produce at least a few figs within two or three years. When Jesus gave this illustration, his ministry had lasted about three years, which is evidently parallel with the three years mentioned in the illustration. For some three years, Jesus had been trying to cultivate faith among the Jews. Yet, relatively few became disciples and could be considered the fruitage of his labor. Now, in the

fourth year of his ministry, he intensifies his efforts. By preaching and teaching in Judea and Perea, it is as if Jesus were digging up the ground and putting fertilizer on the figurative fig tree, representing the Jewish nation. However, only a small number of Jews responded to his efforts, putting the nation as a whole in line for destruction.

tree, but have found none. Cut it down! Why should it keep the ground useless?’^a **8** In reply he said to him, ‘Master, leave it alone for one more year until I dig around it and put on manure. **9** If it produces fruit in the future, well and good; but if not, then cut it down.’^b

Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath

10 Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. **11** And look! a woman was there who had had a spirit of weakness for 18 years; and she was bent double and was unable to straighten up at all. **12** When he saw her, Jesus addressed her and said: “Woman, you are released from your weakness.”^c **13** And he laid his hands on her, and instantly she straightened up and began to glorify God. **14** But in response the presiding officer of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus did the cure on the Sabbath, said to the crowd: “There are six days on which work ought to be done;^d so come and be cured on those days, and not on the Sabbath day.”^e **15** However, the Lord answered him: “Hypocrites,^f does not each one of you on the Sabbath untie his bull or his donkey from the stall and lead it away to give it something to drink?^g **16** Should not this woman, who is a daughter of Abraham and whom Satan held bound for 18 years, be released from this bondage on the Sabbath day?” **17** Well, when he said these things, all his opposers began to feel shame, but the entire crowd began to rejoice at all the glorious things he did.^h

Illustrations of the Mustard Grain and the Leaven

18 So he went on to say: “What is the Kingdom of God like, and with what can I compare it? **19** It is like a mustard grain that a man took and planted in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of heaven nested in its branches.”ⁱ

CHAP. 13

a Mt 3:10
Mt 7:19

b 2Pe 3:9

c Isa 61:1
Lu 4:18

d Ex 20:9, 10
Ex 23:12
Ex 35:2
De 5:13, 14

e Mt 12:10
Mr 3:2
Joh 5:15, 16
Joh 9:14, 16

f Mt 23:27, 28
Lu 12:1

g Lu 14:5

h Lu 9:43

i Mt 13:31, 32
Mr 4:30-32

STUDY NOTES

13:11 a spirit of weakness: Or “a disabling spirit.” This evidently refers to a demon who was causing this woman’s disability. At Lu 13:16, Jesus speaks of her as being “held bound” by Satan.

13:19 mustard grain: Several kinds of mustard plants are found growing wild in Israel. Black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) is the variety commonly cultivated. The relatively small seed, 1 to 1.6 mm (0.039

to 0.063 in.) in diameter and weighing 1 mg (0.000035 oz), produces a tree-like plant. Some varieties of the mustard plant attain a height of up to 4.5 m (15 ft). The mustard grain, called “the tiniest of all the seeds” at Mt 13:32 and Mr 4:31, was used in ancient Jewish writings as a figure of speech for the very smallest measure of size. Although there are smaller seeds known today, it was evidently the tiniest of seeds gathered and sown by Israelite farmers in Jesus’ day.

13:21 large measures: See study note on Mt 13:33.

13:23 are those being saved few?: One hotly debated topic among the Jewish religious leaders in ancient times was the number of those who would ultimately be saved. In later times, there even came to be some mystical sects who sought to determine the exact number by assigning numerical values to each letter in various sacred texts. While the question regarding

CHAP. 13

- a Mt 13:33
 b Mt 9:35
 Mr 6:6
 c Isa 55:6
 Mt 7:13, 14
 Php 3:12-14
 1Ti 6:12
 d Lu 6:46
 e Mt 25:11, 12
 f Mt 7:22, 23
 g Mt 8:11, 12
 h Mt 19:30
 Mt 20:16
 Mr 10:31

20 And again he said: “With what can I compare the Kingdom of God? **21** It is like leaven that a woman took and mixed with three large measures of flour until the whole mass was fermented.”^a

Effort Needed to Enter Through the Narrow Door

22 And he traveled from city to city and from village to village, teaching and continuing on his journey to Jerusalem.^b **23** Now a man said to him: “Lord, are those being saved few?” He said to them: **24** “Exert yourselves vigorously to get in through the narrow door,^c because many, I tell you, will seek to get in but will not be able. **25** When the householder gets up and locks the door, you will stand outside knocking at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us.’^d But in answer he will say to you: ‘I do not know where you are from.’^e **26** Then you will start saying, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our main streets.’^f **27** But he will say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from. Get away from me, all you workers of unrighteousness!’ **28** There is where your weeping and the gnashing of your teeth will be, when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown outside.^g **29** Furthermore, people will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the Kingdom of God. **30** And look! there are those last who will be first, and there are those first who will be last.”^h

STUDY NOTES

God’s judgment is broad and speculative, Jesus’ answer pointed to the personal responsibility of each individual.

13:24 Exert yourselves vigorously: Or “Keep on struggling.” Jesus’ admonition emphasizes the need for taking whole-souled action in order to get in through the narrow door. For this context, various reference works have suggested such renderings as “Exert maximum effort; Make every effort.” The Greek verb *a-go-ni’zo-mai* is related to the Greek noun *a-gon’*, which was often used to refer to athletic contests. At Heb 12:1, this noun is used figuratively for the Christian “race” for life. It is also used in the more general sense of a “struggle” (Php 1:30; Col 2:1) or a “fight” (1Ti 6:12; 2Ti 4:7).

Forms of the Greek verb used at Lu 13:24 are rendered “competing in a contest” (1Co 9:25), “exerting [oneself]” (Col 1:29; 4:12; 1Ti 4:10), and “fight” (1Ti 6:12). Because the background of this expression is connected with competition in the athletic games, some have suggested that the effort Jesus encouraged may be compared to an athlete’s exerting himself vigorously with all his power to win the prize, straining every nerve, as it were.

13:26 main streets: Or “broad streets.” The Greek term used here refers to the main streets of a city that broadened at central locations and that served as public squares. Such “main streets” were in contrast with the narrow and winding lanes that were typical of cities and towns in the first century.

13:28 gnashing of your teeth: Or “grinding (clenching) your teeth.” The expression can include the idea of anguish, despair, and anger, possibly accompanied by bitter words and violent action.

13:29 from east and west and from north and south: By listing the four directions, Jesus embraces the whole earth. In other words, this privilege would be open to people from all nations.

recline at the table: See study note on Mt 8:11.

Herod, “That Fox”; Jesus Laments What Will Happen to Jerusalem

31 In that very hour some of the Pharisees came up and told him: “Get out and go away from here, because Herod wants to kill you.” **32** And he said to them: “Go and tell that fox, ‘Look! I am casting out demons and healing people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will be finished.’ **33** Nevertheless, I must go on today, tomorrow, and the following day, because it cannot be that a prophet should be put to death outside of Jerusalem.^a **34** Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent to her^b—how often I wanted to gather your children together the way a hen gathers her brood of chicks under her wings! But you did not want it.^c **35** Look! Your house is abandoned to you.^d I tell you, you will by no means see me until you say: ‘Blessed is the one who comes in Jehovah’s name!’”^e

CHAP. 13

- a Mt 16:21
- b 2Ch 24:20, 21
Ne 9:26
- c Mt 23:37
- d Le 26:31
1Ki 9:7, 8
Jer 12:7
Jer 22:5
Mic 3:12
- e Ps 118:26
Mt 23:38, 39

CHAP. 14

- f Lu 7:36
Lu 11:37
- g Mt 12:10, 11
Mr 3:4
Lu 6:9
Joh 5:15, 16
Joh 7:23

A Man With Dropsy Healed on the Sabbath

14 On another occasion he went to eat a meal in the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees^f on the Sabbath, and they were closely watching him. **2** And look! a man who had dropsy was in front of him. **3** So in response Jesus asked those versed in the Law and the Pharisees: “Is it lawful to cure on the Sabbath or not?”^g **4** But they kept silent. With that he took hold of the man, healed him, and sent him away. **5** Then

STUDY NOTES

13:31 Herod: That is, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great.—See  Glossary.

See  Gallery, image 56, Coin Made by Herod Antipas.

13:32 that fox: This animal is well-known for its craftiness or slyness, and Jesus may have been alluding to those traits when he called Herod a fox. Some scholars feel that Jesus may have combined the concepts of slyness, weakness, and insignificance in calling Herod a fox. In Jewish literature, the fox was used metaphorically of relatively weak (compare Ne 4:3) but cunning and opportunistic men, in contrast with the powerful lion, which represented a confident ruler of power and greatness. (Compare Pr 28:1; Jer 50:17; Eze 32:2.) Such a view, if valid, would amount to calling Herod a cunning, self-important ruler who was insignificant

in God’s eyes. Jesus was likely passing through Herod’s territory of Perea on his way to Jerusalem when the Pharisees told Jesus that Herod wanted to kill him. It may be that Herod started this rumor, slyly hoping to cause Jesus to flee out of the territory in fear. Herod seems to have been disturbed by Jesus and his ministry. Earlier, Herod had been manipulated by his wife into executing John the Baptist, and he may have been afraid to kill another prophet of God.—Mt 14:1, 2; Mr 6:16.

today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will be finished: Jesus’ expression about time is not to be understood literally. Rather, he was indicating that little time remained before he would depart for Jerusalem, where he would die. His words may also show that the course of his Messianic ministry was set and would not be abbreviated, controlled, or altered by the political aims of any secular ruler.

13:33 it cannot be: Or “it is inconceivable (unthinkable).” While no Bible prophecy explicitly states that the Messiah would die in Jerusalem, this idea may be inferred from Da 9:24-26. Additionally, it would be expected that if the Jews were to kill a prophet, and especially the Messiah, it would be in that city. The 71-member Sanhedrin, the high court, met in Jerusalem, so those accused of being false prophets would be tried there. Jesus may also have had in mind that Jerusalem was where the regular sacrifices were offered to God and where the Passover lamb was slaughtered. As things worked out, Jesus’ words came true. He was brought before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem and condemned. And it was in Jerusalem, just beyond the city walls, that he died as the “Passover lamb.”—1Co 5:7.

13:34 Jerusalem, Jerusalem: According to Mt 23:37, Jesus made a very similar

CHAP. 14

- ^a Ex 23:5
De 22:4
- ^b Mt 12:11
Lu 13:15
- ^c Mt 23:2
Mt 23:6
Lu 11:43
Lu 20:46
- ^d Pr 25:6, 7
- ^e Pr 15:33
Jas 4:10
1Pe 5:5
- ^f Ps 18:27
Pr 29:23
Mt 23:12
Lu 18:14
Jas 4:6

he said to them: “Who of you, if his son or bull falls into a well,^a will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?”^b **6** And they were not able to reply to this.

Be a Humble Guest

7 He then told the invited men an illustration when he noticed how they were choosing the most prominent places for themselves.^c He said to them: **8** “When you are invited by someone to a marriage feast, do not recline in the most prominent place.^d Perhaps someone more distinguished than you may also have been invited. **9** Then the one who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Let this man have your place.’ Then you will proceed with shame to take the lowest place. **10** But when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest place, so that when the man who invited you comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, go on up higher.’ Then you will have honor in front of all your fellow guests.^e **11** For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”^f

Invite Those Who Cannot Repay You

12 Next he said also to the man who had invited him: “When you spread a dinner or an evening meal, do not call your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbors. Otherwise, they might also invite you in return, and it would

FOOTNOTES

14:10 *Or “all those reclining at the table with you.”

STUDY NOTES

statement in Jerusalem on Nisan 11 during the last week of his earthly ministry. Here, however, reference is made to an earlier occasion when Jesus was in Perea.—See  App. A7.

See  Gallery, image 75, A Hen Gathering Her Chicks.

13:35 **Look!:** See study note on Mt 1:20.

house: That is, the temple.

Jehovah's: In this quote from Ps 118:26, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

14:2 **dropsy:** Or “edema,” an excess buildup of fluid in the body, evidenced by swelling. The term was used by ancient physicians from Hippocrates, a Greek physician of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E., onward. Dropsy, which may have been a symptom of advanced deterioration of the body's vital organs, was dreaded because it often indicated that the person would suffer a sudden death. Some believe that the man was brought to Jesus on the Sabbath as a trap by the Pharisees, for verse 1 says: “They were closely watching him.” This is one of at least six miracles that are mentioned only in Luke's Gospel.—See “Introduction to Luke.”

14:7 **an illustration:** Or “a parable.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

most prominent places: At feasts or banquets in Jesus' day, guests reclined

on couches placed along three sides of a table. Servers had access to the fourth side. The number of couches may have varied, depending on the size of the table. Four or five people could occupy one couch, but usually the number was three. Each person would recline with his head near the table, resting his left elbow on a cushion, and taking food with his right hand. The customary three places on the couch indicated the high, middle, and low location of the guests.

See  Gallery, image 73, Prominent Places at Evening Meals.

become a repayment to you.^a **13** But when you spread a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind;^b **14** and you will be happy, because they have nothing with which to repay you.^c For you will be repaid in the resurrection^d of the righteous ones.”

Illustration of the Invited Ones Who Begged Off

15 On hearing these things, one of the fellow guests said to him: “Happy is the one who dines in the Kingdom of God.”

16 Jesus said to him: “A man was spreading a grand evening meal,^e and he invited many. **17** He sent his slave out at the hour of the evening meal to say to the invited ones, ‘Come, because everything is now ready.’ **18** But they all alike began to make excuses.^f The first said to him, ‘I bought a field and need to go out and see it; I ask you, have me excused.’^{*} **19** And another said, ‘I bought five yoke^{*} of cattle and am going to examine them; I ask you, have me excused.’^g **20** Still another said, ‘I just got married, and for this reason I cannot come.’ **21** So the slave came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go out quickly to the main streets and the alleys of the city, and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ **22** In time the slave said, ‘Master, what you ordered has been done, and still there is room.’ **23** So the master said to the slave, ‘Go out to the roads and the lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled.’^h **24** For I say to you, none of those men who were invited will taste my evening meal.”ⁱ

Cost of Discipleship

25 Now large crowds were traveling with him, and he turned and said to them: **26** “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and

CHAP. 14

a Lu 6:34, 35

b Job 31:16

Job 31:22

Pr 3:27, 28

c Ac 20:35

d Joh 5:28, 29

Joh 11:24

Ac 24:15

e Mt 22:2

f Mt 22:3

g Mt 22:5

h Mt 22:9, 10

i Mt 21:43

Mt 22:8

FOOTNOTES

14:18 * Or “please let me be excused.”

14:19 * Or “pairs.”

STUDY NOTES

14:15 **dines:** Or “is at the feast.” Lit., “eats bread.” In Bible times, bread was such an important part of the diet that in both Hebrew and Greek, the expression “to eat bread” means “to eat (a meal); to dine.” The Hebrew term for “eat bread”

has often been rendered “eat” (Ge 37:25; 2Ki 4:8), “dine” (2Sa 9:7), or “eat . . . food” (Ec 9:7). Similarly, at Lu 14:1, the Greek expression rendered “eat a meal” is literally “eat bread.”

14:26 **hate:** In the Bible, the term “hate” has several shades of meaning. It may denote a feeling of hostility that is motivated by malice, prompting someone to harm others. Or it may refer to an intense feeling of dislike for or strong aversion to someone or something, thus causing

a person to avoid having anything to do with that person or thing. Or the term may simply mean to love to a lesser degree. For example, when Jacob is said to have “hated” Leah and loved Rachel, the meaning is that he loved Leah less than he loved Rachel (Ge 29:31, ftn.; De 21:15, ftn.), and the term is used in this sense in other ancient Jewish literature. Therefore, Jesus did not mean that his followers were to feel hostility or loathing toward their families and toward themselves, as

CHAP. 14

- a Re 12:11
 b Mt 10:37
 Lu 18:29, 30
 Joh 12:25
 c Mt 10:38
 Mt 16:24
 Mr 8:34
 Lu 9:23
 d Pr 11:14
 Pr 20:18
 Pr 24:6
 e Mt 19:27
 Lu 9:62
 Php 3:7, 8
 f Mt 5:13
 Mr 9:50
 Col 4:6
 g Mt 13:43
 Mr 4:9
 Re 2:29

sisters, yes, and even his own life,^a he cannot be my disciple.^b **27** Whoever does not carry his torture stake and come after me cannot be my disciple.^c **28** For example, who of you wanting to build a tower does not first sit down and calculate the expense to see if he has enough to complete it? **29** Otherwise, he might lay its foundation but not be able to finish it, and all the onlookers would start to ridicule him, **30** saying: ‘This man started to build but was not able to finish.’ **31** Or what king marching out against another king in war does not first sit down and take counsel whether he is able with 10,000 troops to stand up to the one who comes against him with 20,000?^d **32** If, in fact, he cannot do so, then while that one is yet far away, he sends out a body of ambassadors and sues for peace. **33** In the same way, you may be sure that not one of you who does not say goodbye to* all his belongings can be my disciple.^e

CHAP. 15

- h Mt 9:10, 11
 Mr 2:15, 16
 Lu 5:29, 30
 Lu 19:2–6
 1Ti 1:15
 i Lu 7:39
 Lu 19:7

Salt That Loses Its Strength

34 “Salt, to be sure, is fine. But if the salt loses its strength, with what will it be seasoned?^f **35** It is not suitable for soil or for manure. People throw it away. Let the one who has ears to listen, listen.”^g

Illustration of the Lost Sheep

15 Now all the tax collectors and the sinners kept gathering around him to hear him.^h **2** And both the Pharisees and the scribes kept muttering: “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”ⁱ **3** Then he told them this illustration, saying: **4** “What man among you with 100 sheep, on losing one of them,

FOOTNOTES

14:33 * Or “give up.”

STUDY NOTES

this would contradict the rest of the Scriptures. (Compare Mr 12:29-31; Eph 5:28, 29, 33.) In this context, the term “hate” could be rendered “love to a lesser degree.”

life: Or “soul.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. Here it refers to a person’s life. Thus, Jesus’ words mean that a true disciple must love Jesus more than he loves his

own life, even being willing to lose his life if necessary.—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

14:27 torture stake: Or “execution stake.” In classical Greek, the word *stau-ros* primarily referred to an upright stake or pole. Used figuratively in the Scriptures, this term often stands for the suffering, shame, torture, and even death that a person experienced because of being a follower of Jesus. This is the third time that Jesus said that his disciples would have to carry a torture stake; the two earlier occasions are recorded at (1) Mt 10:38; (2) Mt 16:24; Mr 8:34; Lu 9:23.—See  Glossary.

14:34 Salt: A mineral used for preserving and flavoring food.—See study note on Mt 5:13.

loses its strength: See study note on Mt 5:13.

See  Gallery, image 27, Salt on the Shore of the Dead Sea.

15:3 illustration: Or “parable.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

will not leave the 99 behind in the wilderness and go after the lost one until he finds it?^a **5** And when he has found it, he puts it on his shoulders and rejoices. **6** And when he gets home, he calls his friends and his neighbors together, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’^b **7** I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents^c than over 99 righteous ones who have no need of repentance.^d

CHAP. 15

- a Eze 34:11
Eze 34:16
Mt 18:12, 13
Lu 19:10
- b Mt 18:14
Ro 12:15
1Pe 2:25
- c Eze 33:11
Lu 5:32
- d Lu 19:8-10
- e Mt 9:13
Mr 2:17

Illustration of the Lost Coin

8 “Or what woman who has ten drachma coins, if she loses one of the drachmas, does not light a lamp and sweep her house and search carefully until she finds it? **9** And when she has found it, she calls her friends* and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the drachma coin that I had lost.’ **10** In the same way, I tell you, joy arises among the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”^e

Illustration of the Lost Son

11 Then he said: “A man had two sons. **12** And the younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that should come to me.’ So he divided his belongings between them. **13** A few days later, the younger son gathered all his things together and traveled to a distant country and there

FOOTNOTES

15:9 *Or “her women friends.”

STUDY NOTES

15:4 See  Gallery, image 64, The Shepherd and His Sheep.

15:8 ten: As shown in the study note on **drachma coins** in this verse, a drachma was worth almost a day’s wages. However, this lost coin may have had special value as one of a set of ten, perhaps an heirloom or part of a prized string of drachmas used for adornment. It was necessary to **light a lamp** to search for it because the window in a home, if there was one, was usually quite small. And houses at that time generally had clay floors, so the woman swept the floor to help her find the lost coin.

drachma coins: A drachma was a Greek silver coin. By the time of Jesus’ earthly ministry, the drachma probably weighed about 3.4 g (0.109 oz t). At that time, the Greeks equated the drachma with the denarius, but the Roman government officially reckoned the value of the drachma at three fourths of a denarius. The Jews paid an annual temple tax of two drachmas (a didrachma).—See study note on Mt 17:24;  Glossary, “Drachma”; and  App. B14.

15:9 the drachma coin: See study note on Lu 15:8;  Glossary, “Drachma”; and  App. B14.

15:11 A man had two sons: Some aspects of the illustration of the prodigal son (also known as “the lost son”) are unique. It is one of the longest that Jesus gave. An outstanding feature is the family relationships he describes. In oth-

er illustrations, Jesus often referred to inanimate things, such as different kinds of seed or soil, or to the formal relationship between a master and his slaves. (Mt 13:18-30; 25:14-30; Lu 19:12-27) In this illustration, however, Jesus highlights the intimate relationship between a father and his sons. Many who hear this account may not have had such a kind, warm-hearted father. This illustration portrays the deep compassion and love that our heavenly Father has for his earthly children, both those who remain with him and those who return to him after going astray.

15:12 the younger one: According to the Mosaic Law, the firstborn received a double share. (De 21:17) So in this illustration, the inheritance of the younger son would have been half that of his older brother.

CHAP. 15

a Le 11:7, 8
 b 2Ch 7:14
 Ps 32:5
 Ps 51:4
 Pr 28:13
 Lu 18:13
 1Jo 1:9

squandered his property by living a debauched life. **14** When he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred throughout that country, and he fell into need. **15** He even went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to herd swine.^a **16** And he longed to be filled with the carob pods that the swine were eating, but no one would give him anything.

17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have more than enough bread, while I am dying here from hunger! **18** I will get up and travel to my father and say to him: “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. **19** I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Make me as one of your hired men.”’ **20** So he got up and went to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him and was moved with pity, and he ran and embraced him* and tenderly kissed him. **21** Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.’^b I am no longer worthy of being called your son.’ **22** But the father said

FOOTNOTES

15:20 * Lit., “fell upon his neck.”

STUDY NOTES

15:13 squandered: The Greek word used here literally means “to scatter (in different directions).” (Lu 1:51; Ac 5:37) At Mt 25:24, 26, it is rendered “winnow.” Here it is used in the sense of being wasteful, spending foolishly.

a debauched life: Or “a wasteful (reckless; wild) life.” A related Greek word is used with a similar meaning at Eph 5:18; Tit 1:6; 1Pe 4:4. Since the Greek word may also include the idea of a spendthrift, or wasteful, lifestyle some Bible translations use the expression “with prodigal living.”

15:15 to herd swine: These animals were unclean according to the Law, so this was a degrading, despicable occupation for a Jew.—Le 11:7, 8.

15:16 carob pods: The fruit or pods of the carob have a shiny, leathery shell of a purplish-brown color and, in harmony with the literal meaning of their name in Greek (*ke-ra'ti-on*, “small horn”), have a

curved horn shape. Carob pods are widely used till this day as food for horses, cattle, and pigs. The degradation to which the young man had sunk was accentuated by his willingness even to eat the food of swine.—See study note on Lu 15:15.

See  Gallery, image 107, Carob Pods.

15:18 against you: Or “in your sight.”

The Greek preposition *e-no'pi-on*, literally meaning “before; in the sight of,” is used in a similar way at 1Sa 20:1 in the *Septuagint*. In that verse, David asks Jonathan: “How have I sinned *against* your father?”

15:19 hired men: When he returned home, the younger son planned to ask his father to be accepted, not as a son, but as a hired man. Such a man was not part of the estate, as were the slaves, but was an outsider who was hired, often for just a day at a time.—Mt 20:1, 2, 8.

15:20 tenderly kissed him: Or “affectionately kissed him.” The Greek term rendered “tenderly kissed” has been understood to be an intensive form of the verb *phi-le'o*, sometimes rendered “to kiss” (Mt 26:48; Mr 14:44; Lu 22:47) but more often having the meaning “to have affection for” (Joh 5:20; 11:3; 16:27).

By greeting him in such a warm, friendly manner, the father in the illustration shows his willingness to welcome back his repentant son.

15:21 called your son: Some manuscripts add: “Make me as one of your hired men,” but the current main text reading has support in various early, authoritative manuscripts. Some scholars consider that the extra expression was added to make the verse harmonize with Lu 15:19.

to his slaves, ‘Quick! bring out a robe, the best one, and clothe him with it, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.

23 Also bring the fattened calf, slaughter* it, and let us eat and celebrate, **24** for this son of mine was dead but has come to life again;^a he was lost and has been found.’ And they started to enjoy themselves.^b

25 “Now his older son was in the field, and as he returned and got near the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** So he called one of the servants to him and asked what was happening. **27** He said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father slaughtered the fattened calf because he got him back in good health.’* **28** But he became angry and refused to go in. Then his father came out and began to plead with him. **29** In reply he said to his father, ‘Look! These many years I have slaved for you and never once did I disobey your orders, and yet you never once gave me a young goat to enjoy with my friends. **30** But as soon as this son of yours arrived who squandered your belongings with prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.’ **31** Then he said to him, ‘My son, you have always been with me, and all the things that are mine are yours. **32** But we just had to celebrate and rejoice, for your brother was dead but has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

Illustration of the Unrighteous Steward

16 Then he also said to the disciples: “A rich man had a steward^c who was accused of handling his goods wastefully. **2** So he called him and said, ‘What is this I hear about you? Hand in the account of your stewardship, for you can no

CHAP. 15

^a Ro 6:13
Eph 2:4, 5
Col 2:13

^b Lu 15:7, 10

CHAP. 16

^c Ge 24:2

FOOTNOTES

15:23 * Or “sacrifice.” **15:27** * Or “safe.”

STUDY NOTES

15:22 **robe . . . ring . . . sandals:** This robe was not merely a simple article of clothing but **the best one**—perhaps a richly embroidered vestment of the sort presented to an honored guest. The act of putting a ring on the hand of his son shows the favor and affection of the father as well as the dignity, honor, and status accorded this restored son. A ring and sandals were not usually seen on slaves. Thus, the father was making it

clear that his son was being welcomed back as a full-fledged member of the family.

15:30 **squandered:** Lit., “devoured.” The Greek word is here used to give a graphic description of how the younger son wasted his father’s **belongings**, or means of living.

16:1 **steward:** Or “house manager; house administrator.”—See study note on Lu 12:42.

16:6 **measures:** Or “bath measures.” The Greek word *ba'tos* is equated with the Hebrew bath measure by some scholars. Based on jar fragments bearing the designation “bath” in ancient Hebrew

characters, the capacity of the bath measure is reckoned at approximately 22 L (5.81 gal).—See  Glossary, “Bath,” and  App. B14.

See  Gallery, image 108, Written Agreement Acknowledging a Debt.

16:7 **large measures:** Or “cor measures.” The Greek word *ko'ros* is equated by some scholars with the Hebrew cor measure that contained ten bath measures. With the bath measure reckoned at 22 L (20 dry qt), the cor measure equals 220 L (200 dry qt).—See study note on Lu 16:6;  Glossary, “Bath,” “Cor”; and  App. B14.

CHAP. 16

- a Joh 12:36
Eph 5:8
1Th 5:5
- b Mt 19:21
1Ti 6:17
- c Mt 25:34
Lu 12:20, 21

longer manage the house.’ **3** Then the steward said to himself, ‘What am I to do, seeing that my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. **4** Ah! I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from the stewardship, people will welcome me into their homes.’ **5** And calling to him each one of his master’s debtors, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ **6** He replied, ‘A hundred measures of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take back your written agreement and sit down and quickly write 50.’ **7** Next, he said to another one, ‘Now you, how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred large measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take back your written agreement and write 80.’ **8** And his master commended the steward, though unrighteous, because he acted with practical wisdom; for the sons of this system of things are wiser in a practical way toward their own generation than the sons of the light^a are.

9 “Also, I say to you: Make friends for yourselves by means of the unrighteous riches,^b so that when such fail, they may receive you into the everlasting dwelling places.^c **10** The person faithful in what is least is faithful also in much, and the person unrighteous in what is least is unrighteous also in much. **11** Therefore, if you have not proved yourselves faithful in connection with the unrighteous riches, who will entrust you with what is true? **12** And if you have not proved yourselves faithful in connection with what belongs to another, who will give

 STUDY NOTES

16:8 acted with practical wisdom: Or “acted shrewdly (discreetly).” The Greek word *phro-ni’mos* is here rendered “with practical wisdom.” Forms of the related adjective are rendered **wiser in a practical way** later in this verse and “discreet” at Mt 7:24; 24:45; 25:2; and Lu 12:42. —See study notes on Mt 24:45; Lu 12:42.

this system of things: The Greek word *ai-on’*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. In this context, it refers to the present unrighteous system of things and a worldly way of life.—See  Glossary, “System(s) of things.”

16:9 friends: That is, friends in heaven, Jehovah God and Jesus Christ, the only

ones who can receive others into “everlasting dwelling places.”

the unrighteous riches: Lit., “the mammon of the unrighteousness.” The Greek word *ma-mo-nas’* (of Semitic origin), traditionally translated “mammon,” is generally understood to denote money or riches. (See study note on Mt 6:24.) Jesus evidently viewed this type of riches as unrighteous because they are under the control of sinful humans, they normally serve selfish ends, and they are often acquired by means of unrighteous actions. The possession of or desire for material riches can also lead to lawless acts. Literal riches can lose their value, so a person having such riches should not put his trust in them. (1Ti 6:9, 10, 17-19) Rather, he should use them to make friends with Jehovah and Jesus, who can

receive a person into the everlasting dwelling places.

everlasting dwelling places: Lit., “everlasting tents.” Evidently referring to perfect dwelling places in the everlasting new world, whether this be in the heavenly Kingdom with Jesus Christ or on the Paradise earth under that Kingdom’s rule.

you something for yourselves?*"a **13** No servant can be a slave to two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick to the one and despise the other. You cannot be slaves to God and to Riches."*b

The Law and God's Kingdom

14 Now the Pharisees, who were money lovers, were listening to all these things, and they began to sneer at him.^c **15** So he said to them: "You are those who declare yourselves righteous before men,^d but God knows your hearts.^e For what is considered exalted by men is a disgusting thing in God's sight.^f

16 "The Law and the Prophets were until John. From then on, the Kingdom of God is being declared as good news, and every sort of person is pressing forward toward it.^g **17** Indeed, it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to go unfulfilled.^h

18 "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and whoever marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.ⁱ

Illustration of the Rich Man and Lazarus

19 "There was a rich man who used to dress in purple and linen,^j enjoying himself day after day with magnificence. **20** But a beggar named Laz'a-rus used to be put at his gate, covered with

CHAP. 16

- a Lu 12:48
- b Mt 6:24
- c Isa 53:3
- d Mt 6:2
Mt 23:27, 28
Lu 10:29
Lu 18:9
- e 1Sa 16:7
1Ch 28:9
2Ch 6:30
- f 1Pe 5:5
- g Mt 11:12, 13
- h Mt 5:17, 18
- i Mt 5:32
Mt 19:9
Mr 10:11, 12
Ro 7:2, 3
- j Es 8:15

FOOTNOTES

16:12 *Or "what is your own."

STUDY NOTES

16:13 **hate:** That is, be less devoted to. —See study note on Lu 14:26.

be slaves: See study note on Mt 6:24.

Riches: See study note on Mt 6:24.

16:16 **The Law and the Prophets:** "The Law" refers to the Bible books of Genesis through Deuteronomy. "The Prophets" refers to the prophetic books of the Hebrew Scriptures. However, when these terms are mentioned together, the expression could be understood to include the entire Hebrew Scriptures.—Mt 5:17; 7:12; 22:40; see study note on Mt 11:13.

pressing forward: The Greek word used here conveys the basic idea of forceful action or endeavor. Some Bible translators

have understood this in a negative sense (that of acting with or suffering violence), but the context, **the Kingdom of God is being declared as good news**, makes it reasonable to understand the term in the positive sense of "going after something with enthusiasm; seeking fervently." These words evidently describe the forceful actions or endeavors of those who responded to the preaching of the good news about God's Kingdom, which put them in line to become prospective members of that Kingdom.

16:17 **one stroke of a letter:** In the Hebrew alphabet current in Jesus' day, certain characters featured a tiny stroke that differentiated one letter from another. Jesus' hyperbole thus emphasized that God's Word would be fulfilled down to the smallest detail.—See study note on Mt 5:18.

16:18 **commits adultery:** The Greek verb *moi-kheu'o* refers to committing marital sexual unfaithfulness. In the Bible, adultery refers to voluntary acts of "sexual immorality" between a married person and someone who is not his or her mate. (Compare the study note on Mt 5:32, where the term "sexual immorality," rendered from the Greek *por-nei'a*, is discussed.) During the time when the Mosaic Law was valid, having sexual relations with another man's wife or fiancée was considered to be adultery.—See study notes on Mt 5:27; Mr 10:11.

a woman divorced: That is, a woman divorced except on account of sexual immorality.—See study note on Mt 5:32.

16:19 See  Gallery, image 109, Purple Dyes.

CHAP. 16

a Lu 6:21, 25

b De 18:18
Lu 24:25-27

c Joh 5:46

ulcers **21** and desiring to be filled with the things dropping from the table of the rich man. Yes, even the dogs would come and lick his ulcers. **22** Now in the course of time, the beggar died and was carried off by the angels to Abraham's side.

"Also, the rich man died and was buried. **23** And in the Grave he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and he saw Abraham from afar and Laz'a-rus by his side. **24** So he called and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Laz'a-rus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this blazing fire.' **25** But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you had your fill of good things in your lifetime, but Laz'a-rus for his part received bad things. Now, however, he is being comforted here, but you are in anguish.'^a **26** And besides all these things, a great chasm has been fixed between us and you, so that those who want to go over from here to you cannot, neither may people cross over from there to us.' **27** Then he said, 'That being so, I ask you, father, to send him to the house of my father, **28** for I have five brothers, in order that he may give them a thorough witness so that they will not also come into this place of torment.' **29** But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to these.'^b **30** Then he said, 'No, indeed, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' **31** But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses^c and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.'"

 STUDY NOTES

16:20 a beggar: Or "a poor man." The Greek word can refer to one who is very poor, or destitute. The use of this word provides a stark contrast to the rich man in Jesus' illustration. It is used in a figurative sense at Mt 5:3 in the phrase rendered "*those conscious of their spiritual need*," literally, "*those who are poor* (needy; destitute; beggars) as to the spirit," conveying the idea of people who are painfully aware of their spiritual poverty and of their need for God.—See study note on Mt 5:3.

Lazarus: Probably the Greek form of the Hebrew name Eleazar, meaning "God Has Helped."

16:21 dogs: According to the Mosaic Law, dogs were unclean. (Le 11:27) The dogs

that licked the beggar's sores were apparently scavengers that roamed the streets. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the term "dog" is often used in a derogatory sense. (De 23:18, fn.; 1Sa 17:43; 24:14; 2Sa 9:8; 2Ki 8:13; Pr 26:11) At Mt 7:6, the expression "dogs" is figuratively used of people who do not value spiritual treasures. Because dogs were unclean animals to the Jews and thus have an unfavorable figurative sense in the Bible, the mention of "dogs" in this illustration clearly indicates the low state of the beggar named Lazarus.—See study notes on Mt 7:6; 15:26.

16:22 to Abraham's side: Lit., "to the bosom of Abraham." The bosom position was one of special favor and close fellowship. (See study note on Joh 1:18.) This figure of speech is drawn from the practice of reclining on couches at meals

in such a way that one would lean back on the bosom, or chest, of a special friend.—Joh 13:23-25.

16:23 the Grave: Or "Hades," that is, the common grave of mankind.—See  Glossary, "Grave."

by his side: Lit., "in his bosom."—See study note on Lu 16:22.

16:29 They have Moses and the Prophets: That is, the writings of Moses and the prophets, which were read every Sabbath in the synagogues (Ac 15:21) and should have led them to accept Jesus as God's Messiah and King.

Jesus Teaches About Stumbling, Forgiveness, and Faith

17 Then he said to his disciples: “It is unavoidable that causes for stumbling should come. Nevertheless, woe to the one through whom they come!^a **2** It would be more advantageous for him if a millstone were hung from his neck and he were thrown into the sea than for him to stumble one of these little ones.^b **3** Pay attention to yourselves. If your brother commits a sin, rebuke him,^c and if he repents, forgive him.^d **4** Even if he sins seven times a day against you and he comes back to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”^e

5 Now the apostles said to the Lord: “Give us more faith.”^f

6 Then the Lord said: “If you had faith the size of a mustard grain, you would say to this black mulberry tree,^{*} ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea!’ and it would obey you.”^g

Illustration of the Slave Who Attends to His Master’s Needs

7 “Which one of you who has a slave plowing or shepherding would say to him when he comes in from the field, ‘Come here at once and dine at the table’? **8** Rather, will he not say to him, ‘Get something ready for me to have my evening meal, and put on an apron and serve me until I finish eating and drinking, and afterward you can eat and drink’? **9** He will not feel gratitude to the slave because he did what was assigned, will

CHAP. 17

- a Mt 18:7
- b Mt 18:6
Mr 9:42
- c Pr 17:10
- d Le 19:17
Pr 19:11
Mt 18:15
- e Isa 55:7
Mt 6:12
Mt 18:21, 22
Col 3:13
1Pe 4:8
- f Mr 9:23, 24
Heb 12:2
- g Mt 17:20
Mt 21:21
Mr 11:23

FOOTNOTES

17:6 *Or “this sycamine tree.”

STUDY NOTES

17:1 causes for stumbling: Or “stumbling blocks.” The original meaning of the Greek word *skan’da-lon* is thought to have referred to a trap; some suggest that it was the stick in the trap to which bait was attached. By extension, the word came to refer to any impediment that would cause one to stumble or fall. In a figurative sense, it refers to an action or a circumstance that leads a person to follow an improper course, to stumble or fall morally, or to fall into sin. At Lu 17:2, the related verb *skan-da-li’zo*, translated “stumble,” could also be rendered “become a snare to; cause to sin.”

17:2 See  Gallery, image 63, Upper and Lower Millstones.

17:4 seven times a day: This expression may have reminded Peter of the answer Jesus gave on an earlier occasion. Peter had asked Jesus how many times someone should forgive a brother. In that instance, Jesus replied: “Up to 77 times.” (See study note on Mt 18:22.) Neither of Jesus’ comments should be taken literally. “Seven times” here conveys the idea of an indefinite number of times. (Compare the expression “seven times a day” at Ps 119:164, which conveys the idea of repeatedly, constantly, always.) A Christian might sin against his brother seven times in a single day and repent seven times. If on being rebuked he is repentant, the sinner is to be forgiven every time. In those circumstances, forgiveness is to be extended indefinitely, or without limit.—Lu 17:3.

17:6 the size of a mustard grain: Or “as small as a mustard seed.”—See study note on Lu 13:19.

black mulberry tree: Or “sycamine tree.” This tree is mentioned only once in the Bible. The Greek word used was regularly applied to the mulberry tree, and the black mulberry (*Morus nigra*) is commonly cultivated in Israel. It is a sturdy tree that grows to a height of about 6 m (20 ft), with large heart-shaped leaves and dark-red or black fruit resembling the blackberry. This tree is known for having an extensive root system, thus requiring great effort to uproot.

See  Gallery, image 110, Black Mulberry Tree.

CHAP. 17

- a 1Co 9:16
 b Le 13:45, 46
 Mt 8:1, 2
 c Le 14:2-4
 De 24:8
 Mt 8:3, 4
 Lu 5:13, 14
 d 2Ki 5:1
 2Ki 5:14
 e 2Ki 17:24
 Joh 4:9
 f Mt 9:22
 Mr 5:34
 Lu 7:50

he? **10** Likewise, when you have done all the things assigned to you, say: ‘We are good-for-nothing slaves. What we have done is what we ought to have done.’”^a

Jesus Heals Ten Lepers

11 While he was going to Jerusalem, he was passing between Sa-mar'i-a and Gal'i-lee. **12** And as he was entering a village, ten men with leprosy met him, but they stood at a distance.^b **13** And they raised their voices and said: “Jesus, Instructor, have mercy on us!” **14** When he saw them, he said to them: “Go and show yourselves to the priests.”^c Then as they were going off, they were cleansed.^d **15** One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice. **16** And he fell facedown at Jesus’ feet, thanking him. Furthermore, he was a Sa-mar'i-tan.^e **17** In reply Jesus said: “All ten were cleansed, were they not? Where, then, are the other nine? **18** Did no one else turn back to give glory to God except this man of another nation?” **19** Then he said to him: “Get up and be on your way; your faith has made you well.”^{*f}

FOOTNOTES

17:19 * Or “has saved you.”

STUDY NOTES

17:8 **put on an apron:** The Greek word *pe-ri-zon'ny-mai*, rendered “put on an apron,” literally means “gird oneself about,” that is, to bind on an apron or to tighten the garments, often with a belt, in order to be prepared for service. In this context, the Greek word could also be rendered “get dressed and ready to serve.” The Greek word occurs at Lu 12:35, 37 and Eph 6:14.—See study notes on Lu 12:35, 37.

17:10 **good-for-nothing:** Lit., “useless; worthless.” The point of Jesus’ illustration is not that the **slaves**, his disciples, are to consider themselves useless or worthless. According to the context, “good-for-nothing” conveys the idea that the slaves would view themselves modestly, not as deserving special credit or praise. Some scholars consider the term as it is used here to be hyperbole meaning “we are merely slaves deserving no special attention.”

17:11 **While he was going to Jerusalem . . . passing between Samaria and Galilee:**

The final destination of this journey was Jerusalem, but Jesus first traveled N from the city of Ephraim through Samaria and Galilee (probably its southern part) to Perea. During this trip, while Jesus was entering a village either in Samaria or in Galilee, he was met by ten men who had leprosy. (Lu 17:12) This visit to Galilee was his last one prior to his death.—Joh 11:54; see  App. A7.

17:12 **ten men with leprosy:** In Bible times, lepers evidently congregated together or lived in groups, making it possible for them to help one another. (2Ki 7:3-5) God’s Law required that lepers live in isolation. A leper was also to warn others of his presence by calling out: “Unclean, unclean!” (Le 13:45, 46) In line with what the Law prescribed, the lepers **stood at a distance** from Jesus.—See study note on Mt 8:2 and  Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

17:14 **show yourselves to the priests:** Jesus Christ, being under the Law while on earth, recognized the Aaronic priesthood as being in force, and he directed ones whom he cured of leprosy to go to

the priest. (Mt 8:4; Mr 1:44) In accord with the Mosaic Law, a priest had to verify that a leper was healed. The cured leper had to travel to the temple and bring as an offering, or gift, two live clean birds, cedarwood, scarlet material, and hyssop.—Le 14:2-32.

they were cleansed: This healing of the ten lepers by Jesus is reported by Luke alone.

The Coming of God's Kingdom

CHAP. 17

20 On being asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God was coming,^a he answered them: “The Kingdom of God is not coming with striking observableness; **21** nor will people say, ‘See here!’ or, ‘There!’ For look! the Kingdom of God is in your midst.”^b

22 Then he said to the disciples: “Days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, but you will not see it.^c **23** And people will say to you, ‘See there!’ or, ‘See here!’ Do not go out or chase after them.^d **24** For just as lightning flashes from one part of heaven to another part of heaven, so the Son of man^e will be in his day.^f **25** First, however, he must undergo many sufferings and be rejected by this generation.^g **26** Moreover, just as it occurred in the days of Noah,^h so it will be in the days of the Son of man:ⁱ **27** they were eating, they were drinking, men were marrying, women were being given in marriage until that day when Noah entered into the ark,^j and the Flood came and destroyed them all.^k **28** Likewise, just as it occurred in the days of Lot:^l they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building. **29** But on the day that Lot went out of Sod’om, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed them all.^m **30** It will be the same on that day when the Son of man is revealed.ⁿ

a Mt 24:3
 b Mt 12:28
 Mt 21:5
 c Mt 9:15
 Lu 5:35
 d Mt 24:23, 26
 Mr 13:21
 Lu 21:8
 1Jo 4:1
 e Da 7:13
 f Mt 24:27
 g Mr 8:31
 Mr 9:31
 Lu 9:22
 h Ge 6:5
 i Mt 24:37-39
 j Ge 7:7
 k Ge 7:17
 Ge 7:21
 l Ge 19:15
 m Ge 19:24, 25
 n 1Co 1:7
 2Th 1:7, 8

STUDY NOTES

17:20 with striking observableness: The Greek expression used here occurs only once in the Christian Greek Scriptures and is derived from a verb meaning “to watch closely; to observe.” According to some scholars, medical writers used this expression when they described watching the symptoms of disease. The way the word is used here seems to convey the idea that **the Kingdom of God** is not coming in a way that is obvious to all.

17:21 is in your midst: Or “is among you.” The pronoun “you” is plural in the original Greek and obviously refers to the Pharisees, to whom Jesus was speaking. (Lu 17:20; compare Mt 23:13.) Jesus was God’s royal representative, the one anointed by God for the kingship; hence, it could be said that “the Kingdom” was in their midst. Not only was he present in

this capacity but he also had authority to perform works manifesting God’s kingly power and to prepare candidates for positions within his coming Kingdom.—Lu 22:29-30.

17:24 just as lightning flashes: Jesus’ presence was to resemble lightning in that the evidence of his presence in Kingdom power would be clearly visible to all attentive onlookers.

so the Son of man will be in his day: Or possibly, “so the Son of man will be.” Some ancient manuscripts use the shorter reading, whereas other ancient manuscripts use this reading in the main text, as do many Bible translations.

17:26 the days of Noah: In the Bible, the term “day(s) of” is sometimes used with reference to the time period of a particular person. (Isa 1:1; Jer 1:2, 3; Lu 17:28) Here “the days of Noah” are compared to

the days of the Son of man. In a similar statement recorded at Mt 24:37, the term “the presence of the Son of man” is used. Jesus does not limit the comparison just to the coming of the Flood as a final climax during Noah’s days, though he shows that his “days” or “presence” will see a similar climax. “The days of Noah” actually covered a period of years, so there is basis for believing that the foretold “days [or, “presence”] of the Son of man” would likewise cover a period of years, being climaxed by the destruction of those who do not seek deliverance.—See study note on Mt 24:3.

17:27 ark: See study note on Mt 24:38.

Flood: Or “deluge; cataclysm.” The Greek word *ka-ta-kly-smos*’ denotes a large flood with destructive force, and the Bible uses the word with reference to the

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- a Mt 24:17, 18
Mr 13:15, 16
- b Ge 19:17
Ge 19:26
- c Mt 10:39
Mt 16:25
Mr 8:35
Lu 9:24
Joh 12:25
- d Mt 24:40, 41
- e Mt 24:28

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- f Lu 11:9
Ro 12:12
Eph 6:18
Php 4:6
Col 4:2
1Th 5:17

31 “On that day let the person who is on the housetop but whose belongings are in the house not come down to pick these up, and likewise, the person out in the field must not return to the things behind.^a **32** Remember the wife of Lot.^b **33** Whoever seeks to keep his life safe will lose it, but whoever loses it will preserve it alive.^c **34** I tell you, in that night two people will be in one bed; the one will be taken along, but the other will be abandoned.^d **35** There will be two women grinding at the same mill; the one will be taken along, but the other will be abandoned.” **36** — **37** So in response they said to him: “Where, Lord?” He said to them: “Where the body is, there also the eagles will be gathered together.”^e

Illustration of the Persistent Widow

18 Then he went on to tell them an illustration about the need for them always to pray and not to give up,^f **2** saying: “In a certain city there was a judge who had no fear of God and no respect for man. **3** There was also a widow in that city who kept going to him and saying, ‘See that I get justice from my legal opponent.’ **4** Well, for a while he was unwilling, but

STUDY NOTES

Deluge of Noah’s day.—Ge 6:17, *Septuagint*; Mt 24:38, 39; 2Pe 2:5.

17:31 on the housetop: The roofs of houses were flat and were used for many purposes, including storage (Jos 2:6), rest (2Sa 11:2), sleep (1Sa 9:26), and festivals for worship (Ne 8:16-18). That is why a parapet was required. (De 22:8) Generally, an external stairway or ladder allowed a householder to leave the rooftop without having to enter the house, which helps us understand how a person could heed Jesus’ warning and shows how urgent the situation would be.

17:33 life: Or “soul.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

17:34 be taken along: The Greek term rendered “taken along” is used in different contexts, often in a positive sense. For instance, at Mt 1:20, it is rendered “take . . . home”; at Mt 17:1, “took . . . along”; and at Joh 14:3, “receive . . . home.” In this context, it evidently refers to receiving a favorable standing with the “Lord” and being saved. (Lu 17:37) It may also

correspond to Noah’s being taken into the ark on the day of the Flood and to Lot’s being taken by the hand and led out of Sodom. (Lu 17:26-29) To be **abandoned** would then mean to be judged worthy of destruction.

17:36 A few ancient manuscripts here include the words: “Two men will be in the field; one will be taken along, and the other will be abandoned.” However, these words do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and are evidently not part of the original text of Luke. Similar words, though, can be found at Mt 24:40 as part of the inspired text. Some scholars are of the opinion that a copyist inserted the words from Matthew’s account into Luke’s account.—See  App. A3.

18:1 an illustration: Or “a parable.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

the need for them always to pray: Luke alone mentions the illustration recorded in verses 2-8, providing another example of how his Gospel emphasizes the matter of prayer.—Lu 1:10, 13; 2:37; 3:21; 6:12; 9:28, 29; 11:1; 18:1-8; 22:39-46; 23:46.

18:2 a judge: Jesus is apparently referring to a judge or police magistrate appointed by the Romans. It seems that the judge mentioned in this illustration does not fit into the Jewish judicial arrangement in which at least a three-man court officiated. Also, the judge did not fear God and had **no respect for** any human, that is, he was not concerned about what other people thought.

afterward he said to himself, ‘Although I do not fear God or respect any man, **5** because this widow keeps making me trouble, I will see that she gets justice so that she will not keep coming and wearing me out with her demand.’^a **6** Then the Lord said: “Hear what the judge, although unrighteous, said! **7** Certainly, then, will not God cause justice to be done for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night,^b while he is patient toward them?^c **8** I tell you, he will cause justice to be done to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man arrives, will he really find this faith on the earth?”

CHAP. 18

- a Lu 11:7, 8
- b Re 6:9, 10
- c 2Pe 3:9
- d Lu 10:29
- e Joh 7:47-49
- f Le 27:30
Mt 23:23

Illustration of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

9 He also told this illustration to some who trusted in their own righteousness^d and who considered others as nothing: **10** “Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11** The Pharisee stood and began to pray these things to himself, ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like everyone else—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even like this tax collector.’^e **12** I fast twice a week; I give the tenth of all things I acquire.’^f **13** But the tax collector, standing at a distance, was not willing even to raise his eyes

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18:4 not . . . respect any man: In this context, it means not being constrained by public opinion or not being overly concerned about what other people think.—See study note on Lu 18:2.

18:5 wearing me out with her demand: Or “pummeling me to a finish.” Lit., “hitting me under [that is, under the eye] into the end.” The Greek verb *hy-po-pi-a’zo* used here has been defined “to strike in the face; to give a black eye.” Here it is evidently used figuratively to convey the idea of causing someone constant annoyance or wearing someone out completely. Some scholars feel that the term conveys the idea of damaging someone’s reputation. As the expression is used in this context, it describes the feeling of the judge, who was at first unwilling to listen to the widow’s plea for justice but who was moved to act because of her persistence. (Lu 18:1-4) The illustration does not say that God is like the unrighteous

judge; rather, it contrasts God with the judge. If this unrighteous judge would eventually do what was right, how much more so would God! Like the widow, God’s servants must persist in asking Jehovah for his help. God, who is righteous, will respond in answer to their prayer, causing justice to be done.—Lu 18:6, 7.

18:8 this faith: Or “this kind of faith.” Lit., “the faith.” The use of the Greek definite article before the word “faith” indicates that Jesus was referring, not to faith in a general sense, but to a particular kind of faith, like that of the widow in Jesus’ illustration. (Lu 18:1-8) This would include having faith in the power of prayer as well as faith that God will cause justice to be done to his chosen ones. Jesus apparently left the question about faith unanswered so that his disciples would think about the quality of their own faith. The illustration about prayer and faith was particularly appropriate because Jesus had just been describing the tests his disciples would face.—Lu 17:22-37.

18:10 the temple: Those who went to the temple to pray did not go into the Holy or the Most Holy, but they were permitted to enter the surrounding courtyards. Evidently, in this illustration the two Jewish men are portrayed as standing in one of the courts.—See  App. B11.

18:11 extortioners: When the Romans ruled Israel, Jewish tax collectors were often guilty of extortion. Their position provided them with many opportunities to enrich themselves unjustly (and undoubtedly their Roman masters) at the expense of the people. Jesus may have alluded to this practice when in this illustration he spoke of the self-righteous Pharisee’s commending himself to God for not being an extortioner.

18:12 fast twice a week: Although the Mosaic Law does not use the term “fast,” it is generally understood that the command to “afflict yourselves” once a year in connection with the Atonement Day involved fasting. (Le 16:29, ftn.; Nu 29:7, ftn.; Ps 35:13) Later, other annual fasts

CHAP. 18

- a Ps 51:1-3
 b Isa 66:2
 Mt 21:28-31
 c Isa 2:11
 Mt 23:12
 Jas 4:6
 1Pe 5:5
 d Mt 19:13-15
 Mr 10:13-16
 e 1Pe 2:2
 f Mt 18:3
 Mr 10:15
 g Mt 19:16-22
 Mr 10:17-22
 Lu 10:25-28
 h Mt 19:17
 Mr 10:18
 i Ex 20:14
 De 5:18
 j Ex 20:13
 De 5:17
 k Ex 20:15
 De 5:19
 l Ex 20:16
 De 5:20
 m Ex 20:12
 De 5:16
 Ro 13:9
 Eph 6:2

heavenward but kept beating his chest, saying, ‘O God, be gracious to me, a sinner.’^a **14** I tell you, this man went down to his home and was proved more righteous than that Pharisee.^b Because everyone who exalts himself will be humiliated, but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”^c

Jesus and the Young Children

15 Now people were also bringing him their infants for him to touch them, but on seeing this, the disciples began to reprimand them.^d **16** However, Jesus called the infants to him, saying: “Let the young children come to me, and do not try to stop them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such ones.^e **17** Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a young child will by no means enter into it.”^f

A Rich Ruler’s Question

18 And one of the rulers questioned him, saying: “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life?”^g **19** Jesus said to him: “Why do you call me good? Nobody is good except one, God.^h **20** You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,ⁱ do not murder,^j do not steal,^k do not bear false witness,^l honor your father and your mother.’”^m **21** Then he said: “All of these I have kept from youth on.” **22** After hearing that, Jesus said to him, “There is still one thing lacking about you: Sell all the things you have and distribute the

STUDY NOTES

were gradually established in memory of national calamities. However, the Pharisees customarily fasted “twice a week,” on the second and fifth day of the week. They wanted their piety to be observed. (Mt 6:16) According to some sources, the days they chose for fasting were the regular market days, when many people would be in town. They also fasted when special services were held in the synagogues and when the local courts met.

18:13 be gracious to me: Or “have mercy on me.” The Greek word for the expression “be gracious” occurs only twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures and is connected with the idea of propitiation, or atonement. At Heb 2:17 (see also fn.), it is rendered “to offer a propitiatory [“atonement”] sacrifice,” or “to make atonement.”

18:15 infants: Or “babies.” The Greek word *bre’phos* used here refers to very small children, infants, or even unborn children. (Lu 1:41; 2:12; Ac 7:19; 2Ti 3:15, “infancy”; 1Pe 2:2) The parallel accounts at Mt 19:13 and Mr 10:13 use *pai-di’on*, a different Greek word that is used not only of newborns and infants (Mt 2:8; Lu 1:59) but also of Jairus’ 12-year-old daughter (Mr 5:39-42). The Gospel writers’ use of different Greek words may indicate that on this occasion the children were of varying ages, though Luke evidently focuses on the infants who were present.

18:17 like a young child: See study note on Mr 10:15.

18:18 Good Teacher: See study note on Mr 10:17.

18:22 Jesus said to him: Jesus saw how earnest the ruler was and, according to Mr 10:21, “felt love for him.” However,

Jesus may have realized that the man would need to cultivate a greater degree of self-sacrifice to become a disciple, so he told him: **Sell all the things you have and distribute the proceeds to the poor.** Unlike Peter and others who left everything to follow Jesus, this young man could not part with his possessions to become a disciple.—Mt 4:20, 22; Lu 18:23, 28.

proceeds to the poor, and you will have treasure in the heavens; and come be my follower.”^a **23** When he heard this, he became deeply grieved, for he was very rich.^b

24 Jesus looked at him and said: “How difficult it will be for those having money to make their way into the Kingdom of God!^c **25** It is easier, in fact, for a camel to get through the eye of a sewing needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.”^d **26** Those who heard this said: “Who possibly can be saved?”^e **27** He said: “The things impossible with men are possible with God.”^f **28** But Peter said: “Look! We have left what was ours and followed you.”^g **29** He said to them: “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God^h **30** who will not get many times more in this period of time,^{*} and in the coming system of things, everlasting life.”ⁱ

Jesus Again Foretells His Death and Resurrection

31 Then he took the Twelve aside and said to them: “Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and all the things written by means of the prophets^j about the Son of man will be accomplished.^{*k} **32** For instance, he will be handed over to men of the nations^l and will be mocked^m and treated insolently and spat on.ⁿ **33** And after scourging him, they will kill him,^o but on the third day he will rise.”^p **34** However, they did not get the meaning of any of these things, for these words were hidden from them, and they did not understand the things said.^q

^p Mr 10:33, 34; Lu 9:22; ^q Mr 9:31, 32.

CHAP. 18

- a Mt 6:20
Mt 19:21
Mr 10:21
Lu 12:33
1Ti 6:18, 19
- b Mt 19:22
Mr 10:22
- c Pr 11:28
Mt 19:23
Mr 10:23, 24
1Ti 6:9
- d Mt 19:24
Mr 10:25
- e Mt 19:25
- f Ge 18:14
Jer 32:17
Zec 8:6
Mt 19:26
Mr 10:27
- g Mt 19:27
- h Mt 19:28, 29
Mr 10:29, 30
- i Re 2:10
- j Ps 16:10
Ps 22:16-18
Ps 34:20
Ps 41:9
Ps 69:21
Isa 53
Mic 5:1
Zec 9:9
Zec 11:12
Zec 13:7
- k Mt 16:21
Mt 20:17-19
Mr 10:32-34
- l Ps 2:1, 2
Mt 27:2
Ac 3:13
Ac 4:27, 28
- m Ps 22:7
- n Isa 50:6
- o Isa 53:5
Isa 53:7

FOOTNOTES

18:30 *Or “in the present time.” **18:31** *Or “completed.”

STUDY NOTES

18:25 easier . . . for a camel to get through the eye of a sewing needle: Jesus uses hyperbole to illustrate a point. Just as a literal camel cannot go through the eye of a needle, it is impossible for a rich man to **enter the Kingdom of God** if he continues to put his riches ahead of his relationship with Jehovah. Jesus did not mean that no wealthy person would inherit the Kingdom, for he went on to say: “The things impossible with

men are possible with God.” (Lu 18:27) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *be-lo’ne*, rendered “sewing needle,” is used only here. It was sometimes used to refer to a surgical needle, whereas the Greek word *rha-phis*, translated “needle,” is found in the parallel accounts at Mt 19:24 and Mr 10:25 and is drawn from a verb meaning “to sew.”

18:30 the coming system of things: Or “the coming age.” The Greek word *ai-on*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. Jesus is here referring to the coming era of God’s Kingdom rule, under which faithful ones will enjoy **ever-**

lasting life.—Mr 10:29, 30; see  Glossary, “System(s) of things.”

18:31 going up to Jerusalem: See study note on Mt 20:17.

18:32 spat on: See study note on Mr 10:34.

18:35 Jericho: The first Canaanite city W of the Jordan River to be conquered by the Israelites. (Nu 22:1; Jos 6:1, 24, 25) This ancient city was eventually abandoned, but after the Jews returned from Babylonian exile, another Jewish city was developed at the site because a good water source (‘Ein es-Sultan) was located there. By Jesus’ time, a new Roman city had been built about 2 km (a little

CHAP. 18

Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar

^a Mt 20:29–34
Mr 10:46–52

^b Lu 7:50
Lu 17:19

^c Mt 20:34

^d Lu 5:26

35 Now as Jesus was getting near to Jer'i-cho, a blind man was sitting beside the road begging.^a **36** Because he heard a crowd passing by, he began to inquire what was going on. **37** They reported to him: "Jesus the Naz-a-rene' is passing by!" **38** At that he cried out: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" **39** And those who were in front began rebuking him, telling him to keep quiet, but all the more he kept shouting: "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **40** Then Jesus stopped and commanded that the man be brought to him. After he came near, Jesus asked him: **41** "What do you want me to do for you?" He said: "Lord, let me recover my sight." **42** So Jesus said to him: "Recover your sight; your faith has made you well."^b **43** And instantly he recovered his sight, and he began to follow him,^c glorifying God. Also, at seeing it, all the people gave praise to God.^d

Jesus Visits Zacchaeus

19 He then entered Jer'i-cho and was passing through. **2** Now a man named Zac-chae'us was there; he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. **3** Well, he was trying to see who this Jesus was, but he could not see because of the crowd, since he was short. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree* in order to see him, for he was about to pass that way. **5** Now when Jesus got to the place, he looked up and said to him: "Zac-chae'us, hurry and get down, for today I must stay in your house." **6** With that he hurried down and joyfully welcomed him as a guest. **7** When they saw this, they were all muttering: "He went as a guest to the house of a man who is

FOOTNOTES

18:42 *Or "has saved you." **19:4** *Or "a fig-mulberry tree."

STUDY NOTES

over a mile) S of the Jewish city. This may explain why the accounts of Matthew and Mark say of the same incident that Jesus was "going out of Jer'i-cho" (Mt 20:29; Mr 10:46), whereas Luke's account says that Jesus was **getting near to Jericho**. Perhaps Jesus cures the blind man while leaving the Jewish city and approaching the Roman city.—See  App. B4 and B10.

a blind man: Matthew's account (20:30) of this event states that two blind men were present. Mark (10:46) and Luke each mention one, evidently focusing on the one named Bartimaeus, whose name appears only in Mark's account.

18:39 Son of David: Addressing Jesus as "Son of David," the blind man openly acknowledges him as the Messiah.—See study notes on Mt 1:1, 6.

19:2 Zacchaeus: From a Hebrew name, possibly from a root word meaning "clean; pure." As **a chief tax collector**, it seems that Zacchaeus was over other tax collectors in and around Jericho. The

district around this city was fertile and productive, yielding considerable tax revenue. Zacchaeus **was rich**, and his own words (Lu 19:8) indicate that he used questionable practices to accumulate at least part of his wealth.

19:4 See  Gallery, image 111, Sycamore Tree.

a sinner.”^a **8** But Zac-chae’us stood up and said to the Lord: “Look! The half of my belongings, Lord, I am giving to the poor, and whatever I extorted from anyone, I am restoring four times over.”^b **9** At this Jesus said to him: “Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of man came to seek and to save what was lost.”^c

Illustration of the Ten Minas

11 While they were listening to these things, he told another illustration, because he was near Jerusalem and they thought that the Kingdom of God was going to appear instantly.^d **12** So he said: “A man of noble birth traveled to a distant land^e to secure kingly power for himself and to return. **13** Calling ten of his slaves, he gave them ten mi’nas and told them, ‘Do business with these until I come.’^f **14** But his citizens hated him and sent out a body of ambassadors after him to say, ‘We do not want this man to become king over us.’

15 “When he eventually got back after having secured the kingly power, he summoned the slaves to whom he had given the money, in order to ascertain what they had gained by their business activity.^g **16** So the first one came forward and said, ‘Lord, your mi’na gained ten mi’nas.’^h **17** He said to him, ‘Well done, good slave! Because in a very small matter you have proved yourself faithful, hold authority over ten cities.’ⁱ **18** Now the second came, saying, ‘Your mi’na, Lord, made five mi’nas.’^j **19** He said to this one as well, ‘You too be in charge

CHAP. 19

- a Mt 9:11
Lu 5:30
Lu 15:2
- b Ex 22:1
Le 6:4, 5
Lu 3:12-14
- c Eze 34:16
Mt 9:13
Mt 15:24
Lu 15:4
Ro 5:8
1Ti 1:15
- d Ac 1:6
- e Mt 25:14
Mr 13:34
Joh 18:36
- f Mt 25:15
- g Mt 25:19
- h Mt 25:20, 21
- i Lu 16:10
- j Mt 25:22, 23

STUDY NOTES

19:8 extorted: Or “extorted by false accusation.”—See study note on Lu 3:14.

four times over: Zacchaeus could likely calculate from his tax records just how much he had received from various Jews, and he vowed to make a fourfold restitution. That is even more than God’s Law required. In such cases of repentance and admission of guilt, the Law ordered that the defrauder pay back the full amount and “add to it a fifth [that is, 20 percent] of its value,” but Zacchaeus said that he would repay four times the amount. As fruitage of his repentance, he thus showed not only love for the poor but also justice toward oppressed ones.—Le 6:2-5; Nu 5:7.

19:11 illustration: Or “parable.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

19:12 to secure kingly power: Or “to secure a kingdom.” The Greek word *ba-si-lei’a*, most often rendered “kingdom,” has a broad meaning and often refers to a royal government as well as to the territory and peoples under the rule of a king. (See study notes on Mt 3:2; 25:34.) It may also signify kingship, the royal office or position of the king, with its accompanying dignity, power, and authority. In the Roman Empire, it was not uncommon for a person of noble birth to travel to Rome in quest of kingly power. Jesus’ parable may well have reminded his listeners of Archelaus, a son of Herod the Great. Before Herod the Great died, he designated Archelaus as heir to rulership over Judea and other areas.

However, to secure the rulership, Archelaus first made the long journey to Rome in order to get the approval of Caesar Augustus.

19:13 minas: A Greek mina was not a coin but a unit of weight of some 340 g (10.9 oz t) and, according to ancient Greek writers, was reckoned to have a monetary value equal to 100 drachmas. Since the drachma was worth nearly as much as a denarius, a mina was a considerable sum. (See [L](#) Glossary, “Denarius.”) A Greek mina was different from the Hebrew mina.—See [L](#) Glossary, “Mina,” and [E](#) App. B14.

19:15 the kingly power: Or “the kingdom.”—See study note on Lu 19:12.

19:15, 23 money: See study note on Mt 25:18.

CHAP. 19

- a Mt 25:24
 b Mt 25:26, 27
 c Mt 25:28
 d Mt 13:12
 Mt 25:29
 Mr 4:25
 Lu 8:18
 e Ac 1:12
 f Mt 21:1-3
 Mr 11:1-6
 g Mt 21:6, 7

of five cities.’ **20** But another one came, saying, ‘Lord, here is your mi’na that I kept hidden away in a cloth. **21** You see, I was in fear of you, because you are a harsh man; you take what you did not deposit, and you reap what you did not sow.’^a **22** He said to him, ‘By your own words I judge you, wicked slave. You knew, did you, that I am a harsh man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow?’^b **23** So why did you not put my money in a bank? Then on my coming, I would have collected it with interest.’

24 “With that he said to those standing by, ‘Take the mi’na from him and give it to the one who has the ten mi’nas.’^c **25** But they said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten mi’nas!’— **26** ‘I say to you, to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.’^d **27** Moreover, bring these enemies of mine here who did not want me to become king over them and execute them in front of me.”

Jesus’ Triumphal Entry

28 After he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. **29** And when he got near to Beth’pha-ge and Beth’a-ny at the mountain called Mount of Olives,^e he sent two of the disciples,^f **30** saying: “Go into the village that is within sight, and after you enter it, you will find a colt tied, on which no man has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. **31** But if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ you must say, ‘The Lord needs it.’” **32** So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had said to them.^g **33** But as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them: “Why are you untying the colt?”

STUDY NOTES

19:23 bank: In the parable of the minas in Luke’s Gospel, as well as in the illustration about the talents in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus referred to a bank and to bankers who give interest on money deposited with them. (Mt 25:14-30; Lu 19:12-27) The Greek word *tra’pe-za*, here rendered “bank,” literally means “table.” (Mt 15:27) When associated with financial operations, such as the money changers, this word refers to a table or a counter for displaying coins. (Mt 21:12; Mr 11:15; Joh 2:15) During the first century C.E., moneylenders, or bankers, were prominent in Israel and surrounding nations.

interest: The Law forbade the Israelites to charge interest on loans to needy fellow Jews. (Ex 22:25) But interest was specifically allowed on loans to foreigners, likely for business ventures. (De 23:20) It seems that in Jesus’ day, it was common to receive interest on funds deposited with moneylenders.

19:25 —: The em dash helps the reader to see that there is a change of speaker, since this is not specifically indicated in the text. In verse 26, the master of the slaves is speaking.

19:29 Bethphage: See study note on Mt 21:1.

Bethany: See study note on Mt 21:17.

See  Gallery, image 67, Bethphage, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem.

19:30 a colt: See study notes on Mt 21:2; Mr 11:2.

See  Gallery, image 68, Colt, or Young Donkey.

34 They said: “The Lord needs it.” **35** And they led it to Jesus, and they threw their outer garments on the colt and seated Jesus on it.^a

36 As he moved along, they were spreading their outer garments on the road.^b **37** As soon as he got near the road down the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and to praise God with a loud voice because of all the powerful works they had seen, **38** saying: “Blessed is the one coming as the King in Jehovah’s name! Peace in heaven, and glory in the heights above!”^c **39** However, some of the Pharisees from the crowd said to him: “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.”^d **40** But in reply he said: “I tell you, if these remained silent, the stones would cry out.”

Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem

41 And when he got nearby, he viewed the city and wept over it,^e **42** saying: “If you, even you, had discerned on this day the things having to do with peace^f—but now they have been hidden from your eyes.^g **43** Because the days will come upon you when your enemies will build around you a fortification of pointed stakes and will encircle you and besiege you* from every side.^h **44** They will dash you and your children within you to the ground,ⁱ and they will not leave a stone upon a stone in you,^j because you did not discern the time of your being inspected.”

CHAP. 19

- a Zec 9:9
Mr 11:7-10
Joh 12:14, 15
- b 2Ki 9:13
Mt 21:8
- c Ps 118:26
Mt 21:9
Mr 11:9
- d Mt 21:15
Joh 12:19
- e Joh 11:35
- f Lu 1:76, 79
- g Isa 6:9, 10
Mt 13:14
- h De 28:52
Da 9:26
Lu 21:20
- i Lu 23:28, 29
- j Mic 3:12
Mt 24:2
Mr 13:2
Lu 21:6

FOOTNOTES

19:38 *Or “in the highest places.”

19:43 *Or “hem you in; distress you.”

STUDY NOTES

19:38 Jehovah’s: In this quote from Ps 118:26, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

19:40 the stones would cry out: As the context shows, Jesus was speaking about the particular declaration his disciples were making and to which the Pharisees objected. (Lu 19:37-39) The disciples were using the words recorded at Ps 118:26. That prophetic psalm was certain to be fulfilled on this occasion, for Jehovah’s words do not return to him “without

results.” (Isa 55:11) If the disciples had been forced to be silent at this time, the literal stones would have cried out in order to fulfill this prophecy.

19:41 wept: The Greek word for “wept” often refers to weeping audibly.

19:43 fortification of pointed stakes: Or “palisade.” The Greek word *kha’rax* occurs only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It has been defined as a “pointed stick or post used to fence in an area; stake” and also as a “military installation involving the use of stakes; palisade.” Jesus’ words came true in the year 70 C.E. when the Romans, commanded by Titus, erected a siege wall, or palisade, around Jerusalem. Titus’ objective was threefold—to prevent the Jews from fleeing, to encourage their surrender, and to starve the inhabitants into

submission. To provide materials for the construction of this fortification around Jerusalem, Roman troops stripped the countryside of trees.

19:44 they will not leave a stone upon a stone: See study note on Mt 24:2.

the time of your being inspected: Or “the appointed time of your inspection.” The Greek word *e-pi-sko-pe’* (inspection; visitation) is related to the words *e-pi’sko-pos* (overseer) and *e-pi-sko-pe’o* (watch over; watch carefully) and can have a positive or a negative connotation. For unfaithful Jews, who did not discern this time of inspection in connection with Jesus’ earthly ministry, it would result in adverse judgment by God. However, those who did discern this time of inspection and took advantage of it to repent and show faith in God would have God’s

CHAP. 19

- a Mt 21:12
Mr 11:15, 16
- b Isa 56:7
- c Jer 7:11
Mt 21:13
Mr 11:17
Joh 2:16
- d Mr 11:18
- e Mr 12:37
Lu 21:38

CHAP. 20

- f Mt 21:23-27
Mr 11:27-33
- g Mt 14:3, 5
Lu 7:29
- h Isa 5:7

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

45 Then he entered the temple and started to throw out those who were selling,^a **46** saying to them: “It is written, ‘My house will be a house of prayer,’^b but you have made it a cave of robbers.”^c

47 He continued teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the principal ones of the people were seeking to kill him;^d **48** but they did not find any way to do this, for the people one and all kept hanging on to him to hear him.^e

Jesus’ Authority Challenged

20 On one of the days while he was teaching the people in the temple and declaring the good news, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came **2** and said to him: “Tell us, by what authority do you do these things? Or who gave you this authority?”^f **3** He replied to them: “I will also ask you a question, and you tell me: **4** Was the baptism* of John from heaven or from men?”^g **5** Then they drew conclusions among themselves, saying: “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why did you not believe him?’ **6** But if we say, ‘From men,’ the people one and all will stone us, for they are convinced that John was a prophet.”^g **7** So they replied that they did not know its source. **8** Jesus said to them: “Neither am I telling you by what authority I do these things.”

Illustration of Murderous Cultivators

9 Then he began to tell the people this illustration: “A man planted a vineyard^h and leased it to cultivators, and he traveled

FOOTNOTES

20:4 * Or “immersion; dipping.” # Or “of human origin.”

STUDY NOTES

approval. The same Greek word is used in the *Septuagint* at Isa 10:3 and Jer 10:15 to render a Hebrew expression for “day of reckoning (punishment).”

See  Gallery, image 76, Stones From the Temple Mount.

19:45 temple: See study note on Mt 21:12.

throw out those who were selling: On Nisan 10, 33 C.E., Jesus cleanses the temple a second time. This occasion is described in the Gospels of Matthew (21:12-17), Mark (11:15-18), and Luke. The first cleansing took place in connection with the Passover of 30 C.E. and is described at Joh 2:13-17.

19:46 cave of robbers: See study note on Mt 21:13.

20:1 chief priests: See study note on Mt 2:4.

scribes: See study note on Mt 2:4.

elders: See study note on Mt 16:21.

20:9 illustration: Or “parable.”—See study note on Mt 13:3.

leased: See study note on Mt 21:33.

abroad for a considerable time.^a **10** In due season he sent a slave to the cultivators so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. The cultivators, however, sent him away empty-handed, after beating him.^b **11** But again he sent another slave. That one also they beat and humiliated* and sent away empty-handed. **12** Yet again he sent a third; this one also they wounded and threw out. **13** At this the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What should I do? I will send my son, the beloved.^c They will likely respect this one.’ **14** When the cultivators caught sight of him, they reasoned with one another, saying, ‘This is the heir. Let us kill him so that the inheritance may become ours.’ **15** So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.^d What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do to them? **16** He will come and kill these cultivators and will give the vineyard to others.”

On hearing this, they said: “Never may that happen!” **17** But he looked straight at them and said: “What, then, does this mean where it is written: ‘The stone that the builders rejected, this has become the chief cornerstone’?^e **18** Everyone falling on that stone will be shattered.^f As for anyone on whom it falls, it will crush him.”

God and Caesar

19 The scribes and the chief priests then sought to get their hands on him in that very hour, but they feared the people, for they realized that he told this illustration with them in mind.^g **20** And after observing him closely, they sent men whom they had secretly hired to pretend that they were righteous in order to catch him in his speech,^h so as to turn him over to

CHAP. 20

- a Mt 21:33-41
Mr 12:1-9
- b 2Ki 17:13, 14
2Ch 36:15, 16
Ac 7:52
Heb 11:36, 37
- c Mt 17:5
Joh 3:16
- d Ac 3:15
- e Ps 118:22
Isa 28:16
Mt 21:42, 44
Mr 12:10, 11
Ac 4:11
Ro 9:31-33
1Pe 2:7
- f Isa 8:14, 15
- g Mt 21:45, 46
Mr 12:12
- h Mt 22:15-22
Mr 12:13-17
Lu 11:53, 54

FOOTNOTES

20:11 *Or “dishonored; treated shamefully.”

STUDY NOTES

20:9 **for a considerable time:** Only Luke adds this expression in the illustration of the murderous vineyard cultivators. —Compare the parallel accounts at Mt 21:33 and Mr 12:1.

20:17 **the chief cornerstone:** See study note on Mt 21:42.

20:22 **Caesar:** See study note on Mt 22:17.

20:24 **denarius:** This Roman silver coin with an inscription of Caesar was “the tax coin” that the Romans exacted from the Jews. (Mt 22:17, 19; Lu 20:22) In Jesus’ day, agricultural laborers commonly received a denarius for a 12-hour workday, and the Christian Greek Scriptures often use the denarius as a basis for calculating other monetary values. (Mt 20:2; Mr 6:37; 14:5; Re 6:6) A variety of copper and silver coins were used in Israel, including silver coins minted in Tyre that were used for the temple tax. Yet, for paying taxes to Rome, people evidently used the silver denarius bearing the image of Caesar. —See

 Glossary and  App. B14.

image and inscription: See study note on Mt 22:20.

20:25 **pay back:** See study note on Mt 22:21.

Caesar’s things to Caesar: Jesus’ reply here, and in the parallel accounts at Mt 22:21 and Mr 12:17, is his only recorded reference to the Roman emperor. “Caesar’s things” include payment for services rendered by the secular government as well as the honor and relative subjection that is to be shown to such authorities. —Ro 13:1-7.

God’s things to God: See study note on Mt 22:21.

CHAP. 20

- a Ro 13:7
Tit 3:1
1Pe 2:13
- b Da 3:17, 18
Mal 3:8
Mt 22:21
Mr 12:17
Lu 23:2
- c Ac 23:8
- d Mt 22:23-28
Mr 12:18-23
- e Ge 38:7, 8
De 25:5, 6

the government and to the authority of the governor. **21** And they questioned him, saying: “Teacher, we know you speak and teach correctly and show no partiality, but you teach the way of God in line with truth: **22** Is it lawful* for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” **23** But he detected their cunning and said to them: **24** “Show me a de-nar’i-us. Whose image and inscription does it have?” They said: “Caesar’s.” **25** He said to them: “By all means, then, pay back Caesar’s things to Caesar^a but God’s things to God.”^b **26** Well, they were not able to trap him in his speech before the people, but amazed at his answer, they became silent.

Question About Resurrection

27 However, some of the Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection,^c came and asked him:^d **28** “Teacher, Moses wrote us, ‘If a man’s brother dies, leaving a wife, but he was childless, his brother should take the wife and raise up offspring for his brother.’^e **29** Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife but died childless. **30** So the second **31** and the third married her. Likewise even all seven; they died and left no children. **32** Finally the woman also died. **33** Consequently, in the resurrection, whose wife will she become? For the seven had her as a wife.”

34 Jesus said to them: “The children of this system of things marry and are given in marriage, **35** but those who have been

FOOTNOTES

20:22 *Or “right.”

STUDY NOTES

20:27 Sadducees: This is the only mention of the Sadducees in the Gospel of Luke. (See [LJ](#) Glossary.) The name (Greek, *Sad-dou-kai’os*) is likely connected with Zadok (often spelled *Sad-douk’* in the *Septuagint*), who was made high priest in the days of Solomon and whose descendants evidently served as priests for centuries.—1Ki 2:35.

resurrection: The Greek word *a-na’sta-sis* literally means “raising up; standing up.” It is used about 40 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures with reference to the resurrection of the dead. (Mt 22:23, 31; Lu 20:33; Ac 4:2; 24:15; 1Co 15:12, 13) In the *Septuagint* at Isa 26:19, the verb form of

a-na’sta-sis is used to render the Hebrew verb “to live” in the expression “Your dead will live.”—See [LJ](#) Glossary.

20:31 married her: See study note on Mr 12:21.

20:34 children: Or “people.” Lit., “sons.” In this context, the Greek word for “son” is used in a broader sense than merely referring to immediate male offspring. That both men and women are included is clear from the use of the Greek word for **given in marriage**, a term that is used about women. In this context, the whole expression, “children of this system of things” is evidently an idiom for people whose attitudes and lifestyle reflect the characteristics of this present system of things.

this system of things: The Greek word *ai-on’*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to fea-

tures that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. In this context, it refers to the present system of things.—See study notes on Mt 12:32; Mr 10:30 and [LJ](#) Glossary, “System(s) of things.”

counted worthy of gaining that system of things and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage.^a **36** In fact, neither can they die anymore, for they are like the angels, and they are God’s children by being children of the resurrection. **37** But that the dead are raised up, even Moses made known in the account about the thornbush,^b when he calls Jehovah ‘the God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Jacob.’^c **38** He is a God, not of the dead, but of the living, for they are all living to him.”^d **39** In response some of the scribes said: “Teacher, you spoke well.” **40** For they no longer had the courage to ask him a single question.

CHAP. 20

a Mt 22:29, 30
Mr 12:24, 25

b Ex 3:2

c Ex 3:6
Mt 22:31-33
Mr 12:26, 27

d Mt 22:32

e Mt 22:41-46
Mr 12:35-37

f Ps 110:1
Ac 2:34, 35

g Mt 23:2
Mr 12:36, 7
Mr 12:38-40
Lu 11:43

Is the Christ the Son of David?

41 In turn he asked them: “How is it they say that the Christ is David’s son?”^e **42** For David himself says in the book of Psalms, ‘Jehovah said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand **43** until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.”’^f **44** David, therefore, calls him Lord; so how is he his son?”

Warning Against the Scribes

45 Then, while all the people were listening, he said to his disciples: **46** “Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in robes and who love greetings in the marketplaces and front seats in the synagogues and the most prominent places at evening meals,^g **47** and who devour the houses* of the widows and for show# make long prayers. These will receive a more severe^Δ judgment.”

FOOTNOTES

20:47 *Or “property.” #Or “for a pretext.” ^ΔOr “a heavier.”

STUDY NOTES

20:35 **that system of things:** The Greek word *ai-on*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. Here it refers to the coming system of things under God’s rule, when **the resurrection from the dead** will take place.—See study notes on Mt 12:32; Mr 10:30 and  Glossary, “System(s) of things.”

20:36 **children:** Lit., “sons.” The Greek word for “son” occurs twice in this verse.

In some contexts, it is used in a broader sense than merely referring to immediate male offspring.—See study note on Lu 20:34.

20:37 **even Moses made known:** See study note on Mr 12:26.

when he calls Jehovah ‘the God of Abraham’: Or “when he says: ‘Jehovah the God of Abraham.’” Jesus is here explaining that Moses refers to Jehovah as still being the God of the patriarchs long after they had died. The quote in this verse is taken from Ex 3:6. The preceding verses (Ex 3:4, 5) show that “Jehovah” is the one speaking, and at Ex 3:6, Jehovah says to Moses: “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” At that

time, Abraham had been dead for 329 years, Isaac for 224, and Jacob for 197. Yet, Jehovah did not say: ‘I was the God of.’ He said: “I *am* the God of.” This Hebrew Scripture background is one of the reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the name Jehovah in the main text.—See  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Lu 20:37.

20:38 **for they are all living to him:** Or “for they are all living from his standpoint.” The Bible shows that those who are living but who are alienated from God are dead from his standpoint. (Eph 2:1; 1Ti 5:6) Likewise, approved servants of God who die are still living from Jehovah’s standpoint, since his purpose to resurrect them is sure of fulfillment.—Ro 4:16, 17.

CHAP. 21

- a Mr 12:41
 b Mr 12:42
 c Mr 12:43, 44
 2Co 8:12
 d Mt 22:37
 e Mt 24:1, 2
 Mr 13:1, 2
 f 1Ki 9:7, 8
 Jer 7:12, 14
 Mic 3:12
 Lu 19:44

Needy Widow's Two Coins

21 Now as he looked up, he saw the rich dropping their gifts into the treasury chests.^a **2** Then he saw a needy widow drop in two small coins of very little value,^b **3** and he said: “Truly I say to you that this poor widow put in more than they all did.^c **4** For all of these put in gifts* out of their surplus, but she, out of her want,[#] put in all the means of living she had.”^d

Question About the Sign; Warning Against Being Misled

5 Later, when some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with fine stones and dedicated things,^e **6** he said: “As for these things that you now see, the days will come when not a stone will be left upon a stone and not be thrown down.”^f **7** Then they questioned him, saying: “Teacher, when will these things actually be, and what will be the sign when these things

FOOTNOTES

21:4 *Or “contributed to the gifts.”
 #Or “poverty.”

STUDY NOTES

20:42 Jehovah: The divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text at Ps 110:1, quoted here. However, as explained in  App. A5, most Bible translations do not use God’s name in what is commonly called the New Testament, not even in quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures. Most Bibles simply use “Lord.” Yet, as shown in  App. C, some Bible translations do use such renderings as Jehovah, Yahveh, Yahweh, יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton), LORD, and ADONAI in capital letters (indicating that it is a substitute for God’s name) in the main text of the Christian Greek Scriptures. Some 17th-century editions of the *King James Version* have the rendering “the LORD” in capital letters here and at three other places where Ps 110:1 is quoted in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (Mt 22:44; Mr 12:36; Ac 2:34) Later editions continued this practice. Since “the LORD” is used in the Hebrew Scriptures of that translation to indicate where

the original Hebrew text uses the divine name, the same way of writing “the LORD” in the Christian Greek Scriptures would indicate that the translators thought that it is Jehovah who is being referred to. It is also interesting to note that the *New King James Version*, first published in 1979, extends this use of “the LORD” to all occurrences of that word when it refers to the divine name in quotes from the Hebrew Scriptures.

20:46 marketplaces: See study note on Mt 23:7.

front seats: See study note on Mt 23:6.

See  Gallery, image 72, The Front Seats in the Synagogue.

See  Gallery, image 73, Prominent Places at Evening Meals.

21:1 treasury chests: See study note on Mr 12:41.

See  Gallery, image 89, The Treasury Chests and the Widow.

21:2 needy: Or “poor.” The Greek word *pe-ni-khros*’ used here may denote a person who lacks the basic necessities of life or someone for whom life is a great struggle. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, it is used only here.

two small coins of very little value:

Lit., “two lepta,” the plural form of the Greek word *le-pton*’, meaning “something small and thin.” A lepton was a coin that equaled 1/128 of a denarius and was evidently the smallest copper or bronze coin used in Israel.—See  Glossary, “Lepton,” and  App. B14.

21:4 all the means of living she had: As shown in the study note on Lu 21:2, the coins that the widow put in the treasury chest were “two lepta,” the equivalent of 1/64 of a day’s wage. The lepton was the smallest coin used in Israel at that time. According to Mt 10:29, for an assarion coin (the equivalent of eight lepta), a person could purchase two sparrows, which were among the cheapest birds used for food. So this widow had only half the amount needed to buy one sparrow, hardly enough for a single meal.

21:6 not a stone will be left upon a stone: See study note on Mt 24:2.

See  Gallery, image 76, Stones From the Temple Mount.

are to occur?”^a **8** He said: “Look out that you are not misled,^b for many will come on the basis of my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and, ‘The due time is near.’ Do not go after them.^c **9** Furthermore, when you hear of wars and disturbances,^{*} do not be terrified. For these things must take place first, but the end will not occur immediately.”^d

Features of the Sign

10 Then he said to them: “Nation will rise against nation,^e and kingdom against kingdom.^f **11** There will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another food shortages and pestilences;^g and there will be fearful sights and from heaven great signs.

Persecution Foretold

12 “But before all these things happen, people will lay their hands on you and persecute you,^h handing you over to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and governors for the sake of my name.ⁱ **13** It will result in your giving a witness. **14** Therefore, resolve in your hearts not to rehearse beforehand how to make your defense,^j **15** for I will give you

CHAP. 21

a Mt 24:3
Mr 13:4

b 2Ti 3:13
1Jo 4:1
Re 12:9

c Mt 24:4, 5
Mr 13:5, 6

d Mt 24:6
Mr 13:7

e Re 6:4

f Mt 24:7
Mr 13:8

g Ac 11:28
Re 6:6, 8

h Joh 16:2

i Mt 10:17, 18
Mt 24:9
Mr 13:9

Ac 25:23
Re 2:10

j Lu 12:11, 12

FOOTNOTES

21:9 * Or “disorders; uprisings.”

STUDY NOTES

21:8 **I am he:** See study note on Mr 13:6.

21:9 **disturbances:** Or “disorders; uprisings.” The Greek word *a-ka-ta-sta-si’a* has the basic meaning of unruliness, but it could also refer to opposition to established authority; insurrection; political turmoil. At 2Co 6:5, this term is rendered “riots” when describing the violent opposition faced by Paul.

end: Or “complete end; final end.”—See study note on Mt 24:6.

21:10 **Nation:** See study note on Mt 24:7.

rise: See study note on Mt 24:7.

21:11 **pestilences:** Or “widespread diseases; epidemics.” Of the three Gospel writers who recorded Jesus’ great prophecy about the time of the end, only Luke mentions this feature of the composite “sign.” (Lu 21:7; Mt 24:3, 7; Mr 13:4, 8)

The three accounts are complementary. The only other Biblical occurrence of the Greek word for “pestilence” is at Ac 24:5, where it is used figuratively about a person who was perceived to be “a pest,” one who causes problems, a troublemaker or public menace.

fearful sights: Derived from the Greek verb *pho-be’o*, meaning “to fear,” this word appears only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It evidently refers to terrifying events.

21:15 **words:** Or “forceful speech.” Lit., “a mouth.” Here the Greek word *sto’ma* is used synonymously for speech or the power of speech.

21:18 **not even a hair of your heads will perish:** By using hyperbole, Jesus left no doubt that his followers would be protected despite being “hated by all people.” (Lu 21:17) The context indicates that Jesus refers primarily to protection from spiritual or eternal harm rather than to protection from all physical harm. (Lu 21:16) Therefore, Jesus’ disciples do not

expect to be miraculously delivered from abuse or even death. But they can be confident in Jehovah’s power to resurrect them from the dead. (Mt 10:39) The use of two Greek negatives with the verb in this verse emphatically expresses the certainty of Jesus’ promise. A similar meaning is conveyed by Jesus’ words to his disciples regarding God’s care for them: “Even the hairs of your head are all numbered.”—Lu 12:7; see study note on Mt 10:30.

21:19 **endurance:** The Greek noun *hy-po-mo-ne’* is used in the Scriptures to denote courageous, steadfast, or patient “endurance” that does not lose hope in the face of obstacles, persecutions, trials, or temptations. The related verb *hy-po-me’no*, rendered “to endure,” literally means “to remain (stay) under.” It is often used in the sense of “remaining instead of fleeing; standing one’s ground; persevering; remaining steadfast.”—Mt 10:22; Ro 12:12; Heb 10:32; Jas 5:11.

CHAP. 21

- a Mr 13:11
Ac 6:8
Ac 6:10
- b Mic 7:6
Mt 10:21
Mr 13:12, 13
Ac 7:59
- c Mt 10:22
Mt 24:9
Joh 15:21
- d Mt 10:29, 30
Lu 12:6, 7
- e Mt 24:13
Ro 5:3, 4
Heb 10:36
2Pe 1:5, 6
- f Lu 19:43
- g Da 9:26, 27
Mt 23:37, 38
Mt 24:15, 16
- h Mr 13:14
- i Mt 24:19
Mr 13:17
Lu 19:44
Lu 23:28, 29
- j De 28:64
Da 9:26
- k Da 4:25

words and wisdom that all your opposers together will not be able to resist or dispute.^a **16** Moreover, you will be handed over* even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death,^b **17** and you will be hated by all people because of my name.^c **18** But not even a hair of your heads will perish.^d **19** By your endurance you will preserve your lives.^e

Jerusalem to Be Surrounded by Armies

20 “However, when you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies,^f then know that the desolating of her has drawn near.^g **21** Then let those in Ju-de’a begin fleeing to the mountains,^h let those in the midst of her leave, and let those in the countryside not enter into her, **22** because these are days for meting out justice in order that all the things written may be fulfilled. **23** Woe to the pregnant women and those nursing a baby in those days!ⁱ For there will be great distress on the land* and wrath against this people. **24** And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all the nations;^j and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled.^k

FOOTNOTES

21:16 *Or “betrayed.” **21:23** *Lit., “earth.”

STUDY NOTES

21:19 **preserve your lives:** Or “acquire (gain) your lives (souls).” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. (See  Glossary, “Soul.”) It often refers to a person’s life, present or future. In this context, it has been rendered “your future lives” or “your real life.”

21:20 **her:** That is, the city of Jerusalem. In this context, the name Jerusalem in Greek is a feminine noun, though in some other contexts, it is neuter.

21:21 **Judea:** That is, the Roman province of Judea.

to the mountains: According to fourth-century historian Eusebius, Christians in Judea and Jerusalem fled across the Jordan River to Pella, a city in a mountainous region of the Decapolis.—See  App. B10.

her: That is, the city of Jerusalem.—See study note on Lu 21:20.

21:22 **days for meting out justice:** Or “days of vengeance,” that is, divine vengeance and judgment. On an earlier occasion, in the synagogue of Nazareth, Jesus quoted part of Isaiah’s prophecy (Isa 61:1, 2) and applied it to himself, but the record does not say that he quoted the part concerning “the day of vengeance of our God.” (Lu 4:16-21) However, on this occasion, Jesus did proclaim “days of vengeance,” foretelling that Jerusalem would be surrounded by encamped armies. God’s vengeance was among **the things written** in the Hebrew Scriptures. The same Greek word here rendered “meting out justice” or “vengeance” occurs in the *Septuagint* at De 32:35; Jer 46:10 (26:10, LXX); and Hos 9:7. In these scriptures, the corresponding Hebrew terms are rendered “vengeance” or “reckoning.”

21:24 **appointed times of the nations:** Or “times of the Gentiles.” The Greek word *kai-ros'* (here the plural form is

rendered “appointed times”) may refer to a point of time or a fixed or definite period of time or a “season” marked by certain features. (Mt 13:30; 21:34; Mr 11:13) It is used of “the appointed time” for Jesus’ ministry to begin (Mr 1:15) and the “appointed time” of his death (Mt 26:18). The term *kai-ros'* is also used with reference to future times or seasons within God’s arrangement or timetable, particularly in relation to Christ’s presence and his Kingdom. (Ac 1:7; 3:19; 1Th 5:1) In view of how the word *kai-ros'* is used in the Bible text, the expression “appointed times of the nations” evidently refers, not to a vague or indefinite time, but to a fixed period of time, one having a beginning and an end. The term “nations” or “Gentiles” translates the plural form of the Greek word *e'thnos*, which was often used by the Bible writers to refer specifically to the non-Jewish nations.

See  Gallery, image 113, Judea Capta Coin.

See  Gallery, image 112, Roman Sword.

Coming of the Son of Man

25 “Also, there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars,^a and on the earth anguish of nations not knowing the way out because of the roaring of the sea and its agitation. **26** People will become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.^b **27** And then they will see the Son of man^c coming in a cloud with power and great glory.^d **28** But as these things start to occur, stand up straight and lift up your heads, because your deliverance is getting near.”

Illustration of the Fig Tree; “This Generation”

29 With that he told them an illustration: “Notice the fig tree and all the other trees.^e **30** When they are budding, you see it for yourselves and know that now the summer is near. **31** Likewise also you, when you see these things happening, know that the Kingdom of God is near. **32** Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all things happen.^f **33** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away.^g

“Keep Awake”

34 “But pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking^h and anxieties of life,^{*i} and suddenly that day be instantly upon you **35** as a snare.^j For it will come upon all those dwelling on the face of the whole earth. **36** Keep awake,^k then, all the

CHAP. 21

- a Mt 24:29
Mr 13:24, 25
- b Isa 34:4
- c Da 7:13
- d Mt 24:30
Mr 13:26
Re 1:7
- e Mt 24:32, 33
Mr 13:28, 29
- f Mt 24:34
Mr 13:30
- g Mt 24:35
Mr 13:31
- h Isa 5:11, 12
Ro 13:13
- i Pr 11:4
Mt 6:25
1Ti 6:8
- j 1Th 5:2, 3
2Pe 3:10
- k Mt 25:13
Mr 13:33, 35
1Co 16:13
1Pe 5:8

FOOTNOTES

21:34 * Or “anxieties over livelihood; worries of daily life.”

STUDY NOTES

21:26 the inhabited earth: The Greek word for “inhabited earth” (*oi-kou-me’ne*) refers to the earth as the dwelling place of mankind.—Lu 4:5; Ac 17:31; Ro 10:18; Re 12:9; 16:14.

21:27 see: See study note on Mt 24:30.

Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

in a cloud: See study note on Mt 24:30.

21:29 illustration: Or “parable; lesson.”
—See study note on Mt 13:3.

21:33 Heaven and earth will pass away:
See study note on Mt 24:35.

my words will by no means pass away:
See study note on Mt 24:35.

21:36 standing: In the Bible, this term is sometimes used to indicate that an individual or a group holds a favored or approved position with someone who has authority. (Ps 1:5; 5:5; Pr 22:29; Lu 1:19) For example, at Re 7:9, 15, a great crowd is shown to be “standing before the throne and before the Lamb,” indicating that they are favorably recognized by God and by Jesus.

21:37 lodge on the mountain: During the last four days of his earthly life, Jesus was active during the daytime in Jerusalem. At night, he and his disciples would leave the city to lodge in the village of Bethany on the eastern slope of **the Mount of Olives**, doubtless at the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus.—Mt 21:17; Mr 11:11.

22:1 the Festival of the Unleavened Bread, which is called Passover: Strictly speaking, the Passover, celebrated on Nisan 14, was distinct from the Festival of the Unleavened Bread, which lasted from Nisan 15 to 21. (Le 23:5, 6; Nu 28:16, 17; see  App. B15.) In Jesus’ time, however, these two festivals had become so closely connected that all eight days, including

CHAP. 21

- a Ro 12:12
Eph 6:18
1Pe 4:7
- b Mt 24:42
Mr 13:35
Re 6:16, 17
Re 16:15

time making supplication^a that you may succeed in escaping all these things that must occur and in standing before the Son of man.”^b

Jesus Teaches in the Temple

37 So by day he would be teaching in the temple, but by night he would go out and lodge on the mountain called the Mount of Olives. **38** And all the people would come to him early in the morning to hear him in the temple.

CHAP. 22

- c Le 23:5-8
Lu 22:7
Joh 13:1
- d Ex 12:3
Ex 12:6
- e Lu 9:22
- f Mt 21:45, 46
Mt 26:3-5
Mr 14:1, 2
Lu 20:19
- g Mt 26:14-16
Mr 14:10, 11
Joh 6:70
Joh 13:2
Joh 13:27
Ac 1:16, 17
- h Joh 13:18
- i Zec 11:12
- j Ex 12:14
Ex 12:18
Ex 23:14, 15, 18
De 16:1, 2
Mt 26:17
Mr 14:12

22 Now the Festival of the Unleavened Bread, which is called Passover,^c was getting near.^d **2** And the chief priests and the scribes were looking for an effective way to get rid of him,^e because they were afraid of the people.^f **3** Then Satan entered into Judas, the one called Is-car'i-ot, who was numbered among the Twelve,^g **4** and he went off and talked with the chief priests and temple captains about how to betray him to them.^h **5** They were delighted at this and agreed to give him silver money.ⁱ **6** So he consented and began looking for a good opportunity to betray him to them without a crowd around.

Priests Plot to Kill Jesus

Preparations for Jesus' Last Passover

7 The day of the Unleavened Bread now arrived, on which the Passover sacrifice must be offered;^j **8** so Jesus sent Peter and

STUDY NOTES

Nisan 14, were treated as one festival. Josephus speaks of “a feast for eight days, which is called the feast of unleavened bread.” The events described at Lu 22:1-6 occurred on Nisan 12, 33 C.E.—See  App. B12.

22:3 **Isca**riot: See study note on Mt 10:4.

22:4 **temple captains**: Here the Greek text literally reads “captains,” but Lu 22:52 adds “of the temple,” to indicate what kind of captains were referred to. Thus, “temple” was added here for clarification. Luke alone mentions these officials. (Ac 4:1; 5:24, 26) They were leaders of the temple guards. They may have been included in the discussion with Judas to make the planned arrest of Jesus appear legal.

22:5 **silver money**: Lit., “silver,” that is, silver used as money. According to Mt 26:15, the amount of money was “30 silver pieces.” Matthew is the only Gospel writer to mention the amount for which Jesus was betrayed. These were possibly 30 silver shekels minted in Tyre. This sum appears to show the chief priests’ contempt for Jesus, since under the Law, it was the price of a slave. (Ex 21:32) Likewise, when the prophet Zechariah asked for his wages from unfaithful Israelites for his prophetic work among God’s people, they weighed out to him “30 pieces of silver,” suggesting that they considered him to be worth no more than a slave.—Zec 11:12, 13.

22:7 **The day of the Unleavened Bread now arrived**: As mentioned in the study note on Lu 22:1, the Passover (Nisan 14)

and the Festival of the Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15-21) had become so closely connected in Jesus’ time that all eight days, including Nisan 14, were sometimes referred to as “the Festival of the Unleavened Bread.” (See  App. B15.) The day mentioned here refers to Nisan 14 because it is said to be the day **on which the Passover sacrifice must be offered.** (Ex 12:6, 15, 17, 18; Le 23:5; De 16:1-7) What is described in verses 7-13 likely took place on the afternoon of Nisan 13 in preparation for the Passover meal in the evening, that is, at sunset when Nisan 14 started.—See  App. B12.

John, saying: “Go and get the Passover ready for us to eat.”^a **9** They said to him: “Where do you want us to get it ready?” **10** He said to them: “Look! When you enter into the city, a man carrying an earthenware water jar will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters.^b **11** And say to the landlord of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you: “Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?”’ **12** And that man will show you a large, furnished upper room. Get it ready there.” **13** So they left and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared for the Passover.

CHAP. 22

a Ex 12:8
 b Mt 26:18, 19
 Mr 14:13-16
 c Mt 26:20
 Mr 14:17
 d Mt 26:29
 e Ex 12:8
 Ex 12:19, 20
 De 16:3
 f 1Co 10:16
 g Heb 10:10
 1Pe 2:24
 h Mt 26:26
 Mr 14:22
 1Co 11:23-25

Instituting the Lord's Evening Meal

14 So when the hour came, he reclined at the table along with the apostles.^c **15** And he said to them: “I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; **16** for I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.” **17** And accepting a cup, he gave thanks and said: “Take this and pass it from one to the other among yourselves, **18** for I tell you, from now on, I will not drink again from the product of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes.”^d

19 Also, he took a loaf,^e gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, saying: “This means my body,^f which is to be given in your behalf.^g Keep doing this in remembrance of me.”^h

STUDY NOTES

22:12 See  Gallery, image 90, Upper Room.

22:14 **when the hour came:** That is, when the evening came, marking the start of Nisan 14.—See  App. A7 and B12.

22:17 **accepting a cup:** The cup mentioned here was part of the Passover celebration in Jesus' day. (Lu 22:15) The Bible does not state that wine was used at the Passover in Egypt; nor did Jehovah command that it be used during the festival. Therefore, the custom of passing a number of cups of wine among the Passover participants was evidently introduced later on. Jesus did not condemn the use of wine with the meal. Rather, he drank the Passover wine with his apostles after giving **thanks** to God. He later offered them a cup to drink as he instituted the Lord's Evening Meal.—Lu 22:20.

22:19 **took a loaf . . . broke it:** See study note on Mt 26:26.

means: See study note on Mt 26:26.

22:20 **the evening meal:** Evidently referring to the Passover meal that Jesus ate with his disciples before instituting the Lord's Evening Meal. Thus Jesus celebrated the Passover according to the accepted custom of the time. He did not alter it or interrupt it by introducing anything new into the observance. In this way, he kept the Law as one who was born a Jew. However, when the Passover had been observed according to the Mosaic Law, Jesus was free to introduce the new evening meal for memorializing his approaching death on that same Passover Day.

new covenant by virtue of my blood: Luke is the only Gospel writer to record that Jesus on this occasion referred to a “new covenant,” an allusion to Jer 31:31. The new covenant, between Jehovah and anointed Christians, was made operative by Jesus' sacrifice. (Heb 8:10) Jesus here

uses the terms “covenant” and “blood” in a way similar to the way Moses used the terms when acting as mediator and inaugurating the Law covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. (Ex 24:8; Heb 9:19-21) Just as the blood of bulls and goats validated the Law covenant between God and the nation of Israel, Jesus' blood made valid the new covenant that Jehovah would make with spiritual Israel. That covenant went into effect at Pentecost 33 C.E.—Heb 9:14, 15.

. . . poured out in your behalf: The words from the middle of verse 19 (“which is to be given . . .”) to the end of verse 20 are missing in some manuscripts, but this passage has strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.—For more information about how ancient manuscripts are used to establish the Greek text, see  App. A3.

CHAP. 22

a Jer 31:31
2Co 3:6
Heb 7:22
Heb 8:8, 13
Heb 12:24

b Ex 24:8

c Mt 26:26-28
Mr 14:22-24
Heb 9:13, 14
1Pe 1:18, 19

d Ps 41:9
Mt 26:21
Mr 14:18
Joh 13:21

e Isa 53:7, 8
Da 9:26
Ac 4:27, 28

f Mt 26:24

g Mt 26:22
Mr 14:19
Joh 13:22

h Mr 9:34
Lu 9:46

i Mt 20:25-27
Mr 10:42-44

j 1Pe 5:2, 3

k Lu 9:46-48

l Mt 23:11
Mr 9:35

m Mt 20:28
Joh 13:3-5
Php 2:5-7

20 Also, he did the same with the cup after they had the evening meal, saying: “This cup means the new covenant^a by virtue of my blood,^b which is to be poured out in your behalf.^c

“My Betrayer Is With Me at the Table”

21 “But look! the hand of my betrayer is with me at the table.^d
22 For, indeed, the Son of man is going his way according to what has been determined;^e all the same, woe to that man through whom he is betrayed!”^f **23** So they began to discuss among themselves which one of them could really be about to do this.^g

Heated Dispute Over Who Is Greatest

24 However, there also arose a heated dispute among them over which one of them was considered to be the greatest.^h
25 But he said to them: “The kings of the nations lord it over them, and those having authority over them are called Benefactors.ⁱ **26** You, though, are not to be that way.^j But let the one who is the greatest among you become as the youngest,^k and the one taking the lead as the one ministering.^l **27** For which one is greater, the one dining* or the one serving? Is it not the one dining?* But I am among you as the one serving.^m

FOOTNOTES

22:27 * Or “reclining at the table.”

STUDY NOTES

22:21 But look! the hand of my betrayer is with me: What is described in verses 21-23 evidently does not follow in strict chronological order. A comparison of Mt 26:20-29 and Mr 14:17-25 with Joh 13:21-30 indicates that Judas departed before Jesus instituted the Lord’s Evening Meal. Judas had definitely left by the time Christ commended the group for having ‘stuck with him in his trials,’ something that could not have been said about Judas; nor would Judas have been taken into the “covenant . . . for a kingdom.”—Lu 22:28-30.

22:22 is going his way: According to some scholars, this is a euphemism for “is going to his death.”

22:25 Benefactors: The Greek word *eu-er-ge’tes* (lit., “one who is doing good

to [others]”) was often used as an honorary title for princes or distinguished people, especially those recognized for their civic contributions. Those “taking the lead” among Christ’s followers should not consider themselves to be “Benefactors” to whom their fellow believers are somehow indebted, for they are not to be like the rulers of this world.—Lu 22:26.

22:26 the one taking the lead: The Greek word *he-ge’o-mai* used here also appears at Heb 13:7, 17, 24 to describe the work of overseers in the Christian congregation.

ministering: Or “serving.” Related to the Greek verb *di-a-ko-ne’o*, used here, is the noun *di-a’ko-nos* (minister; servant), which refers to one who does not let up in humbly rendering service in behalf of others. The term is used to describe Christ (Ro 15:8); ministers or servants of Christ, both male and female (Ro 16:1; 1Co 3:5-7; Col 1:23); ministerial servants (Php 1:1; 1Ti 3:8); as well as household servants (Joh 2:5, 9) and government officials.—Ro 13:4.

22:27 serving: Or “ministering.” The Greek verb *di-a-ko-ne’o* occurs twice in this verse.—See study note on Lu 22:26.

Jesus' Covenant for a Kingdom

28 “However, you are the ones who have stuck with me^a in my trials;^b **29** and I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom,^c **30** so that you may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom,^d and sit on thrones^e to judge the 12 tribes of Israel.^f

Peter's Denial Foretold

31 “Simon, Simon, look! Satan has demanded to have all of you to sift you as wheat.^g **32** But I have made supplication for you that your faith may not give out;^h and you, once you have returned, strengthen your brothers.”ⁱ **33** Then he said to him: “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.”^j **34** But he said: “I tell you, Peter, a rooster will not crow today until you have denied knowing me three times.”^k

Need for Preparedness; the Two Swords

35 He also said to them: “When I sent you out without a money bag and a food pouch and sandals,^l you did not lack anything, did you?” They said: “No!”^m **36** Then he said to them: “But now let the one who has a money bag take it, likewise a food pouch, and let the one who has no sword sell his outer garment and buy one. **37** For I tell you that what is written must be accomplished in me, namely, ‘He was counted with lawless ones.’^m For this is being fulfilled concerning me.”ⁿ **38** Then

CHAP. 22

a Joh 6:67, 68

b Heb 4:15

c Ps 110:4

Da 7:27

Lu 12:32

2Ti 2:12

Heb 12:28

Jas 2:5

Re 1:6

Re 5:9, 10

d Lu 13:29

Joh 17:24

Re 19:9

e 1Co 6:2

Re 2:26, 27

Re 3:21

f Mt 19:28

Re 20:4, 6

g Mt 26:31

Mr 14:27

1Pe 5:8

h Joh 17:15

i Joh 21:15-17

Heb 12:12

j Mt 26:33

Mr 14:29

Joh 13:37

k Mt 26:34

Mr 14:30

Lu 22:61

Joh 13:38

l Mt 10:9, 10

Mr 6:7-9

Lu 9:2, 3

m Isa 53:12

n Lu 18:31

FOOTNOTES

22:35 *Or “They said: ‘Nothing!’”

STUDY NOTES

22:29 **I make a covenant with you . . . for a kingdom:** The Greek verb *di-a-ti'the-mai*, here rendered “make a covenant,” is related to the noun *di-a-the'ke*, “covenant.” At Ac 3:25, Heb 8:10, and 10:16, both the verb and the noun are used in the phrase “to make [or “conclude” (lit., “covenant”)] a covenant.” Here Jesus makes reference to two covenants, one between him and his Father, and one between him and his anointed followers, who are to join him as corulers in the Kingdom.

22:30 eat and drink at my table:

To eat a meal with someone signified friendship and peace between those involved. Therefore, one who was privileged to eat regularly at the table of a king was especially favored and enjoyed a very close bond with the monarch. (1Ki 2:7) This is the kind of relationship that Jesus here promised his faithful disciples.—Lu 22:28-30; see also Lu 13:29; Re 19:9.

22:31 **to sift you as wheat:** In Bible times, wheat was sifted, or shaken vigorously to pass through a sieve, after it had been threshed and winnowed. Sifting separated the straw and chaff from the grain. (See study note on Mt 3:12.) As a result of the trials Jesus was about to undergo, his disciples would also be tested. Jesus likened this test to the sifting of wheat.

22:32 returned: Or “turned back

(around).” It appears that Jesus is referring to Peter’s returning or recovering from his fall that would be caused largely by his overconfidence combined with a fear of man.—Compare Pr 29:25.

22:34 **a rooster:** All four Gospels mention that a rooster would crow, but only Mark’s account adds the detail that the rooster would crow twice. (Mt 26:34, 74, 75; Mr 14:30, 72; Lu 22:60, 61; Joh 13:38; 18:27) The Mishnah indicates that roosters were bred in Jerusalem in Jesus’ day, lending support to the Bible account. This crowing likely occurred very early in the morning.—See study note on Mr 13:35.

CHAP. 22

- a Mt 26:30
Mr 14:26
Joh 18:1
- b Mt 26:36-46
Mr 14:32-42
Lu 22:46
- c Mt 6:10
Joh 5:30
Joh 6:38
- d 1Ki 19:5
1Ki 19:7
Da 10:18, 19
Mt 4:11
- e Joh 12:27
Heb 5:7
- f Lu 22:40
- g Mt 26:47-50
Mr 14:43-46
Joh 18:2, 3

they said: “Lord, look! here are two swords.” He said to them: “It is enough.”

Jesus' Prayer on the Mount of Olives

39 On leaving, he went as was his custom to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples also followed him.^a **40** On arriving at the place, he said to them: “Carry on prayer so that you do not enter into temptation.”^b **41** And he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw away, and he bent his knees and began to pray, **42** saying: “Father, if you want to, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, let, not my will, but yours take place.”^c **43** Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.^d **44** But he was in such agony that he kept praying more earnestly;^e and his sweat became as drops of blood falling to the ground. **45** When he rose from prayer and went to the disciples, he found them slumbering, exhausted from grief. **46** He said to them: “Why are you sleeping? Get up and keep praying, so that you do not enter into temptation.”^f

Jesus Is Arrested

47 While he was still speaking, look! a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them, and he approached Jesus to kiss him.^g **48** But Jesus said to him: “Judas, are you betraying the Son of man with a kiss?” **49** When those around him saw what was going to happen, they said: “Lord, should we strike with the sword?” **50** One of them even struck

STUDY NOTES

22:40 Carry on prayer: Or “Keep praying.” This exhortation, apparently recorded by Luke alone, seems to be addressed to the 11 faithful apostles. (Compare the parallel account at Mt 26:36, 37.) A second, similar exhortation is recorded at Lu 22:46, which parallels Mt 26:41 and Mr 14:38. The second exhortation was addressed only to the three disciples who accompanied Jesus when he was praying in the garden. (Mt 26:37-39; Mr 14:33-35) The fact that Luke mentions both exhortations (Lu 22:40, 46) is an example of how his Gospel emphasizes the matter of prayer. Several instances in which Luke alone mentions the subject of prayer or of Jesus’ praying are Lu 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 11:1; 23:46.

22:42 remove this cup from me: See study note on Mr 14:36.

22:43 an angel: Of the four Gospel writers, only Luke mentions the angel appearing from heaven and strengthening Jesus.

22:44 his sweat became as drops of blood: Luke may have been drawing a comparison by indicating that Christ’s perspiration formed like drops of blood or by describing how the dripping of Jesus’ sweat resembled the dripping of blood from a wound. On the other hand, some have suggested that Jesus’ blood may have exuded through his skin and may have been mixed with his sweat, a condition that has reportedly occurred in certain cases of extreme mental stress. Blood or the elements thereof will seep

through unruptured walls of blood vessels in a condition called diapedesis. In a condition known as hematidrosis, there is an excreting of perspiration tinged with blood pigment or blood or of bodily fluid mingled with blood, thus resulting in the ‘sweating of blood.’ These, of course, are only possible explanations for what may have taken place in Jesus’ case.

... falling to the ground: Verses 43, 44 appear in some early manuscripts, though others omit them. However, they are found in most Bible translations.

22:50 One of them: The parallel account at Joh 18:10 shows that it was Simon Peter who **struck the slave of the high priest** and that the name of the slave was Malchus.—See study note on Joh 18:10.

the slave of the high priest, taking off his right ear.^a **51** But in reply Jesus said: “That is enough.” And he touched the ear and healed him. **52** Jesus then said to the chief priests and captains of the temple and elders who had come there for him: “Did you come out with swords and clubs as against a robber?”^b **53** While I was with you in the temple day after day,^c you did not lay your hands on me.^d But this is your hour and the authority of darkness.”^e

Peter Denies Jesus

54 Then they arrested him and led him off,^f and they brought him into the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance.^g **55** When they lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter was sitting among them.^h **56** But a servant girl, seeing him sitting in the light of the fire, looked closely at him and said: “This man was also with him.” **57** But he denied it, saying: “I do not know him, woman.”ⁱ **58** After a short time another person saw him and said: “You too are one of them.” But Peter said: “Man, I am not.”^j **59** And after about an hour had passed, another man began insisting strongly: “Certainly this man was also with him, for he is, in fact, a Gal-i-le’an!” **60** But Peter said: “Man, I do not know what you are saying.” And instantly, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. **61** At this the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter, and Peter recalled the statement of the Lord when he had said to him: “Before a rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.”^k **62** And he went outside and wept bitterly.

CHAP. 22

- a Mt 26:51, 52
Mr 14:47
Joh 18:10, 11
- b Mt 26:55, 56
Mr 14:48, 49
- c Lu 19:47
- d Joh 7:30
- e Joh 19:11
- f Isa 53:7
Joh 18:12
Ac 8:32
- g Mt 26:57, 58
Mr 14:53, 54
Joh 18:15
- h Mt 26:69-75
Mr 14:66-72
Joh 18:18
- i Joh 18:17
- j Joh 18:25-27
- k Mt 26:75
Mr 14:72
Lu 22:34

STUDY NOTES

22:50 struck the slave of the high priest: See study note on Joh 18:10.

22:51 and healed him: Of the four Gospel writers, only Luke mentions that Jesus healed the slave of the high priest.—Mt 26:51; Mr 14:47; Joh 18:10.

22:53 hour: The Greek word *ho'ra* is here used figuratively to refer to a relatively short period of time.

the authority of darkness: Or “the power of darkness,” that is, of those who are in spiritual darkness. (Compare Col 1:13.) At Ac 26:18, darkness is mentioned together with “the authority of Satan.”

Satan exercised his authority by influencing human agents to carry out the works of darkness that led to the execution of Jesus. For example, the account at Lu 22:3 says that “Satan entered into Judas, the one called Iscariot,” who then betrayed Jesus.—Ge 3:15; Joh 13:27-30.

22:60 a rooster crowed: See study note on Mr 14:72.

22:64 Prophecy!: Here “prophecy” does not imply making a prediction but, rather, identifying by divine revelation. The context shows that Jesus’ persecutors had covered his face. They were thus challenging the blindfolded Jesus to identify who had hit him.—See study note on Mt 26:68.

22:66 assembly of elders: Or “council (body) of elders.” The Greek word *pre-sby-te'ri-on* used here is related to the term *pre-sby'te-ros* (lit., “older man”), which in the Bible primarily refers to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. Although the term sometimes refers to physical age (as at Lu 15:25 and Ac 2:17), it is not limited to those who are elderly. The expression “assembly of elders” here evidently refers to the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court in Jerusalem, which was made up of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. These three groups are often mentioned together.—Mt 16:21; 27:41; Mr 8:31; 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1; Lu 9:22;

CHAP. 22

Jesus Is Mocked

- a Ps 22:7
 b Isa 50:6
 Isa 53:5
 Mt 26:67, 68
 Mr 14:65
 c Ps 2:2
 Mt 27:1
 Mr 15:1
 Ac 4:26
 d Mt 26:63
 Mr 14:61
 e Da 7:13
 f Ps 110:1
 Mt 26:64
 Mr 14:62
 Ac 2:32, 33
 Ac 7:55
 Ro 8:34
 Col 3:1
 Heb 1:3
 g Mt 26:65
 Mr 14:63

63 Now the men who held Jesus in custody began to mock him,^a hitting him;^b **64** and after covering his face, they kept asking: “Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?” **65** And they said many other blasphemous things against him.

Trial Before the Sanhedrin

- d Mt 26:63
 Mr 14:61
 e Da 7:13
 f Ps 110:1
 Mt 26:64
 Mr 14:62
 Ac 2:32, 33
 Ac 7:55
 Ro 8:34
 Col 3:1
 Heb 1:3
 g Mt 26:65
 Mr 14:63

66 And when it became day, the assembly of elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together,^c and they led him into their San’he-drin hall and said: **67** “If you are the Christ, tell us.”^d But he said to them: “Even if I told you, you would not believe it at all. **68** Moreover, if I questioned you, you would not answer. **69** However, from now on the Son of man^e will be seated at the powerful right hand of God.”^f **70** At this they all said: “Are you, therefore, the Son of God?” He said to them: “You yourselves are saying that I am.” **71** They said: “Why do we need further testimony? For we ourselves have heard it out of his own mouth.”^g

CHAP. 23

- h Mt 27:2
 Mr 15:1
 Joh 18:28
 i Ps 35:11
 j Mr 12:17
 Ac 24:5
 k Joh 18:36
 l Mt 27:11

Jesus Stands Before Pilate; Herod

23 So the multitude got up, one and all, and led him to Pilate.^h **2** Then they began to accuse him,ⁱ saying: “We found this man subverting our nation, forbidding the paying of taxes to Caesar,^j and saying he himself is Christ a king.”^k **3** Now Pilate asked him the question: “Are you the King of the Jews?” In answer he said: “You yourself are saying it.”^l **4** Then

STUDY NOTES

20:1; see  Glossary, “Elder; Older man,” and study note on **their Sanhedrin hall** in this verse.

their Sanhedrin hall: Or “their Sanhedrin.” The Sanhedrin was the Jewish high court in Jerusalem. The Greek word rendered “Sanhedrin hall” or “Sanhedrin” (*sy-ne’dri-on*) literally means a “sitting down with.” Although it was a general term for an assembly or a meeting, in Israel it could refer to a religious judicial body or court. The Greek word can refer to the people making up the court itself or to the building or location of the court.—See study note on Mt 5:22 and  Glossary, “Sanhedrin”; see also  App. B12 for the possible location of the Sanhedrin Hall.

See  Gallery, image 91, The Sanhedrin.

22:69 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

at the powerful right hand of God: Or “at the right hand of the power of God.” To be on a ruler’s right hand meant being second in importance only to the ruler himself. (Ps 110:1; Ac 7:55, 56) The Greek expression for “powerful right hand” also appears in the parallel accounts, Mt 26:64 and Mr 14:62, where it is rendered “right hand of power.” That the Son of man is seated “at the powerful right hand of God” implies that Jesus would be infused with power, or authority.—Mr 14:62; see study note on Mt 26:64.

23:2 Caesar: See study note on Mt 22:17.

23:3 Are you the King of the Jews?:

All four Gospel accounts record the same question by Pilate in precisely the same words. (Mt 27:11; Mr 15:2; Lu 23:3; Joh 18:33) No king in the Roman Empire could rule without Caesar’s consent. So Pilate apparently concentrated his interrogation on the issue of Jesus’ kingship.

You yourself are saying it: See study note on Mt 27:11.

Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds: “I find no crime in this man.”^a **5** But they insisted, saying: “He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Ju-de’a, starting from Gal’i-lee even to here.” **6** On hearing that, Pilate asked whether the man was a Gal-i-le’an. **7** After ascertaining that he was under the jurisdiction of Herod,^b he sent him on to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem in those days.

8 When Herod saw Jesus, he rejoiced greatly. For a considerable time he had been wanting to see Jesus because he had heard much about him,^c and he was hoping to see some sign performed by him. **9** So he began to question him at length, but he gave him no answer.^d **10** However, the chief priests and the scribes kept standing up and vehemently accusing him. **11** Then Herod together with his soldiers treated him with contempt,^e and he mocked him^f by clothing him with a splendid* garment and then sent him back to Pilate.^g **12** Herod and Pilate became friends with each other on that very day, for before that they had been at enmity with each other.

13 Pilate then called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people **14** and said to them: “You brought this man to me as one inciting the people to revolt. Now look! I examined him in front of you but found in this man no grounds for the charges you are bringing against him.^h **15** In fact, neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us, and look! he has done nothing deserving of death. **16** I will therefore punish himⁱ and release him.” **17** — **18** But the whole crowd shouted out: “Do away with this man,^{*} and release Bar-ab’bas to us!”^j **19** (This

CHAP. 23

- a Joh 18:38
Heb 7:26
1Pe 2:21, 22
- b Lu 3:1
- c Mt 14:1, 2
Mr 6:14
Lu 9:7-9
- d Isa 53:7
- e Isa 53:3
- f Ps 22:7
- g Ps 2:1, 2
- h Joh 18:38
- i Mt 27:26
Joh 19:1
- j Mt 27:20, 21
Mr 15:11
Joh 18:40

FOOTNOTES

23:11 *Or “bright; shining.” **23:18**
*Lit., “Take this one away.”

STUDY NOTES

23:7 Herod: That is, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. Antipas was the district ruler (tetrarch) of Galilee and Perea. Only Luke reports that Jesus was brought before Herod.—Lu 3:1; see  Glossary.

23:11 a splendid garment: It is possible that Herod Antipas, a nominal Jew and the district ruler of Galilee and Perea, might have taken one of his own splendid, possibly white, royal garments to dress Jesus up as a mock King of the Jews

before sending him back to Pilate. The Greek word used here for “garment” (*e-sthes*) usually had reference to a robe or garment that was ornate. Angels appeared in such attire. (Lu 24:4; see also Jas 2:2, 3.) This Greek word is also used to describe the royal “raiment” worn by Herod Agrippa I. (Ac 12:21) The Greek word here rendered “splendid” (*lam-pros*) comes from a word meaning “to shine.” When used of garments, it refers to a fine garment and sometimes to shining or white garments. This is apparently a different garment from the scarlet cloak, also called a purple robe, with which Pilate’s soldiers later clothed Jesus at the governor’s residence. (Mt 27:27, 28, 31; Joh 19:1, 2, 5; see study notes on Mt

27:28; Mr 15:17.) Herod, Pilate, and the Roman soldiers apparently had the same intention when clothing Jesus with these two different garments—to mock him as the so-called King of the Jews.—Joh 19:3.

23:17 Some manuscripts here read: “Now he was under necessity to release one man to them from feast to feast,” but these words do not appear in several early authoritative manuscripts and were apparently not part of the original text of Luke. A few other manuscripts add these words after verse 19. Similar verses with a slightly different wording do appear at Mt 27:15 and Mr 15:6, where there is no uncertainty regarding the text. It is thought that copyists added these words here in Luke as an explanation based on the

CHAP. 23

- a Mt 27:22-26
Mr 15:12-15
Joh 19:12
- b Joh 19:6
- c Ps 69:4
- d Joh 19:15, 16
- e Mr 15:21
Joh 19:17
- f Mr 13:17
Lu 19:44
- g Mt 24:19
Lu 21:23
- h Ho 10:8

man had been thrown into prison for sedition that had occurred in the city and for murder.) **20** Again Pilate called out to them, because he wanted to release Jesus.^a **21** Then they began to yell, saying: “To the stake with him! To the stake with him!”^{*b} **22** The third time he said to them: “Why? What bad thing did this man do? I found in him nothing deserving of death;^c I will therefore punish him and release him.” **23** At this they became insistent, demanding with loud voices that he be executed,^{*} and their voices prevailed.^d **24** So Pilate made the decision that their demand be met. **25** He released the man whom they were demanding, who had been thrown into prison for sedition and murder, but he surrendered Jesus to their will.

Jesus and Two Criminals Are Hung on Stakes

26 Now as they led him away, they seized a certain Simon of Cy-re’ne, who was coming from the countryside, and they placed the torture stake on him to carry it behind Jesus.^e **27** A large number of people were following him, including women who kept beating themselves in grief and wailing for him. **28** Jesus turned to the women and said: “Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me. Weep instead for yourselves and for your children;^f **29** for look! days are coming when people will say, ‘Happy are the barren women, the wombs that did not give birth and the breasts that did not nurse!’^g **30** Then they will start saying to the mountains, ‘Fall over us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us over!’^h **31** If they do these things when the tree is moist, what will occur when it is withered?”

FOOTNOTES

23:21 *Or “Execute him on the stake! Execute him on the stake!” **23:23** *Or “executed on the stake.”

STUDY NOTES

parallel accounts in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

23:18 **release Barabbas to us:** This incident described at Lu 23:16-25 is mentioned by all four Gospel writers. (Mt 27:15-23; Mr 15:6-15; Joh 18:39, 40) Matthew, Mark, and John add, however, that the governor customarily released a prisoner in connection with the festival. —See study notes on Mt 27:15; Mr 15:6; Joh 18:39.

23:26 **Cyrene:** A city located in North Africa near the coast, SSW of the island of Crete. (See  App. B13.) It may be that **Simon**, though born in Cyrene, later settled in Israel.

torture stake: Or “execution stake.” —See  Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake”; see also Lu 9:23; 14:27, where the term is used in a figurative sense.

23:31 **when the tree is moist, . . . when it is withered:** Jesus is apparently referring to the Jewish nation. It was like a dying tree that still had some moisture left, for Jesus was present and so were a number of Jews who believed in him. However, Jesus would soon be executed, and faithful Jews would be anointed with holy spirit and become part of

spiritual Israel. (Ro 2:28, 29; Ga 6:16) At that time, the literal nation of Israel would be spiritually dead, resembling a withered tree.—Mt 21:43.

32 Two other men, criminals, were also being led off to be executed with him.^a **33** And when they got to the place called Skull,^b they nailed him to the stake there alongside the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.^c **34** But Jesus was saying: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”^d Furthermore, they cast lots to distribute his garments.^e **35** And the people stood looking on. But the rulers were sneering and saying: “Others he saved; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.”^f **36** Even the soldiers mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine^g **37** and saying: “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself.” **38** There was also an inscription over him: “This is the King of the Jews.”^h

CHAP. 23

- a Isa 53:12
Mt 27:38
b Mt 27:33
c Joh 19:17, 18
d Ac 7:59, 60
e Ps 22:18
Mt 27:35
Mr 15:24
Joh 19:23, 24
f Ps 22:7, 8
Mt 27:41-43
Mr 15:31
g Ps 69:21
h Mt 27:37
Mr 15:26
Joh 19:19

 STUDY NOTES

23:32 criminals: The Greek word used here (*ka-kour'gos*) literally means “one who engages in doing bad or evil.” The parallel accounts at Mt 27:38, 44 and Mr 15:27 describe the men as “robbers,” using the Greek word (*lei-stes*), which may include robbing by using violence and at times could refer to bandits or revolutionaries. That word is also used of Barabbas (Joh 18:40), who according to Lu 23:19 was in prison for “sedition” and “murder.”

23:33 Skull: The Greek expression *Kra-ni'on* corresponds to the Hebrew name *Golgotha*. (See Joh 19:17 and study note on Mt 27:33.) The term “Calvary” is used here in some English Bible translations. It comes from the Latin *calvaria*, the word for “skull,” used in the *Vulgate*. See  Gallery, image 84, Nail in a Heel Bone.

23:34 forgive them: The context does not say for whom Jesus made this request, but he likely had in mind the crowd who called for his execution, some of whom repented a short time later. (Ac 2: 36-38; 3:14, 15) Also, the Roman soldiers who nailed Jesus to the stake did not know or realize the gravity of what they were doing, being ignorant of who he really was. On the other hand, he would not have asked his Father to forgive the chief priests, who were responsible for his death. They knew exactly what they were doing when they conspired to kill Jesus. They handed him over because of envy.

(Mt 27:18; Mr 15:10; Joh 11:45-53) Also, it is unlikely that he was asking his Father to forgive the criminals who were executed alongside him, since neither of them was responsible for his death.

... doing: The first part of this verse is not included in certain ancient manuscripts. However, because these words are found in other early authoritative manuscripts, they are included in the *New World Translation* and numerous other Bible translations.

23:36 sour wine: See study note on Mt 27:48.

23:38 an inscription over him: Some manuscripts make additions that could be rendered: “(written) in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew.” However, these words do not occur in early authoritative manuscripts, and it is thought that copyists added these words in order to agree with Joh 19:20.

23:39 hanging: The Greek verb used here is, not *stauro'o* (“to execute on a stake”), but *kre-man'ny-mi* (“to hang”). In connection with Jesus' execution, this verb is used with the phrase *e-pi' xy'lou* (“on a stake or tree”). (Ga 3:13; see study note on Ac 5:30.) In the *Septuagint*, the verb is often used to describe hanging a person on a stake or a tree.—Ge 40:19; De 21:22; Es 8:7.

23:43 Truly I tell you today: The form of Greek script used in the earliest available manuscripts of the Christian Greek Scrip-

tures is composed solely of capital letters. It did not contain spaces or punctuation as used in modern languages. Although some scribes did occasionally add some marks in the text that may have been for punctuation, such marks were not used often or consistently. Therefore, the punctuation in modern Bible translations is based on the grammar of the Greek text and the context of the verse. In this verse, the grammar of the Greek text allows for placing a comma (or a colon) either before or after the word “today.” However, the punctuation shown in renderings of Jesus' statement depends on how translators understand the sense of what Jesus said and on what the Bible as a whole teaches. Scholarly editions of the Greek text like the ones prepared by Westcott and Hort, Nestle and Aland, and the United Bible Societies put a comma before the Greek word rendered “today.” However, placing the comma after “today” harmonizes with earlier statements that Jesus made and with teachings found elsewhere in the Scriptures. For example, Jesus said that he would die and be “in the heart of the earth”—the grave—until the third day. (Mt 12:40; Mr 10:34) On more than one occasion, he told his disciples that he would be killed and raised on the third day. (Lu 9:22; 18:33) Also, the Bible states that Jesus was resurrected as “the firstfruits of those who [had] fallen asleep in death” and that he ascended to heaven 40 days later. (1Co 15:20; Joh 20:17; Ac 1:1-3, 9; Col 1:18)

CHAP. 23

- a Mt 27:44
Mr 15:32
- b Lu 1:32, 33
- c Isa 11:6
Isa 35:1
Isa 65:17
Joh 5:28, 29
Ac 24:15
Re 21:1

39 Then one of the criminals hanging there began to speak abusively to him,^a saying: “You are the Christ, are you not? Save yourself and us too!” **40** In response the other rebuked him, saying: “Do you not fear God at all, now that you have received the same judgment? **41** And we rightly so, for we are getting back what we deserve for the things we did; but this man did nothing wrong.” **42** Then he said: “Jesus, remember me when you get into your Kingdom.”^b **43** And he said to him: “Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise.”^c

 STUDY NOTES

Jesus was resurrected, not on the day that he died, but on the third day after his death, so it is evident that the criminal could not be with Jesus in Paradise on the same day that Jesus spoke to him.

In harmony with this reasoning, a fifth-century C.E. Syriac version of Luke’s account, known as the Curetonian Syriac, renders this text: “Amen, I say to thee to-day that with me thou shalt be in the Garden of Eden.” (F. C. Burkitt, *The Curetonian Version of the Four Gospels*, Vol. 1, Cambridge, 1904) It is also worth noting that both early and later Greek writers and commentators indicated that there were disagreements regarding how to render these words. For example, Hesychius of Jerusalem, who lived in the fourth and fifth centuries C.E., wrote regarding Lu 23:43: “Some indeed read in this manner: ‘Truly I tell you today,’ and put a comma; then they follow: ‘You will be with me in Paradise.’” (Greek text found in *Patrologiae Graecae*, Vol. 93, col. 1432-1433.) Theophylact, who lived in the 11th and 12th centuries C.E., wrote about some who argued for “putting a punctuation mark after ‘today,’ so that it would be said this way: ‘Truly I tell you today’; and then they follow with the expression: ‘You will be with me in Paradise.’” (*Patrologiae Graecae*, Vol. 123, col. 1104.) G. M. Lamsa, in the publication *Gospel Light—Comments on the Teachings of Jesus From Aramaic and Unchanged Eastern Customs*, pp. 303-304, says about the use of “today” at Lu 23:43: “The emphasis in this text is on the word ‘today’ and should read, ‘Truly I say to you today, you will be with me in

Paradise.’ The promise was made on that day and it was to be fulfilled later. This is a characteristic of Oriental speech implying that the promise was made on a certain day and would surely be kept.” Therefore, the Greek phrase at Lu 23:43 may reflect a Semitic way of expressing emphasis. The Hebrew Scriptures provide numerous examples of the idiomatic usage of “today” in solemn expressions, such as promises and commands. (De 4:26; 6:6; 7:11; 8:1, 19; 30:15; Zec 9:12) The evidence presented above suggests that Jesus used the word “today” to call attention, not to the time of the criminal’s being in Paradise, but to the time at which the promise was being made.

A number of translations, such as those in English by Rotherham and by Lamsa (1933 edition) and those in German by L. Reinhardt and by W. Michaelis, recognize that the emphasis is correctly placed on the time that the promise is being made rather than on the time that it is being fulfilled. Those translations render the text in a form similar to the reading of the *New World Translation*.

Paradise: The English word “paradise” comes from the Greek word *pa-ra’dei-sos*, and similar words can be found in both Hebrew (*par-des’*, at Ne 2:8; Ec 2:5; Ca 4:13) and Persian (*pairidaeza*). All three words convey the basic idea of a beautiful park or parklike garden. The translators of the *Septuagint* used the Greek term *pa-ra’dei-sos* to render the Hebrew word for “garden” (*gan*) in the expression “garden of Eden” at Ge 2:8. Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁷, 18, 22 in  App. C) render Lu 23:43: “You will be with me in

the garden of Eden.” This promise made to the criminal hanging next to Jesus was not the promise to be in “the paradise of God” mentioned at Re 2:7, since that promise was made to “the one who conquers,” that is, Christ’s corulers in the heavenly Kingdom. (Lu 22:28-30) This criminal was not a conqueror of the world with Jesus Christ; nor had he been “born from water and spirit.” (Joh 3:5; 16:33) He will evidently be one of “the unrighteous” who are resurrected as earthly subjects of the Kingdom when Christ rules over the Paradise earth for a thousand years.—Ac 24:15; Re 20:4, 6.

Death of Jesus

44 Well, by now it was about the sixth hour, and yet a darkness fell over all the land* until the ninth hour,^a **45** because the sunlight failed; then the curtain of the sanctuary^b was torn down the middle.^c **46** And Jesus called out with a loud voice and said: “Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.”^d After he said this, he expired.^e **47** Because of seeing what occurred, the army officer began to glorify God, saying: “Truly, this man was righteous.”^f **48** And when all the crowds that were gathered together there for this spectacle saw the things that occurred, they returned home, beating their chests. **49** And all those acquainted with him were standing at a distance. Also, women who had accompanied him from Gal’i-lee were there and saw these things.^g

CHAP. 23

- a Mt 27:45
Mr 15:33
- b Ex 26:31-33
- c Mt 27:51
Heb 10:19, 20
- d Ps 31:5
Ac 7:59
- e Mt 27:50
- f Mt 27:54
- g Mt 27:55, 56
Mr 15:40, 41
Lu 8:2, 3
- h Mt 27:57-60
Mr 15:43-46
Joh 19:38
- i De 21:22, 23

Burial of Jesus

50 And look! there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, who was a good and righteous man.^h **51** (This man had not voted in support of their scheme and action.) He was from Ar-i-ma-the’a, a city of the Ju-de’ans, and was waiting for the Kingdom of God. **52** This man went in before Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. **53** And he took it downⁱ and wrapped it up in fine linen, and he laid it in a tomb carved

FOOTNOTES

23:44 *Lit., “earth.”

STUDY NOTES

23:44 about the sixth hour: That is, about 12:00 noon.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

a darkness: This darkness was miraculous, caused by God. It could not have been caused by a solar eclipse, which occurs at the time of the new moon. This was Passover season, so the moon was full. And the darkness lasted for three hours, far longer than the longest possible total eclipse, which lasts less than eight minutes. Here in Luke’s account, the observation that “the sunlight failed” is included.—Lu 23:45.

the ninth hour: That is, about 3:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

23:45 curtain: See study note on Mt 27:51.

sanctuary: See study note on Mt 27:51.

23:46 I entrust my spirit: Jesus here quotes from Ps 31:5, where David is calling on God to guard, or care for, his spirit, or life force. This was a way of saying that he was putting his life in God’s hands. At his death, Jesus entrusted his life force to Jehovah; thus his future life prospects rested entirely with God.—See  Glossary.

expired: The Greek verb *ek·pne’o* (lit., “to breathe out”) could here also be rendered “breathed his last.” (See study note on Mt 27:50.) The Scriptures clearly show that when Jesus’ spirit went out, he was not on his way to heaven. He expired, or died. Jesus himself foretold that he would not be resurrected from the dead until “the third day.” (Mt 16:21; Lu 9:22) Then, as

Ac 1:3, 9 shows, it was 40 days later that he actually ascended to heaven.

23:47 army officer: Or “centurion,” that is, one in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army. According to the parallel accounts in Matthew and Mark, he also acknowledged that Jesus “was God’s Son.”—Mt 27:54; Mr 15:39.

23:50 Joseph: See study note on Mr 15:43.

member of the Council: Or “councilor,” that is, a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court in Jerusalem.—See study note on Mt 26:59 and  Glossary, “Sanhedrin.”

23:51 Arimathea: See study note on Mt 27:57.

23:53; 24:1 tomb: See study note on Mt 27:60.

23:53 See  Gallery, image 85, Tomb Chamber.

CHAP. 23

- a Isa 53:9
 b Mr 15:42
 Joh 19:42
 c Ex 20:9, 10
 De 5:13, 14
 d Mt 27:61
 Mr 15:47
 e Ex 16:29
 Ex 20:9, 10
 Ex 31:15
 De 5:12

in the rock,^a where no man had yet lain. **54** Now it was the day of Preparation,^b and the Sabbath^c was about to begin. **55** But the women who had come with him from Gal'i-lee followed along and took a look at the tomb and saw how his body was laid,^d **56** and they went back to prepare spices and perfumed oils. But, of course, they rested on the Sabbath^e according to the commandment.

Women and Peter at the Empty Tomb

CHAP. 24

- f Mt 28:1
 Mr 16:1, 2
 Joh 20:1
 g Mt 28:2
 Mr 16:4
 h Mr 16:5
 i Mt 28:5-7
 Mr 16:5-7
 j Jon 1:17
 Mt 16:21
 Mr 8:31
 Lu 9:22
 k Joh 2:22

24 But on the first day of the week, they came very early to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared.^f **2** But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,^g **3** and when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.^h **4** While they were perplexed about this, look! two men in shining garments stood by them. **5** The women became frightened and kept their faces turned toward the ground, so the men said to them: “Why are you looking for the living one among the dead?”ⁱ **6** He is not here, but has been raised up. Recall how he spoke to you while he was yet in Gal'i-lee, **7** saying that the Son of man must be handed over to sinful men and be executed on the stake and on the third day rise.”^j **8** Then they remembered his words,^k **9** and they returned from the tomb*^{*}

FOOTNOTES

24:9 * Or “memorial tomb.”

STUDY NOTES

23:54 Preparation: See study note on Mt 27:62.

23:55 tomb: Or “memorial tomb.”—See  Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

24:1 the first day of the week: See study note on Mt 28:1.

the spices they had prepared: See study note on Mr 16:1.

24:2 the stone: See study note on Mr 15:46.

24:3 of the Lord Jesus: Some manuscripts do not include these words, but the longer reading has strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.—For more information about how ancient manuscripts are used to establish the Greek text, see  App. A3.

24:4 two men in shining garments: This is an indirect reference to angels. (Compare Lu 24:23.) At Ac 1:10, angels are referred to as “men in white garments.”

24:6 He is not here, but has been raised up: Some manuscripts do not include these words, but they have strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.—See  App. A3.

24:7 executed on the stake: Or “fastened on a stake (pole).”—See study note on Mt 20:19 and  Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

24:9 from the tomb: Some manuscripts do not include these words, but they have strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.

and reported all these things to the Eleven and to all the rest.^a **10** They were Mary Mag'da-lene, Jo-an'na, and Mary the mother of James. Also, the rest of the women^b with them were telling these things to the apostles. **11** However, these sayings seemed like nonsense to them, and they would not believe the women.

12 But Peter got up and ran to the tomb,* and stooping forward, he saw only the linen cloths. So he went off, wondering to himself what had occurred.

On the Road to Emmaus

13 But look! on that very day, two of them were traveling to a village named Em-ma'us, about seven miles from Jerusalem, **14** and they were conversing with each other about all these things that had happened.

15 Now as they were conversing and discussing these things, Jesus himself approached and began walking with them, **16** but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.^c **17** He said to them: "What are these matters that you are debating between yourselves as you walk along?" And they stood still, looking sad. **18** In answer the one named Cle'o-pas said to him: "Are you a stranger dwelling alone in Jerusalem and do not know* the things that have occurred there during these days?" **19** He asked them: "What things?" They said to him: "The things concerning Jesus the Naz-a-rene',^d who proved to be a prophet powerful in deed and word before God and all the people;^e **20** and how our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death,^f and they nailed him to the stake.^g **21** But

CHAP. 24

- a Mt 28:8
- b Lu 8:1-3
- c Joh 20:14
Joh 21:4
- d Mt 2:23
Mt 21:11
- e De 18:18
Lu 7:15, 16
Joh 3:2
Joh 6:14
Ac 2:22
- f Lu 23:1
Ac 3:13
Ac 13:27, 28
- g Joh 19:17, 18

FOOTNOTES

24:12, 22, 24 *Or "memorial tomb."
24:18 *Or possibly, "Are you the only visitor in Jerusalem who does not know . . . ?"

STUDY NOTES

24:9 **they . . . reported all these things to the Eleven:** The two angels, referred to at Lu 24:4 as "men in shining garments," could have shared the news of Jesus' resurrection with his male disciples first. Instead, women were favored with being the first to learn of his resurrection. (Lu 24:6-9; Joh 20:11-18) And women were also given the honor of reporting

the resurrection "to the Eleven and to all the rest" of the disciples. Additionally, Mary Magdalene was among the first disciples who saw the resurrected Jesus. —Joh 20:16; see study note on Mt 28:7.

24:10 **Mary Magdalene:** See study note on Lu 8:2.

Joanna: This is a shortened feminine form of the Hebrew name Jehohanan, meaning "Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious." Joanna, who had been healed by Jesus, was the wife of Chuza, one of Herod Antipas' officials. She is mentioned only twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures and only in Luke's Gospel account.—Lu 8:2, 3.

24:12 . . . what had occurred: Some manuscripts do not include the words of this verse, but the verse has strong support in early authoritative manuscripts. —See ☞ App. A3.

24:13 **about seven miles:** About 11 km. Lit., "60 stadia." A Roman stadium equaled 185 m (606.95 ft).—See 📖 Glossary, "Mile," and ☞ App. B14.

24:27 **interpreted:** The Greek word *di-er-me-neu'o* can be used in the sense "to translate from one language to another." (Ac 9:36; 1Co 12:30, fn.) However, it also signifies "to clarify the meaning; to explain fully." In this verse, it refers to interpreting the meaning of prophecies.

CHAP. 24

- a Ac 1:6
 b Mt 28:1
 Mt 28:8
 Lu 24:9-11
 c Lu 24:12
 Joh 20:3
 d Ps 22:16-18
 Isa 53:7-9
 1Co 15:3
 e Php 2:9-11
 Heb 2:9
 1Pe 1:11
 f Joh 1:45
 Ac 10:43
 Ac 26:22
 g Mt 14:19
 Mt 15:36
 Mr 6:41
 h Joh 20:19

we were hoping that this man was the one who was going to deliver Israel.^a Yes, and besides all these things, this is the third day since these things occurred. **22** Moreover, some women from among us also astonished us, for they went early to the tomb^{*b} **23** and when they did not find his body, they came saying that they had also seen a supernatural sight of angels, who said he is alive. **24** Then some of those who were with us went off to the tomb,^{*c} and they found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.”

25 So he said to them: “O senseless ones and slow of heart to believe all the things the prophets have spoken! **26** Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things^d and to enter into his glory?”^e **27** And starting with Moses and all the Prophets,^f he interpreted to them things pertaining to himself in all the Scriptures.

28 Finally they got close to the village to which they were traveling, and he made as if to travel on farther. **29** But they urged him to remain, saying: “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is nearly over.” With that he went in to stay with them. **30** And as he was dining^{*} with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and began handing it to them.^g **31** At that their eyes were fully opened and they recognized him; but he disappeared from them.^h **32** And they said to each other: “Were not our hearts burning within us as he was speaking to us on the road, as he was fully opening up^{*} the Scriptures to us?” **33** And they got up in that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the Eleven and those assembled together with them, **34** who said: “For a fact the Lord

FOOTNOTES

- 24:30** * Or “reclining at the table.”
24:32 * Or “clearly explaining.”

STUDY NOTES

24:32 **burning:** The expression is rendered from a Greek word that is here used metaphorically to describe strong emotions, such as joy and pleasure, and includes the idea of intense interest and enthusiasm. Here it describes the reaction of the two disciples when Jesus was **fully opening up**, or carefully explaining, the inspired Hebrew Scriptures to them.

within us: Some early manuscripts do not include these words, but they are included in other early authoritative manuscripts.—See  App. A3.

fully opening up the Scriptures:

The Greek verb for “to open up fully” (*di-a-noi'go*) is used three times in this chapter. First, at Lu 24:31, it describes how the “eyes” of the two disciples “were fully opened,” allowing them to perceive that they were talking with Jesus. Second, here at Lu 24:32, the word is used in the sense of “clearly explaining.” And third, at Lu 24:45, this Greek word is used to describe how Jesus “opened up” the minds of the disciples so that they could grasp

the meaning of the inspired Hebrew Scriptures.—See also Ac 7:56, “opened up”; 16:14, “opened . . . wide”; and 17:3, “explaining [lit., “opening up thoroughly”],” where the same Greek word is used.

was raised up, and he appeared to Simon!”^a **35** Then they related the events on the road and how he became known to them by the breaking of the bread.^b

CHAP. 24

^a 1Co 15:3
1Co 15:5

^b Lu 24:30, 31

^c Joh 20:19, 21

^d Mt 14:26

^e Joh 21:5

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

36 While they were speaking of these things, he himself stood in their midst and said to them: “May you have peace.”^c

37 But because they were terrified and frightened, they imagined that they were seeing a spirit.^d **38** So he said to them:

“Why are you troubled, and why have doubts come up in your hearts? **39** See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones just as you see that I have.”

40 And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. **41** But while they were still not believing for sheer joy and amazement, he said to them: “Do you have something there to eat?”^e

42 So they handed him a piece of broiled fish, **43** and he took it and ate it before their eyes.

STUDY NOTES

24:36 and said to them: “May you have peace”: Some manuscripts do not include these words, but they have strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.

24:37 a spirit: Although the Greek word *pneuma* can refer to invisible spirit persons, the disciples were evidently using the term to refer to an apparition or a vision. Jesus showed the disciples his hands and feet and told them: “Touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones just as you see that I have.” (Lu 24:39) This was to prove that like angels in the past, he had materialized in order to be seen by the disciples.—Ge 18:1-8; 19:1-3.

24:39 my hands and my feet: As in Jesus’ case, nailing the hands (and likely the feet also) of the accused to a stake was customary among the Romans. (Ps 22:16; Joh 20:25, 27; Col 2:14) Some scholars believe that a nail or nails pierced Jesus’ feet, fixing them directly to the stake or to a small platform attached to the stake. See  Gallery, image 84, Nail in a Heel Bone.

24:40 . . . and his feet: Some manuscripts do not include the words of this verse, but the verse has strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.—See  App. A3.

24:42 fish: Some later manuscripts add the words “and a honeycomb,” but early authoritative manuscripts do not include these words.

24:44 in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and Psalms: Jesus was here evidently grouping the entire inspired Hebrew Scriptures in the way adopted by the Jews and known to them. “The Law” (Hebrew, *Toh-rah*) refers to the Bible books of Genesis through Deuteronomy. “The Prophets” (Hebrew, *Nevi-’im*) refers to the prophetic books of the Hebrew Scriptures, including the so-called Former Prophets (the Bible books of Joshua through Kings). “Psalms” refers to the third section, which contains the remaining books of the Hebrew Scriptures and is called the Writings, or in Hebrew, *Kethu-vim*. The designation “Psalms” is used because it was the first book of the third section. The term “Tanakh,” a Jewish designation for the Hebrew Scriptures, comes from combining the first letter of each of these three sections (*TaNaKh*). Jesus’ use of these three terms indicates

that the canon of the Hebrew Scriptures was well-established when he was on earth and was approved by him.

24:48 You are to be witnesses: This is one of the first times that Jesus tells his disciples “to be witnesses” about his life and ministry, including his death and resurrection. (Compare Joh 15:27.) As faithful Jews, Jesus’ disciples were already witnesses of Jehovah and testified that He is the only true God. (Isa 43:10-12; 44:8) Some 40 days after the events recorded here, Jesus repeats and further emphasizes their new assignment to be his witnesses.—See study note on Ac 1:8.

24:49 what my Father promised: That is, the holy spirit promised at Joe 2:28, 29 and Joh 14:16, 17, 26. This active force would energize Jesus’ disciples to serve as witnesses in all the earth.—Ac 1:4, 5, 8; 2:33.

the city: That is, Jerusalem.

24:50 Then: Ac 1:3-9 shows that Jesus’ ascension took place 40 days from the time of his resurrection. So there is a time lapse between the events that took place on Jesus’ resurrection day (Nisan 16), as recorded at Lu 24:1-49, and the events that occurred on the day of his ascension (Iyyar 25), which are described

CHAP. 24

- a Mt 16:21
Lu 9:22
- b Lu 24:27
Joh 5:39
- c Joh 12:16
- d Isa 53:5
Jon 1:17
Mr 9:31
- e Ac 5:31
Ac 13:38, 39
- f Ga 3:14
ITi 3:16
- g Ac 4:1, 2
Ac 5:27, 28
- h Joh 15:26, 27
Ac 1:8
- i Joe 2:28
Joh 14:16
Ac 1:4, 5
Ac 2:1
Ac 2:4
- j Ac 1:9
- k Joh 16:22
Ac 1:12
- l Ac 2:46, 47

44 He then said to them: “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was yet with you,^a that all the things written about me in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and Psalms must be fulfilled.”^b **45** Then he opened up their minds fully to grasp the meaning of the Scriptures,^c **46** and he said to them, “This is what is written: that the Christ would suffer and rise from among the dead on the third day,^d **47** and on the basis of his name, repentance for forgiveness of sins^e would be preached in all the nations^f—starting out from Jerusalem.^g **48** You are to be witnesses of these things.^h **49** And look! I am sending upon you what my Father promised. You, though, stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”ⁱ

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

50 Then he led them out as far as Beth’a-ny, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. **51** As he was blessing them, he was parted from them and taken up to heaven.^j **52** And they did obeisance to him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.^k **53** And they were continually in the temple, praising God.^l

STUDY NOTES

from this verse to the end of the chapter.
—See  App. A7.

Bethany: See study note on Mt 21:17.

24:51 and taken up to heaven: Some manuscripts do not include these words, but the words do have strong support in early authoritative manuscripts. Also, Luke indicated at Ac 1:1, 2 that in his “first account,” namely, his Gospel, he had discussed what Jesus had done in his life and ministry “until the day that he [Jesus] was taken up.” So it is quite appropriate that in his inspired account, Luke would have included these words about Jesus’ ascension to heaven.

24:52 did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; prostrated themselves to him; paid him homage.” When the Greek verb *pro-sky-ne’o* is used to refer to the worship of a god or a deity, it is rendered “to worship.” (Mt 4:10; Lu 4:8) In this context, however, the disciples recognized the resurrected Jesus as God’s representative. They rendered obeisance to him, not as to God or a deity, but as to “God’s Son,” the foretold “Son of man,”

the Messiah with divine authority. (Lu 1:35; Mt 16:13-16; Joh 9:35-38) This was similar to the way that people mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures bowed down when meeting prophets, kings, or other representatives of God. (1Sa 25:23, 24; 2Sa 14:4; 1Ki 1:16; 2Ki 4:36, 37) On many occasions, the obeisance done to Jesus expressed gratitude for divine revelation or recognition of divine favor like that expressed in earlier times.—Mt 14:32, 33; 28:5-10, 16-18; Joh 9:35, 38; see also study notes on Mt 2:2; 8:2; 14:33; 15:25.

did obeisance to him and: Some manuscripts do not include these words, but the words do have strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.—See  App. A3.

24:53 were continually in the temple: After Jesus’ execution, the disciples were in fear of their enemies, so they met behind locked doors. (Joh 20:19, 26) However, the disciples were strengthened when they received enlightenment from Jesus (Ac 1:3) as well as when they witnessed his ascension to heaven on the 40th day after his resurrection. They courageously came out in public, praising

God. Luke adds to the record he began with his Gospel account by writing the book of Acts, documenting the zealous activity of the disciples.—See study note on Ac 1:1.

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO

JOHN



- The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke had been circulating for over 30 years when John wrote his account. Even so, John had much to add to the record of Jesus' life and ministry; some 90 percent of his account is material not covered in the other three Gospels.
- John's Gospel alone discusses Jesus' prehuman existence. John's account starts with that important truth and later includes testimony by John the Baptist and by Jesus himself. (Joh 1:1-3; 3:12, 13; 8:58) Six miracles are unique to John's account, including Jesus' first miracle of turning water into wine and his last miracle, after his being resurrected, of the huge catch of fish.
- John was apparently among the first of John the Baptist's disciples to be introduced to Jesus and one of the first four to be invited to be followers of Christ. (Mr 1:16-20; Joh 1:35-39) John, who may have been a cousin of Jesus, developed a close friendship with Jesus, becoming known as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." (Joh 13:23; 21:20, 24) John was present at the heartbreaking scene of execution, where Jesus entrusted the care of his mother to John. Also, it was John who outran Peter as they sped to the tomb to investigate the report that Jesus had risen.—Joh 19:26, 27; 20:2-4.
- Rather than featuring Jesus' public addresses, John records many dialogues with individuals, both disciples and opposers. John gives us an intimate portrait of Jesus, including his longest recorded prayer to his Father.—Joh 17:1-26.
- John's Gospel soars to its greatest heights in making known the warm love between Father and Son, as well as the relationship to be found by being in union with them. John uses the Greek words for "love" and "to love" more often than the other three Gospel writers combined.
- A small papyrus fragment of John's Gospel (some verses of chapter 18), cataloged as Rylands Papyrus 457, is considered by many scholars to be the oldest existing Greek manuscript of the Christian Greek Scriptures. It is dated to sometime in the first half of the second century. The fact that a copy of John's Gospel was circulating in Egypt, where the fragment was discovered, by that time gives strong support that the "Good News According to John" was recorded in the first century C.E. and by John himself.
- John wrote his Gospel so that those reading it might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," and "may have life by means of his name." —Joh 20:31.

Writer: John

Place Written: Ephesus or near

Writing Completed: c. 98 C.E.

Time Covered: After prologue, 29-33 C.E.

STUDY NOTES

John: The English equivalent of the Hebrew name Jehohanan or Johanan, meaning "Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious." The writer of this Gospel is not identified by name. However, by the second and third centuries C.E., the book was widely attributed to the apostle John. Whenever the name John is mentioned in this Gospel, it refers to John the Baptist. Although the apostle John is never mentioned by name, he and his brother James are referred to as "the

sons of Zebedee." (Joh 21:2; Mt 4:21; Mr 1:19; Lu 5:10; see study note on Joh 1:6.) In the closing verses of the Gospel, the writer refers to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (Joh 21:20-24), and there are good reasons for linking this expression with the apostle John.—See study note on Joh 13:23.

According to John: None of the Gospel writers identify themselves as such in their accounts, and titles are apparently not part of the original text. In some manuscripts of John's Gospel, the title appears as *Eu-ag-ge'li-on Ka-ta' I-o-an'nen* ("Good News [or, "Gospel"] According to John"), whereas in others a shorter title, *Ka-ta' I-o-an'nen* ("According to John"), is used. It is not clear exactly when such titles were added or

began to be used. Some suggest the second century C.E., since examples of the longer title have been found in Gospel manuscripts that have been dated to the end of the second century or early third century. According to some scholars, the opening words of Mark's Gospel ("The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God") may have been the reason why the term "gospel" (lit., "good news") came to be used to describe these accounts. The use of such titles along with the name of the writer may have come about for practical reasons, providing a clear means of identifying the books.

See  Gallery, map 4, Gospel of John —Some Major Events.

OVERVIEW OF JOHN

1:1-18

The Word Became Flesh and Resided Among Humans

The Word was in the beginning with God and was a god (1:1, 2)
The Word was used by God to create all other things (1:3a)
Life and light came into existence by means of the Word (1:3b-5)
John the Baptist to bear witness about the light (1:6-8)
The true light comes into the world but is rejected by many (1:9-11)
Those who receive the Word in faith become God's children (1:12, 13)
The Word, full of divine favor and truth, reveals the Father, whom no man has seen (1:14-18)

1:19-34

The Witness John the Baptist Gave About Jesus

John admits that he is not the Christ but someone crying out in the wilderness (1:19-28)
John introduces Jesus to mankind as "the Lamb of God" (1:29-31)
John bears witness about the spirit descending on Jesus and foretells baptism with holy spirit (1:32-34)

1:35-51

Jesus' First Disciples

John's disciples follow Jesus;
Andrew directs his brother Peter to Jesus (1:35-42)
Philip and Nathanael become Jesus' disciples (1:43-51)

2:1-3:36

The Beginning of Jesus' Miracles; From About the Time of Passover 30 C.E. Onward

Jesus turns water into wine at a wedding in Cana of Galilee (2:1-12)
Jesus cleanses the temple in Jerusalem (2:13-17)

Jesus speaks to opposing Jews about raising up the temple in three days (2:18-22)

Many put faith in Jesus because of the signs he performs (2:23-25)

Jesus explains birth from water and spirit to Nicodemus (3:1-13)

The Son of man to be lifted up as was the serpent in the wilderness (3:14, 15)

God sent his only-begotten Son, not to judge the world, but to save it (3:16-21)

John's final witness about Jesus (3:22-30)

Exercising faith in the Son, who comes from above, means everlasting life (3:31-36)

4:1-54

Jesus Passes Through Samaria on His Way to Galilee

Jesus, tired out, arrives at Jacob's well in Sychar, Samaria (4:1-6)

Jesus strikes up a conversation with a Samaritan woman (4:7-15)

Jesus teaches the Samaritan woman about true worship (4:16-24)

Jesus reveals to the Samaritan woman that he is the Messiah (4:25, 26)

The Samaritan woman witnesses to others (4:27-30)

Jesus compares doing God's will to food; he talks about spiritual harvest (4:31-38)

Many Samaritans believe in Jesus as "the savior of the world" (4:39-42)

Jesus heals an official's son in Cana of Galilee (4:43-54)

5:1-47

Jesus' Ministry From About the Time of a Festival of the Jews, Most Likely Passover 31 C.E., Onward

Jesus heals a sick man on the Sabbath at the pool of Bethzatha (5:1-18)

Jesus speaks about authority given to him by his Father (5:19-24)

Spiritually dead who pay attention to Jesus' voice will live (5:25-27)

Those dead in the memorial tombs will be resurrected (5:28-30)

John the Baptist, the works of Jesus, the Father, and the Scriptures all bear witness about Jesus (5:31-47)

6:1-7:1

From About the Time of Passover 32 C.E. Onward

Jesus feeds about 5,000 men at the Sea of Galilee (6:1-13)

Jesus withdraws when people attempt to make him king (6:14, 15)

Jesus walks on water (6:16-21)

Jesus urges people to work for the food that remains for everlasting life (6:22-27)

Jesus is "the bread of life" (6:28-59)

Many disciples take offense at Jesus' words, but Peter acknowledges that Jesus is "the Holy One of God" (6:60-7:1)

7:2-9:41

From About the Time of the Festival of Tabernacles 32 C.E. Onward

Jesus' brothers go up to the festival; Jesus delays and arrives in secret (7:2-13)

Jesus teaches at the temple during the festival (7:14-24)

People have different opinions about the Christ (7:25-52)

The Father bears witness about Jesus, "the light of the world" (8:12-30)

Jesus' true disciples will know the truth (8:31, 32)

Children of Abraham do the works of Abraham (8:33-41)

Children of the Devil do the desires of the Devil (8:42-47)

Jesus and Abraham (8:48-59)
 Jesus heals a man born blind (9:1-12)
 Healed man questioned by the Pharisees (9:13-34)
 Blindness of the Pharisees (9:35-41)

10:1–12:50

From About the Time of the Festival of Dedication 32 C.E. to Nisan 10, 33 C.E.

Illustration of the shepherd and the sheepfolds (10:1-18)
 Many Jews refuse to believe (10:19-26)
 Jesus and his Father unified in caring for their sheep (10:27-30)
 Jews try to seize Jesus (10:31-39)
 Many people across the Jordan put faith in Jesus (10:40-42)
 Death of Lazarus (11:1-16)
 Jesus comforts Martha and Mary (11:17-37)
 Jesus resurrects Lazarus (11:38-44)
 Religious leaders plot to kill Jesus (11:45-57)
 Mary pours oil on Jesus' feet (12:1-11)
 Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (12:12-19)
 Jesus foretells his imminent death (12:20-27)
 A voice comes out of heaven (12:28)
 Jews' lack of faith fulfills prophecy (12:29-43)
 Jesus came to save the world (12:44-50)

13:1–17:26

Jesus' Last Passover and His Parting Counsel to His Disciples
 Jesus washes his disciples' feet (13:1-20)
 Jesus identifies his betrayer, Judas Iscariot (13:21-30)
 Jesus gives a new commandment (13:31-35)

Jesus foretells Peter's threefold denial (13:36-38)
 Jesus is the only way of approach to the Father (14:1-14)
 Jesus promises holy spirit as a helper (14:15-31)
 Illustration of the true vine (15:1-10)
 Command to show Christlike love (15:11-17)
 The world hates Jesus and his disciples (15:18-27)
 Jesus' disciples may face death (16:1-4a)
 Jesus will send the holy spirit (16:4b-16)
 The disciples' sorrow will turn into joy (16:17-24)
 Jesus' conquest over the world (16:25-33)
 Jesus prays in behalf of his disciples, present and future (17:1-26)

18:1–19:42

Jesus Betrayed, Arrested, Tried, and Executed
 Judas Iscariot betrays Jesus (18:1-9)
 Peter uses a sword and cuts off the ear of Malchus (18:10, 11)
 Jesus taken to chief priest Annas (18:12-14)
 Peter's first denial of Jesus (18:15-18)
 Jesus before Annas (18:19-24)
 Peter's second and third denials of Jesus (18:25-27)
 Jesus before Pilate; the issue of kingship (18:28-40)
 Jesus scourged and mocked (19:1-7)
 Pilate seeks to release Jesus but yields to the Jews (19:8-16a)
 Jesus nailed to a stake at Golgotha (19:16b-22)
 Soldiers fulfill prophecy about Jesus' garments (19:23, 24)
 Jesus' provision for his mother (19:25-27)

Jesus fulfills prophecy and dies (19:28-30)
 Soldiers fulfill scriptures regarding Jesus' death (19:31-37)
 Jesus' burial (19:38-42)

20:1–21:25

Appearances of the Resurrected Christ
 Disciples find Jesus' tomb empty (20:1-10)
 Two angels and Jesus appear to Mary Magdalene (20:11-18)
 Jesus appears to his disciples behind locked doors (20:19-23)
 Thomas doubts but is later convinced (20:24-29)
 John explains the purpose of "this scroll" (20:30, 31)
 Jesus appears to his disciples in Galilee (21:1-14)
 Peter affirms his love for Jesus (21:15-19)
 Jesus foretells future of beloved disciple (21:20-23)
 Final remarks on writership (21:24, 25)

ACCORDING TO JOHN

The Word Became Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word,^a and the Word was with God,^b and the Word was a god.^c **2** This one was in the beginning with God.^d **3** All things came into existence through him,^e and apart from him not even one thing came into existence.

What has come into existence **4** by means of him was life, and the life was the light of men.^{*f} **5** And the light is shining in the darkness,^g but the darkness has not overpowered it.

^g Joh 3:19.

CHAP. 1

- a Joh 12:48, 49
Col 1:15
Re 3:14
Re 19:11, 13
b Pr 8:22, 30
Joh 17:5
c Isa 9:6
Joh 1:18
Joh 10:35, 36
Php 2:5, 6
d Mic 5:2
e Joh 1:10
f Joh 8:12

FOOTNOTES

1:4 *Or “mankind; humankind.”

STUDY NOTES

1:1 the beginning: In the Scriptures, the meaning of the term “beginning” depends on the context. Here the Greek word *ar-khe'* cannot refer to “the beginning” of God the Creator, for he is eternal, having no beginning. (Ps 90:2) It must, therefore, refer to the time when God began creating. God’s first creation was termed **the Word**, a heavenly designation of the one who became Jesus. (Joh 1:14-17) So Jesus is the only one who can rightly be called “the firstborn of all creation.” (Col 1:15) He was “the beginning of the creation by God” (Re 3:14), so he existed before other spirit creatures and the physical universe were created. In fact, by means of Jesus, “all other things were created in the heavens and on the earth.”—Col 1:16; for other examples of how the term “beginning” is used, see study note on Joh 6:64.

the Word: Or “the Logos.” Greek, *ho lo'gos*. Here used as a title, it is also used at Joh 1:14 and Re 19:13. John identified the one to whom this title belongs, namely, Jesus. This title was applied to Jesus during his prehuman existence as a spirit creature, during his ministry on earth as a perfect man, and after his exaltation to heaven. Jesus was God’s Word of communication, or Spokesman, for conveying

information and instructions to the Creator’s other spirit sons and to humans. So it is reasonable to think that prior to Jesus’ coming to earth, Jehovah on many occasions communicated with mankind through the Word, His angelic mouthpiece.—Ge 16:7-11; 22:11; 31:11; Ex 3:2-5; Jg 2:1-4; 6:11, 12; 13:3.

with: Lit., “toward.” In this context, the Greek preposition *pros* implies close proximity and fellowship. It also indicates separate persons, in this case, the Word and the only true God.

the Word was a god: Or “the Word was divine [or, “a godlike one].” This statement by John describes a quality or characteristic of “the Word” (Greek, *ho lo'gos*; see study note on **the Word** in this verse), that is, Jesus Christ. The Word’s preeminent position as the firstborn Son of God through whom God created all other things is a basis for describing him as “a god; a godlike one; divine; a divine being.” Many translators favor the rendering “the Word was God,” equating him with God Almighty. However, there are good reasons for saying that John did not mean that “the Word” was the same as Almighty God. First, the preceding clause and the following clause both clearly state that “the Word” was “with God.” Also, the Greek word *the-os'* occurs three times in verses 1 and 2. In the first and third occurrences, *the-os'* is preceded by the definite article in Greek; in the second occurrence, there is no article.

Many scholars agree that the absence of the definite article before the second *the-os'* is significant. When the article is used in this context, *the-os'* refers to God Almighty. On the other hand, the absence of the article in this grammatical construction makes *the-os'* qualitative in meaning and describes a characteristic of “the Word.” Therefore, a number of Bible translations in English, French, and German render the text in a way similar to the *New World Translation*, conveying the idea that “the Word” was “a god; divine; a divine being; of divine kind; godlike.” Supporting this view, ancient translations of John’s Gospel into the Sahidic and the Bohairic dialects of the Coptic language, probably produced in the third and fourth centuries C.E., handle the first occurrence of *the-os'* at Joh 1:1 differently from the second occurrence. These renderings highlight a *quality* of “the Word,” that his nature was like that of God, but they do not equate him with his Father, the almighty God. In harmony with this verse, Col 2:9 describes Christ as having “all the fullness of the divine quality.” And according to 2Pe 1:4, even Christ’s joint heirs would “become sharers in divine nature.” Additionally, in the *Septuagint* translation, the Greek word *the-os'* is the usual equivalent of the Hebrew words rendered “God,” *'el* and *'elo-him'*, which are thought to convey the basic meaning “Mighty One; Strong One.” These Hebrew words are used with reference to the almighty God, other gods, and humans.

CHAP. 1

- a Mt 3:1
Lu 1:13
Lu 3:2
- b Mt 3:11
Ac 19:4
- c Joh 1:19, 20
Ac 13:25
- d Joh 3:28
Joh 5:33, 36

6 There came a man who was sent as a representative of God; his name was John.^a **7** This man came as a witness, in order to bear witness about the light,^b so that people of all sorts might believe through him. **8** He was not that light,^c but he was meant to bear witness about that light.^d

9 The true light that gives light to every sort of man was about to come into the world.^e **10** He was in the world,^f and the

e Mt 4:16, 17; Lu 2:30, 32; Joh 3:19; Joh 9:5, 39; Joh 12:46; Ac 13:47; 1Jo 2:8; f Joh 1:14.

 STUDY NOTES

(See study note on Joh 10:34.) Calling the Word “a god,” or “a mighty one,” would be in line with the prophecy at Isa 9:6, foretelling that the Messiah would be called “Mighty God” (not “Almighty God”) and that he would be the “Eternal Father” of all those privileged to live as his subjects. The zeal of his own Father, “Jehovah of armies,” would accomplish this.—Isa 9:7.

See  Gallery, image 114, Sahidic Coptic Translation of John 1:1.

See  Gallery, image 115, Second-Century Manuscript of John’s Gospel.

1:3 What has come into existence:

The earliest Greek manuscripts do not have any punctuation in verses 3 and 4. The punctuation used in the *New World Translation* is according to the scholarly editions of the Greek text published by Westcott and Hort, the United Bible Societies, and Nestle and Aland. The last part of verse 3 is linked with verse 4. This rendering indicates that life and light came into existence by means of the Word. (Col 1:15, 16) Some translations follow another understanding of the Greek text and connect the last part of verse 3 with the preceding words, conveying the idea “and apart from him not even one thing came into existence that has come into existence.” However, many scholars support the reading of the *New World Translation*.

1:4 him: That is, the Word, or the Logos. —See study note on Joh 1:1.

life . . . light: These two themes are woven into the fabric of John’s inspired account. God is the Source of life, and **by means of** Jesus, the Word, all other forms of life “came into existence.” (Joh 1:3) In this sense, life came through Jesus

Christ. Also by means of Jesus, God made it possible for sinful, dying mankind to gain everlasting life. In that sense, Jesus can be identified as **the life** that became **the light of men**. Joh 1:9 calls the Word “the true light that gives light to every sort of man.” Humans who follow Jesus, “the light of the world,” will “possess the light of life.” (Joh 8:12) The Word is God’s “Chief Agent of life,” enlightening mankind on their way to gain life.—Ac 3:15.

1:6 sent as a representative of God: Or “commissioned by God.” The mission of John the Baptist came from God (Lu 3:2) and involved the work of a preacher, or public messenger. John not only announced the approach of the Messiah and of God’s Kingdom to the Jews who came out to him but also encouraged them to repent of their sins. (Mt 3:1-3, 11, 12; Mr 1:1-4; Lu 3:7-9) John the Baptist served as a prophet, a teacher (with disciples), and an evangelizer.—Lu 1:76, 77; 3:18; 11:1; Joh 1:35.

John: That is, John the Baptist. The writer of this Gospel, the apostle John, refers to John the Baptist 19 times but, unlike the other Gospel writers, never uses the designation “the Baptist” or “the Baptizer.” (See study notes on Mt 3:1; Mr 1:4.) The apostle John does distinguish between the three Marys. (Joh 11:1, 2; 19:25; 20:1) However, he did not need to make such a distinction when referring to John the Baptist, since the apostle never refers to himself by name and no one would misunderstand which John was meant. This is another confirmation that the apostle John wrote this Gospel.—See “Introduction to John” and study note on **John**.

1:7 as a witness: Or “for a witness.” The Greek noun for “witness” (*mar-ty-rí’a*) ap-

pears more than twice as often in John’s Gospel as in the other three Gospels combined. The related verb, rendered **to bear witness** (*mar-ty-re’o*), appears 39 times in John’s Gospel—compared to 2 times in the other Gospel accounts. (Mt 23:31; Lu 4:22) This Greek verb is used so often in connection with John the Baptist that some have suggested that he be called “John the Witness.” (Joh 1:8, 15, 32, 34; 3:26; 5:33; see study note on Joh 1:19.) In John’s Gospel, this verb is also frequently used in connection with Jesus’ ministry. Jesus is often said to “bear witness.” (Joh 8:14, 17, 18) Particularly noteworthy are Jesus’ words to Pontius Pilate: “For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.” (Joh 18:37) In the Revelation given to John, Jesus is referred to as “the Faithful Witness” and “the faithful and true witness.”—Re 1:5; 3:14.

him: That is, John the Baptist.—Compare Ac 19:4.

1:9 world: The Greek word *ko’smos* here refers to the world of mankind. In this context, the expression **come into the world** seems to refer primarily to Jesus’ going out among mankind at the time of his baptism rather than to his birth as a human. After his baptism, he carried out his assigned ministry, acting as a light bearer to the world of mankind.—Compare Joh 3:17, 19; 6:14; 9:39; 10:36; 11:27; 12:46; 1Jo 4:9.

world came into existence through him,^a but the world did not know* him. **11** He came to his own home, but his own people did not accept him.^b **12** However, to all who did receive him, he gave authority to become God's children,^c because they were exercising faith in his name.^d **13** And they were born, not from blood or from a fleshly will or from man's will, but from God.^e

CHAP. 1

a Ge 1:26
Joh 1:3, 4
1Co 8:6
Col 1:16
Heb 1:2
b Joh 18:35
Ac 4:10, 11

c Ro 8:14; Ro 8:16; 2Co 6:18; Eph 1:5; 1Jo 3:1; d Ga 3:26; e Joh 3:3; 1Pe 1:23; 1Jo 3:9.

FOOTNOTES

1:10 *Or "recognize; acknowledge."

STUDY NOTES

1:10 the world came into existence

through him: Here the Greek word *ko'smos* ("world") refers to the world of mankind, which is evident later in the verse where it says that **the world did not know him**. The Greek term was sometimes used in secular writings to refer to the universe and creation in general, and the apostle Paul may have used it in that sense when he was addressing a Greek audience. (Ac 17:24) However, in the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term generally refers to the world of mankind or a part of it. It is true that Jesus did share in the production of all things, including the heavens and the earth and all things in it. But the focus of this verse is his role in bringing humankind into existence. —Ge 1:26; Joh 1:3; Col 1:15-17.

1:14 flesh: Or "a human being." The Greek word *sarx* is here used in the sense of a physical being, a living being with flesh. When Jesus was born as a human, he was no longer a spirit. He did not merely assume a fleshly body, as angels had done in the past. (Ge 18:1-3; 19:1; Jos 5:13-15) Therefore, Jesus could rightly call himself "the Son of man."—Joh 1:51; 3:14; see study note on Mt 8:20.

the Word became flesh: Jesus was entirely human from his birth until his death. Jesus explained the purpose of his becoming flesh when he said: "The bread that I will give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world." (Joh 6:51) In addition, only because Jesus was wholly human could he experience what humans of flesh and blood experience and thus become a sympathetic High Priest. (Heb 4:15)

Jesus could not have been human and divine at the same time; the Scriptures say that he "was made a little lower than angels." (Heb 2:9; Ps 8:4, 5; see study note on **flesh** in this verse.) However, not all agreed that Jesus had come in the flesh. For example, the Gnostics, who believed that knowledge (Greek, *gnō'sis*) could be gained in a mystical way, combined Greek philosophy and Oriental mysticism with apostate Christian teachings. They held that all physical matter is evil. For that reason, they taught that Jesus did not come in the flesh but only seemed to have a human body. An early form of gnosticism was apparently prevalent at the end of the first century C.E., so John may be making a specific point when he writes that "the Word became flesh." In his letters, John warns against the false teaching that Jesus did not come "in the flesh."—1Jo 4:2, 3; 2Jo 7.

resided: Lit., "tented." Some have taken the statement that the Word 'resided, or tented, among us' to mean that Jesus was, not a true human, but an incarnation. However, Peter used the related noun that is rendered "tabernacle," or "tent," when he spoke of his own fleshly body as a temporary dwelling place. (2Pe 1:13; ftm.) Though Peter knew that his death was near and that his resurrection would be in the spirit, not in the flesh, he was not indicating that he was an incarnation.—2Pe 1:13-15; see also 1Co 15:35-38, 42-44; 1Jo 3:2.

we had a view of his glory: In Jesus' life and ministry, John and the other apostles saw a glory, a splendor or magnificence, that could be displayed only by someone who perfectly reflected the qualities of Jehovah. In addition, the apostle John, along with James and Peter, witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus. (Mt 17:1-9;

Mr 9:1-9; Lu 9:28-36) So John may here have alluded not only to Jesus' reflection of God's qualities but also to the transfiguration vision that had occurred more than 60 years earlier. This event also made a lasting impression on the apostle Peter, who wrote his first letter about 30 years before John wrote his Gospel. Peter specifically referred to the transfiguration as a marvelous confirmation of "the prophetic word."—2Pe 1:17-19.

an only-begotten son: The Greek word *mo-no-ge-nes*, traditionally translated "only-begotten," has been defined as "the only one of its kind; one and only; unique." The Bible uses the term in describing the relation of sons and daughters to their parents. (See study notes on Lu 7:12; 8:42; 9:38.) In the apostle John's writings, this term is used exclusively of Jesus (Joh 3:16, 18; 1Jo 4:9) but never about Jesus' human birth or existence as a man. Instead, John uses the term to describe Jesus in his pre-human existence as the Logos, or the Word, the one who "was in the beginning with God," even "before the world was." (Joh 1:1, 2; 17:5, 24) Jesus is the "only-begotten son" because he was Jehovah's Firstborn and the only one created directly by God. While other spirit creatures are likewise called "sons of the true God" or "sons of God" (Ge 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:4-7), all those sons were created by Jehovah *through* that firstborn Son (Col 1:15, 16). In summary, the term *mo-no-ge-nes* refers both to Jesus' being "one of a kind; unique; incomparable" and to his being the only son produced directly and solely by God.—1Jo 5:18; see study note on Heb 11:17.

divine favor: Or "undeserved kindness." The Greek word *kha'ris* occurs more than 150 times in the Christian Greek Scrip-

CHAP. 1

- a Php 2:7
1Ti 3:16
Heb 2:14
- b Joh 3:16
Col 1:15, 16
Heb 1:5, 6
1Jo 4:9
- c Eph 4:21
- d Joh 8:58

14 So the Word became flesh^a and resided among us, and we had a view of his glory, a glory such as belongs to an only-begotten son^b from a father; and he was full of divine favor and truth.^c **15** (John bore witness about him, yes, he cried out: “This was the one of whom I said, ‘The one coming behind me has advanced in front of me, for he existed before me.’”)^d **16** For we all received from his fullness, even undeserved kindness upon undeserved kindness. **17** Because the Law was given through Moses,^e the undeserved kindness^f and the truth

e Ex 31:18; De 4:44; f Ro 3:23, 24; Ro 6:14; Eph 1:5, 6.

 STUDY NOTES

tures and conveys different shades of meaning, depending on the context. When referring to the undeserved kindness that God shows toward humans, the word describes a free gift given generously by God with no expectation of repayment. It is an expression of God’s bounteous giving and generous love and kindness that the recipient has done nothing to merit or earn; it is motivated solely by the generosity of the giver. (Ro 4:4; 11:6) This term does not necessarily highlight that the recipients are unworthy of receiving kindness, which is why Jesus could be a recipient of this favor, or kindness, from God. In contexts involving Jesus, the term is appropriately rendered “divine favor,” as in this verse, or “favor.” (Lu 2:40, 52) In other contexts, the Greek term is rendered “favor” and “kind gift.”—Lu 1:30; Ac 2:47; 7:46; 1Co 16:3; 2Co 8:19.

full of divine favor and truth: “The Word,” Jesus Christ, had God’s favor and was always truthful. But the context indicates that this phrase involves more; Jehovah specially chose his Son to explain and demonstrate the Father’s undeserved kindness and truth in full measure. (Joh 1:16, 17) These qualities of God were so fully revealed through Jesus that he could say: “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father also.” (Joh 14:9) Jesus was God’s means of extending undeserved kindness and truth to any who would favorably receive such.

1:15 The one coming behind me: John the Baptist was born some six months before Jesus and started his ministry before Jesus did. In that sense, Jesus came “be-

hind,” or after, John. (Lu 1:24, 26; 3:1-20) Jesus, however, did far greater works than John, so in that sense, he **advanced in front of** John, or surpassed him, in every way. John the Baptist also acknowledged Jesus’ prehuman existence by saying that **he existed before me.**

1:16 undeserved kindness upon undeserved kindness: The Greek word for “undeserved kindness” is *kha’ris*. In this context, it denotes God’s bounteous giving and generous love and kindness. This kindness is given unearned and unmerited; the giving is motivated solely by the generosity of the giver. (See  Glossary, “Undeserved kindness.”) The doubling of the word *kha’ris* combined with the Greek preposition *an-ti’* (here rendered “upon”) denotes an abundant, continual, or successive flow of undeserved kindness. The idea could also be expressed as “continual [or “constant”] undeserved kindness.”

1:17 the Law . . . the undeserved kindness and the truth: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Law given through Moses is often contrasted with “undeserved kindness.” (Ro 3:21-24; 5:20, 21; 6:14; Ga 2:21; 5:4; Heb 10:28, 29) The Mosaic Law served as a “guardian leading to Christ” and contained shadows, or prophetic pictures, that were fulfilled in him. (Ga 3:23-25; Col 2:16, 17; Heb 10:1) Among other things, the Law gave humans “the accurate knowledge of sin.” (Ro 3:20) With this accurate knowledge came the realization that “the wages sin pays is death” and that “every transgression and disobedient act received a punishment in harmony with justice.” (Ro 6:23; Heb 2:2) Here John

implies a contrast between “the Law” and “the undeserved kindness and the truth” that **came . . . through Jesus Christ.** Jesus brought to reality the things foreshadowed by the Law, including sacrifices for forgiveness and atonement. (Le 4:20, 26) He also revealed that God would extend toward sinful humans His “undeserved kindness,” or “kind gift,” as the Greek term *kha’ris* is sometimes rendered, by giving his Son as a sin-atonement sacrifice. (Col 1:14; 1Jo 4:10, ftn.; see study note on Ro 6:23 and  Glossary, “Undeserved kindness.”) Jesus revealed a new “truth”—that this sacrifice would set humans free from sin and death.—Joh 8:32; see study note on Joh 1:14.

came to be through Jesus Christ.^a **18** No man has seen God at any time;^b the only-begotten god^c who is at the Father's side^d is the one who has explained Him.^e

The Witness John the Baptist Gave

19 This is the witness John gave when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him: "Who are you?"^f **20** And he admitted it and did not deny it, saying: "I am not the Christ."^g **21** And they asked him: "What, then? Are you E-li-jah?"^h He replied: "I am not."ⁱ "Are you the Prophet?"^j And he answered: "No!" **22** So they said to him: "Who are you? Tell us so that we may give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" **23** He said: "I am a voice of someone crying out in the wilderness, 'Make the way of Jehovah straight,'^k just as Isaiah the prophet said."^l **24** Now those sent were from the Pharisees. **25** So they questioned him and said to him: "Why, then, do you baptize if you are not the Christ

^l Mt 3:1; Mt 3:3; Mr 1:3; Lu 1:67; Lu 1:76; Lu 3:3, 4; Lu 7:27, 28.

CHAP. 1

- a Joh 8:31, 32
Joh 14:6
Joh 18:37
2Co 1:20
- b Ex 33:17
Ex 33:20
Joh 6:46
1Jo 4:12
- c Joh 1:1
- d Pr 8:22
Pr 8:30
- e Mt 11:27
Lu 10:22
- f Lu 3:15
- g Ac 13:25
- h Mal 4:5
- i Lu 1:13, 17
- j De 18:15
Joh 6:14, 15
Joh 7:37
Joh 7:40
Ac 3:22
- k Isa 40:3
Mal 3:1

STUDY NOTES

1:18 the only-begotten god: John is here referring to the Word, "Jesus Christ," whom he earlier calls "a god." (Joh 1:1, 17) John speaks of Jesus as being the only-begotten Son of God. (Joh 1:14; 3:16) In this passage, John calls Jesus "the only-begotten god," a term that emphasizes Jesus' unique position in God's arrangement. Jesus can rightly be called "a god" because of the way the term "god" is used in the Bible. This title conveys the basic idea of a mighty one, and it is even used of humans in the Scriptures. (Ps 82:6; see study notes on Joh 1:1; 10:34.) Jesus is "a god," or a mighty one, because he is given power and authority from the almighty God, the Father. (Mt 28:18; 1Co 8:6; Heb 1:2) Because Jesus is the only one directly created by God and the only one through whom all things "came into existence" (Joh 1:3), he is appropriately called "the only-begotten god." This expression shows that Jesus holds a unique position of glory and preeminence in relation to all of God's spirit sons. As reflected in some Bible translations, some manuscripts read "the only-begotten Son." But the earliest and most authoritative manuscripts read "the only-begotten god" (with the definite article in Greek) or

"only-begotten god" (without the definite article in Greek).

at the Father's side: Lit., "in the bosom of the Father." This expression refers to a position of special favor and close fellowship. It is a figure of speech that is likely drawn from the way meals were eaten; guests would recline on couches in such a way that one could lean back on the bosom, or chest, of a close friend. (Joh 13:23-25) Jesus is thus described as the closest friend of Jehovah, the one person who could explain God more fully and thoroughly than anyone else could.—Mt 11:27.

1:19 the witness John gave: Or "the testimony of John." At Joh 1:7, John the Baptist is called "a witness" (a form of the Greek word *mar·ty·ri'a*, which is also used here), one who came in order to bear witness about the light. Here the same Greek word refers to the confirmation or declaration that John the Baptist made concerning Jesus and that is recorded in the verses that follow.

1:21 Elijah: See study note on Mt 11:14.

the Prophet: That is, the long-awaited prophet foretold by Moses.—De 18:18, 19; Joh 1:25-27; 6:14; 7:40; Ac 3:19-26.

1:23 Jehovah: At Isa 40:3, quoted here, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text. (See  App. A5 and C.) The Gospel writers Matthew, Mark, and Luke apply this prophecy to John the Baptist, and here in John's Gospel, John the Baptist applies this prophecy to himself. John would **make the way of Jehovah straight** in the sense that he would be the forerunner of Jesus, who would *represent* his Father and come in his Father's name.—Joh 5:43; 8:29.

1:26 baptize: Or "immerse; dip." The Greek word *ba·pti'zo* means "to dip; to plunge." Other Biblical references indicate that baptism involves complete immersion. On one occasion, John was baptizing at a location in the Jordan Valley near Salim "because there was a great quantity of water there." (Joh 3:23) When Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch, they both "went down into the water." (Ac 8:38) The same Greek word is used in the *Septuagint* at 2Ki 5:14 when describing that Naaman "plunged into the Jordan seven times."

CHAP. 1

- a Mt 3:11
Mr 1:7
Ac 13:25
- b Mt 3:1
Mt 3:6
- c Ac 8:32, 35
1Co 5:7
1Pe 1:18, 19
Re 5:6
- d Isa 53:7
Isa 53:11
1Co 15:3
Heb 9:13, 14
1Pe 2:24
1Jo 3:5
- e Joh 6:51
1Jo 2:1, 2
1Jo 4:14
- f Joh 1:15
Joh 8:58
- g Ac 19:4
- h Mt 3:16
Mr 1:10
Lu 3:22

or E-li'jah or the Prophet?" **26** John answered them: "I baptize in water. One is standing among you whom you do not know, **27** the one coming behind me, the lace of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."^a **28** These things took place in Beth'a-ny across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.^b

Jesus, "the Lamb of God"

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and he said: "See, the Lamb^c of God who takes away the sin^d of the world!^e **30** This is the one about whom I said: 'Behind me there comes a man who has advanced in front of me, for he existed before me.'^f **31** Even I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing in water was so that he might be made manifest to Israel."^g **32** John also bore witness, saying: "I viewed the spirit coming down as a dove out of heaven, and it remained upon him."^h **33** Even I did not know him, but the very One who sent me to baptize in water said to me: 'Whoever it is upon

STUDY NOTES

1:27 sandal: Untying, removing, or carrying another person's sandals (Mt 3:11; Mr 1:7; Lu 3:16) was considered a menial task to be done by a slave.

1:28 Bethany: Some manuscripts read "Bethabara" instead of "Bethany," a reading that is reflected in some Bible translations. However, the most reliable manuscripts read "Bethany."

Bethany across the Jordan: That is, E of the Jordan. This Bethany, mentioned only once in the Christian Greek Scriptures, is not the one located near Jerusalem. (Mt 21:17; Mr 11:1; Lu 19:29; Joh 11:1) The site of this Bethany E of the Jordan is unknown. Some favor a traditional location for Jesus' baptism, across the Jordan opposite Jericho. However, the record at Joh 1:29, 35, 43; 2:1 seems to indicate a place closer to Cana of Galilee rather than the location near Jericho. Thus, a site somewhat S of the Sea of Galilee seems the most likely, but no positive identification is possible.—See **3** App. B10.

1:29 the Lamb of God: After Jesus got baptized and returned from being tempted by the Devil, John the Baptist introduced him as "the Lamb of God." This expression occurs only here and at

Joh 1:36. (See **3** App. A7.) Comparing Jesus to a lamb is fitting. Throughout the Bible, sheep were offered in recognition of sin and to gain approach to God. This foreshadowed the sacrifice that Jesus would make when he surrendered his perfect human life in behalf of mankind. The expression "the Lamb of God" could reflect a number of passages in the inspired Scriptures. In view of John the Baptist's familiarity with the Hebrew Scriptures, his words may have alluded to one or more of the following: the male sheep that Abraham offered up instead of his own son Isaac (Ge 22:13), the Passover lamb that was slaughtered in Egypt for the deliverance of the enslaved Israelites (Ex 12:1-13), or the male lamb that was offered up on God's altar in Jerusalem each morning and evening (Ex 29:38-42). John may also have had in mind Isaiah's prophecy, where the one whom Jehovah calls "my servant" is said to be "brought like a sheep to the slaughter." (Isa 52:13; 53:5, 7, 11) When the apostle Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, he referred to Jesus as "our Passover lamb." (1Co 5:7) The apostle Peter spoke of Christ's "precious blood, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb." (1Pe 1:19) And more than 25 times in the book of Revelation, the glorified Jesus is spo-

ken of figuratively as "the Lamb."—Some examples are: Re 5:8; 6:1; 7:9; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7; 21:9; 22:1.

the world: The Greek word *ko'smos* is closely linked with mankind in secular Greek literature and particularly so in the Bible. In this context as well as at Joh 3:16, *ko'smos* refers to the entire world of mankind who are here described as being guilty of **sin**, that is, sin inherited from Adam.

1:32 as a dove: Doves had both a sacred use and a symbolic meaning. They were offered as sacrifices (Mr 11:15; Joh 2:14-16), and they symbolized innocence and purity (Mt 10:16). A dove released by Noah brought an olive leaf back to the ark, indicating that the floodwaters were receding (Ge 8:11) and that a time of rest and peace was at hand (Ge 5:29). Thus, at Jesus' baptism, Jehovah may have used the representation of a dove to call attention to the role of Jesus as the Messiah—he is the pure and sinless Son of God who would sacrifice his life for mankind and lay the basis for a period of rest and peace during his rule as King. The way that God's holy **spirit**, or active force, came down upon Jesus at his baptism may have looked like the fluttering of a dove as it nears its perch.

whom you see the spirit coming down and remaining,^a this is the one who baptizes in holy spirit.^b **34** And I have seen it, and I have given witness that this one is the Son of God.”^c

Jesus' First Disciples

35 Again the next day, John was standing with two of his disciples, **36** and as he looked at Jesus walking, he said: “See, the Lamb^d of God!” **37** When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. **38** Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, he said to them: “What are you looking for?” They said to him: “Rabbi (which means, when translated, “Teacher”), where are you staying?” **39** He said to them: “Come, and you will see.” So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day; it was about the tenth hour. **40** Andrew,^e the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard what John said and followed Jesus. **41** He first found* his own brother Simon and said to him: “We have found the Mes-si’ah”^f (which means, when translated, “Christ”),^g **42** and

CHAP. 1

- a Mt 3:16
- b Mt 3:11
Ac 1:5
Ac 2:1
Ac 2:4
- c Mt 3:17
- d Re 5:12
- e Mt 4:18
- f Da 9:25
Joh 4:25
Joh 11:27
- g Mt 16:16
Mr 8:29
Lu 9:20

FOOTNOTES

1:41 *Or “The first thing he did was to find.”

STUDY NOTES

1:34 the Son of God: This expression is often used in the Bible with reference to Jesus. (Joh 1:49; 3:16-18; 5:25; 10:36; 11:4) Since God does not have a literal wife and is not of human nature, this expression must be a word picture. It is obviously intended to help the reader understand that Jesus’ relationship with God is like that of a human son with his father. It also emphasizes that Jesus received his life from Jehovah, being created by Him. In a similar way, the first man, Adam, is also spoken of as a “son of God.”—See study note on Lu 3:38.

1:35 John . . . with two of his disciples: One of the two disciples of John the Baptist was “Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter.”—See study note on Joh 1:40.

1:37 the two disciples . . . followed Jesus: This statement indicates that the first disciples of Jesus came from among the disciples of John the Baptist.—See study notes on Joh 1:35, 40.

1:39 about the tenth hour: That is, about 4:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

1:40 one of the two: These two disciples were mentioned at Joh 1:35. The unnamed disciple is likely the apostle John, who is the son of Zebedee and the writer of this Gospel. (Mt 4:21; Mr 1:19; Lu 5:10) This conclusion is supported by the fact that the writer never identifies himself by name, never mentions the apostle John by name, and always refers to John the Baptist simply as “John.”

1:41 the Messiah: Or “the Anointed One.” The Greek word *Mes-si’as* (a transliteration of the Hebrew word *ma-shi’ach*) occurs only twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (See Joh 4:25.) The Hebrew verb from which the title *ma-shi’ach* is derived is *ma-shach’*, meaning “to smear or spread (with liquid)” and “to anoint.” (Ex 29:2, 7) In Bible times, priests, rulers, and prophets were ceremonially anointed with oil. (Le 4:3; 1Sa 16:3, 12, 13; 1Ki 19:16) Here at Joh 1:41, the title “Messiah” is followed by an explanation, **which means, when translated, “Christ.”** The title “Christ” (Greek, *Khri-stos*) occurs more than 500 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures and is equivalent to the title “Messiah,” both meaning “Anointed One.”—See study note on Mt 1:1.

1:42 You are Simon: Simon is named in five different ways in the Scriptures. (See study notes on Mt 4:18; 10:2.) On this occasion, Jesus apparently meets Simon for the first time and gives him the Semitic name **Cephas** (*Ke-phas’*), perhaps related to the Hebrew *ke-phim’* (rocks) used at Job 30:6 and Jer 4:29. Here the Gospel writer John also provides an explanation, **which is translated “Peter,”** a Greek name that similarly means “A Piece of Rock.” In the Scriptures, Simon alone bears this Semitic name as well as this Greek one. Jesus, who was able to discern that Nathanael was a man “in whom there [was] no deceit” (Joh 1:47; 2:25), could also discern Peter’s makeup. Especially after Jesus’ death and resurrection, Peter showed rocklike qualities, being a strengthening and stabilizing influence on the congregation.—Lu 22:32; Ac 1:15, 16; 15:6-11.

John: According to some ancient manuscripts, the father of the apostle Peter is here called John. In other ancient manuscripts, he is called Jona. At Mt 16:17, Jesus addresses Peter as “Simon son of Jonah.” (See study note on Mt 16:17.) According to some scholars, the Greek forms of the names John and Jona(h) may be different spellings of the same Hebrew name.

CHAP. 1

- a Mt 10:2
Ac 15:14
- b Mt 16:18
Mr 3:16
Joh 21:15
- c Mt 10:2, 3
Joh 6:5-7
Joh 12:20-22
Joh 14:7-9
- d Mt 10:2, 3
Lu 6:13, 14
- e De 18:18
Isa 9:6
Mic 5:2
Mal 3:1
Lu 24:27
Joh 5:46
- f Mt 1:16
Mt 13:55
Lu 2:4
- g Joh 7:41
- h Joh 2:24, 25

he led him to Jesus. When Jesus looked at him, he said: “You are Simon,^a the son of John; you will be called Ce’phas” (which is translated “Peter”).^b

Philip and Nathanael Become Disciples

43 The next day he wanted to leave for Gal’i-lee. Jesus then found Philip^c and said to him: “Be my follower.” **44** Now Philip was from Beth-sa’i-da, from the city of Andrew and Peter. **45** Philip found Na-than’a-el^d and said to him: “We have found the one of whom Moses, in the Law, and the Prophets wrote:^e Jesus, the son of Joseph,^f from Naz’a-reth.” **46** But Na-than’a-el said to him: “Can anything good come out of Naz’a-reth?”^g Philip said to him: “Come and see.” **47** Jesus saw Na-than’a-el coming toward him and said about him: “See, truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”^h **48** Na-than’a-el said to him: “How

STUDY NOTES

1:45 Nathanael: From the Hebrew name meaning “God Has Given.” Presumably another name of Bartholomew, one of Jesus’ 12 apostles. (Mt 10:3) Bartholomew, meaning “Son of Tolmai,” was a patronymic term (that is, a designation derived from the father’s name). It was not exceptional for Nathanael to be called Bartholomew, or Son of Tolmai, as another man was simply called Bartimaeus, that is, the son of Timaeus. (Mr 10:46) When Matthew, Mark, and Luke talk about Bartholomew, they mention him along with Philip. Similarly, when John mentions Nathanael, he also links him with Philip, giving further evidence that Bartholomew and Nathanael were one and the same. (Mt 10:3; Mr 3:18; Lu 6:14; Joh 1:45, 46) It was not uncommon for a person to be known by more than one name.—Joh 1:42.

Moses, in the Law, and the Prophets:

This wording echoes the expression “the Law and the Prophets” that is used several times, with slight variations, in the Gospels. (Mt 5:17; 7:12; 11:13; 22:40; Lu 16:16) Here, “the Law” refers to the Bible books of Genesis through Deuteronomy, and “the Prophets” refers to the prophetic books of the Hebrew Scriptures. When used together, they could be understood to include the entire Hebrew Scriptures. The disciples mentioned here were obviously keen students of the He-

brew Scriptures, and Philip may have had in mind passages like those found at Ge 3:15; 22:18; 49:10; De 18:18; Isa 9:6, 7; 11:1; Jer 33:15; Eze 34:23; Mic 5:2; Zec 6:12; and Mal 3:1. In fact, a number of Bible verses indicate that the entire Hebrew Scriptures bear witness about Jesus.—Lu 24:27, 44; Joh 5:39, 40; Ac 10:43; Re 19:10.

See  Gallery, image 87, View of the Valley of Jezreel.

1:46 Can anything good come out of Nazareth?: It is commonly understood that Nathanael’s comment reflected the fact that Nazareth was an insignificant village, looked down on even by people of Galilee. (Joh 21:2) Nazareth is not specifically mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures nor by Josephus, though the nearby Japhia (less than 3 km [2 mi] SW of Nazareth) is mentioned at Jos 19:12 and by Josephus. However, not all cities in Galilee were mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures or by Josephus. It is also noteworthy that the Gospels always call Nazareth “a city” (Greek, *po’lis*), a term that generally denotes a population center larger than a village. (Mt 2:23; Lu 1:26; 2:4, 39; 4:29) Nazareth stood in a mountain basin, surrounded by hills overlooking the plain of Esdraelon (Jezreel). The area was well-populated, with a number of cities and towns nearby. It was located close to important trade routes, so its inhabitants would have had access

to information about the social, religious, and political activities of the time. (Compare Lu 4:23.) Nazareth also had its own synagogue. (Lu 4:16) So it seems likely that it was not an insignificant village. Therefore, Nathanael may simply have been expressing surprise that Philip would think that a man from the neighboring city of Nazareth in Galilee could be the Promised One, since the Scriptures had foretold that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem in Judah.—Mic 5:2; Joh 7:42, 52.

1:47 truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit: All descendants of Jacob were Israelites, but Jesus was no doubt referring to something more than fleshly kinship. The name Israel means “Contender (Perseverer) With God” and was given to Jacob after he wrestled with an angel in order to obtain a blessing. Unlike his brother, Esau, Jacob appreciated sacred things and was willing to exert himself vigorously to gain God’s favor. (Ge 32:22-28; Heb 12:16) Jesus’ words to Nathanael indicated that he was an Israelite not merely by birth but by manifesting the same kind of faith and adherence to God’s will that his forefather Jacob did. Jesus’ words (which may reflect Ps 32:2) also indicate that there was nothing hypocritical or devious about Nathanael.

do you know me?” Jesus answered him: “Before Philip called you, while you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” **49** Na-than-a-el responded: “Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are King of Israel.”^a **50** Jesus answered him: “Do you believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree? You will see things greater than these.” **51** He then said to him: “Most truly I say to you men, you will see heaven opened up and the angels of God ascending and descending to the Son of man.”^b

CHAP. 1

^a Zec 9:9
Mt 27:11
Lu 1:31, 32
Joh 12:13

^b Ge 28:10
Ge 28:12
Ps 104:4
Da 7:13
Mt 4:11
Lu 22:43

CHAP. 2

^c Joh 2:12

Wedding in Cana

2 And on the third day a marriage feast took place in Ca’na^c of Gal’i-lee, and the mother of Jesus was there. **2** Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the marriage feast.

3 When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him: “They have no wine.” **4** But Jesus said to her: “Woman, why is that of concern to me and to you? My hour has not yet come.” **5** His mother said to those serving: “Do whatever he tells you.”

STUDY NOTES

1:50 You will see things greater than

these: Nathanael soon began to see these words fulfilled. At a marriage feast in his hometown of Cana in Galilee, Nathanael witnessed Jesus’ first miracle, the turning of water into superb wine. (Joh 2:1-11; 21:2) Along with the 11 others who were later appointed as apostles, Nathanael saw Jesus heal the sick, expel demons, and even raise the dead. Besides seeing these things, Nathanael and the other apostles were themselves empowered to perform miracles and to share in proclaiming: “The Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.”—Mt 10:1-8.

1:51 Most truly: Lit., “Truly, truly.” Greek, *a-men’ a-men’*. The Greek word *a-men’* is a transliteration of the Hebrew *’a-men’*, meaning “so be it,” or “surely.” Jesus frequently uses the term *a-men’* to preface a statement, a promise, or a prophecy, thereby emphasizing its absolute truthfulness and reliability. Jesus’ use of “truly,” or amen, in this way is said to be unique in sacred literature. (Mt 5:18; Mr 3:28; Lu 4:24) Only John’s Gospel repeats the term in succession (*a-men’ a-men’*), and it does so in all 25 occurrences. In this translation, the doubling of *a-men’* is rendered “most truly”; alternative renderings

could be “very truly” or “most assuredly.” The whole phrase “Truly [or, “Most truly”] I say to you” could also be rendered: “I assure you” or “I tell you the truth.”

heaven: The Greek term used here can refer to the physical heavens, that is, the sky, or to the spiritual heavens.

angels: Or “messengers.” The Greek word *ag’ge-los* and the corresponding Hebrew word *mal-’akh’* occur nearly 400 times in the Bible. Both words have the basic meaning of “messenger.” When spirit messengers are meant, the words are translated “angels,” but if the reference is definitely to humans, the rendering is “messengers.” The context usually makes clear whether human or angelic messengers are meant, but where both meanings are possible, footnotes often show the alternative rendering. (Ge 16:7; 32:3; Job 4:18, fn.; 33:23, fn.; Ec 5:6, fn.; Isa 63:9, fn.; Mt 1:20; Jas 2:25; Re 22:8; see  Glossary.) In the highly symbolic book of Revelation, certain references to angels may apply to human creatures.—Re 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14.

to the Son of man: Or “in the service of the Son of man.” When speaking about **angels . . . ascending and descending**, Jesus may have had in mind Jacob’s vi-

sion of angels ascending and descending a stairway, or ladder (Ge 28:12), indicating that angels minister in an important way between Jehovah and humans who have his approval. Jesus’ statement likewise shows that those who walked with Jesus had evidence that God’s angels ministered to him and that in a special way, he was under the care and guidance of his Father.

Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

2:1 Cana: Probably from the Hebrew word *qa-neh’*, “reed”; hence, “Place of Reeds.” John alone mentions this town, always calling it **Cana of Galilee** (Joh 2:11; 4:46; 21:2), probably to distinguish it from Kanah (Hebrew, *Qa-nah’*) in Asher’s tribal territory (Jos 19:24, 28). The location favored by many scholars is Khirbet Qana, where there are ruins of an ancient village on a hill at the N edge of the Bet Netofa Valley (Plain of el-Battuf), about 13 km (8 mi) N of Nazareth. In Arabic, the place is still known as Qana el-Jelil, the equivalent of Cana of Galilee. Reeds are abundant in a nearby marshy plain, making the name Cana very fitting. There are remains of ancient cisterns and what are thought to be the ruins of a synagogue (dated to the late first century or to the second century C.E.). Potsherds

CHAP. 2

- a Mr 7:3
 b Isa 9:1, 2
 Joh 1:14
 c Mt 12:46
 Mt 13:55, 56
 Mr 3:31
 Lu 8:19
 Ac 1:14
 ICo 9:5
 Ga 1:19
 d Mt 4:13

6 Now there were six stone water jars sitting there as required by the purification rules of the Jews,^a each able to hold two or three liquid measures. **7** Jesus said to them: “Fill the jars with water.” So they filled them to the brim. **8** Then he said to them: “Now draw some out and take it to the director of the feast.” So they took it. **9** When the director of the feast tasted the water that had now been turned into wine, not knowing where it came from (although the servants who had drawn out the water knew), the director of the feast called the bridegroom **10** and said to him: “Everyone else puts out the fine wine first, and when people are intoxicated, the inferior. You have saved the fine wine until now.” **11** Jesus did this in Ca’na of Gal’i-lee as the beginning of his signs, and he made his glory manifest,^b and his disciples put their faith in him.

12 After this he and his mother and his brothers^c and his disciples went down to Ca-per’na-um,^d but they did not stay there many days.

 STUDY NOTES

(fragments of earthen vessels) and coins believed to date from the first century C.E. have also been found there. Church tradition favors an identification with Kafr Kanna, located 6.5 km (4 mi) NE of Nazareth, possibly because it is easily accessible to pilgrims from Nazareth. However, the name of this location seems to have no linguistic connection with the Cana of Galilee mentioned in the Bible.

2:4 Woman: Jesus’ use of this term when addressing his mother was consistent with his way of addressing other women (Joh 4:21) and was apparently considered polite in many contexts (Mt 15:28). It was not understood to be rude, unkind, or disrespectful in any way. Angels and the resurrected Jesus used this form of address when speaking to Mary Magdalene when she was weeping in sorrow at Jesus’ tomb; their words would surely not have been harsh or disrespectful in such a situation. (Joh 20:13, 15) On the torture stake, Jesus used the same term to address his mother when his great concern for her moved him to place her in the care of his beloved apostle John. (Joh 19:26) He made this arrangement because of the Scriptural obligation to honor one’s father and mother. (Ex 20:12; De 5:16; Mt

15:4) Several reference works confirm that using the term “woman” as a form of address could reflect respect and affection.

why is that of concern to me and to you?: When Mary told Jesus: “They have no wine” (Joh 2:3), she was no doubt suggesting that he do something about it. This is noteworthy, since Jesus had performed no miracles up to that point. The Semitic idiom used in response, which is literally “what to me and to you?” basically indicates some objection and must be understood according to context. While it sometimes expresses hostility and repulsion (Mt 8:29; Mr 1:24; 5:7; Lu 4:34; 8:28), it appears to be a gentle objection in this instance. (Examples of the milder use of this idiom can be found in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as at 2Sa 16:9, 10 and 1Ki 17:18, fn.) Jesus’ following words indicate why he was hesitant: **My hour has not yet come.** Still, Jesus’ response to her suggestion must have indicated that he was not opposed to providing help, as Mary’s reaction in verse 5 shows.

2:6 liquid measures: Many scholars equate the measure mentioned here (Greek, *me-tre-tes*) with the Hebrew bath measure. Based on jar fragments bearing the designation “bath” in ancient Hebrew

characters, some scholars understand the capacity of the bath measure to be about 22 L (5.81 gal). (1Ki 7:26; Eze 7:22; Eze 45:14) If so, each of the water jars could hold between 44 and 66 L (11.6 and 17.4 gal), and the six jars combined would contain about 260 to 390 L (68.6 to 103 gal). Other scholars, though, believe that a larger Greek unit of measure (up to 40 L [10.5 gal]) may be referred to here. —See  App. B14.

See  Gallery, image 116, Stone Jars.

2:11 as the beginning of his signs: Jesus’ changing water into fine wine was the first of the signs, or miracles, that he performed. This event is recorded by John only.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

13 Now the Passover^a of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** He found in the temple those selling cattle and sheep and doves,^b and the money brokers in their seats. **15** So after making a whip of ropes, he drove all those with the sheep and cattle out of the temple, and he poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.^c **16** And he said to those selling the doves: “Take these things away from here! Stop making the house of my Father a house of commerce!”^d **17** His disciples recalled that it is written: “The zeal for your house will consume me.”^e

18 Therefore, in response the Jews said to him: “What sign can you show us,^f since you are doing these things?” **19** Jesus replied to them: “Tear down this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”^g **20** The Jews then said: “This temple was built in 46 years, and will you raise it up in three days?” **21** But he was talking about the temple of his body.^h **22** When, though,

CHAP. 2

- a Ex 12:14
Nu 28:16
De 16:1
Joh 5:1
Joh 6:4
Joh 11:55
Joh 13:1
- b Le 1:14
- c Mt 21:12
Mr 11:15, 16
Lu 19:45
- d Jer 7:11
Mt 21:13
Mr 11:17
Lu 19:46
- e Ps 69:9
- f Mt 12:38
Mt 16:1
Joh 4:48
Joh 6:30
- g Mt 26:59-61
Mt 27:39, 40
Mr 14:57, 58
- h Mt 16:21
Lu 24:46

STUDY NOTES

2:13 the Passover: Jesus started his preaching activity after his baptism in the fall of 29 C.E., so this reference to a Passover early in his ministry must have been to the one celebrated in the spring of 30 C.E. (See study note on Lu 3:1 and ☞ App. A7.) A comparison of the four Gospel accounts indicates that four Passovers were celebrated during Jesus’ earthly ministry, leading to the conclusion that his ministry was three and a half years long. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke (often called the synoptic Gospels) do not mention any Passover except the final one, at which Jesus died. John’s account specifically mentions three Passovers (Joh 2:13; 6:4; 11:55), and a fourth one is most likely referred to by the expression “a festival of the Jews” at Joh 5:1. This example highlights the value of comparing the Gospel accounts to gain a more complete picture of Jesus’ life.—See study notes on Joh 5:1; 6:4; 11:55.

2:14 the temple: Probably referring to the part of the temple area known as the Court of the Gentiles.—See ☞ App. B11.

those selling cattle and sheep and doves: God’s Law required that the Israelites make sacrifices at the temple, and

visitors needed food provisions during their stay in Jerusalem. Some Israelites had to travel long distances to get there, so the Law allowed them to sell their produce and animals, bring the money to Jerusalem, and buy such offerings as cattle, sheep, goats, and doves as well as what they needed for their stay in the city. (De 14:23-26) Over time, merchants set up businesses to sell sacrificial animals and birds right inside the temple complex. (See study note on **the temple** in this verse.) Likely, some of the merchants were cheating the people by charging too much.

2:15 a whip of ropes: The Greek word for “rope” (*skhoi-ni’on*) may denote a cord made of reeds, rushes, or other materials. When Jesus used the whip of ropes to drive “the sheep and cattle out of the temple,” the sellers of these animals would naturally have followed their livestock out of the temple area. In the following verse, when he verbally evicted the men selling doves, there is no mention of the whip, indicating that he did not use it on the sellers. Even so, the result was that those who were commercializing true worship were forced to leave the temple premises.

he drove all those with the sheep and cattle out of the temple: While on earth, Jesus twice cleansed the temple in Jerusalem of commercialism. What is described here is the first cleansing, which took place in connection with the Passover in 30 C.E. and Jesus’ first visit to Jerusalem as the anointed Son of God. (See ☞ App. A7.) On Nisan 10, 33 C.E., Jesus cleansed the temple a second time. This occasion is described in the Gospels of Matthew (21:12, 13), Mark (11:15-18), and Luke (19:45, 46).—See ☞ App. A7.

money changers: See study note on Mt 21:12.

2:16 a house of commerce: Or “a marketplace; a business.” The Greek phrase *oi’kon em-po-ri’ou*, rendered “a house of commerce,” means “a place where business is carried on; a market.” It occurs only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. The sale of sacrifices within the temple grounds was one of the chief sources of income for the wealthy and powerful house of chief priest Annas.

2:17 zeal for your house: In this context, the Greek word (*ze’los*), here rendered “zeal,” denotes an intense, positive, burning interest, marked by a sense

CHAP. 2

a Lu 24:6-8
Joh 12:16
Joh 14:26

b Joh 4:45

c Mt 9:3, 4
Mr 2:6-8
Joh 1:47, 48
Joh 6:64
Re 2:23

he was raised up from the dead, his disciples recalled that he used to say this,^a and they believed the scripture and what Jesus had spoken.

Jesus Knows What Is in Man

23 However, when he was in Jerusalem at the festival of the Passover, many people put their faith in his name when they saw the signs that he was performing.^b **24** But Jesus would not entrust himself to them because he knew them all **25** and because he did not need to have anyone bear witness about man, for he knew what was in man.^c

CHAP. 3

d Joh 7:50, 51
Joh 19:39

e Joh 12:42

f Joh 1:38

g Joh 2:11

h Mt 7:28, 29
Joh 7:46
Joh 14:11
Ac 2:22
Ac 10:38

3 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nic-o-de'mus,^d a ruler of the Jews. **2** This one came to him in the night^e and said to him: "Rabbi,^f we know that you have come from God as a teacher, for no one can perform these signs^g that you perform unless God is with him."^h **3** In response Jesus said to

Jesus and Nicodemus

STUDY NOTES

of dedication. The scripture that the disciples called to mind can be found at Ps 69:9. There the corresponding Hebrew noun (*qin·'ah*), rendered "zeal," may convey such meanings as "insistence on exclusive devotion; toleration of no rivalry." When Jesus saw all the commercial activity in the temple area, he was righteously indignant, and his zeal moved him to action.

2:19 Tear down this temple, and in three days I will raise it up: Only John records these words spoken by Jesus. The Jews thought that he was speaking of the temple of Herod. At Jesus' trial, his opposers quoted and distorted his words. (Mt 26:61; 27:40; Mr 14:58) As shown at Joh 2:21, Jesus was using figurative speech; he was comparing his anticipated death and resurrection to the demolition and reconstruction of the temple. Although Jesus said: "I will raise it up," the Scriptures clearly show that it was God who resurrected him. (Ac 10:40; Ro 8:11; Heb 13:20) After being put to death and on the third day resurrected (Mt 16:21; Lu 24:7, 21, 46), Jesus was given another body, not one made with hands like the temple in Jerusalem, but

a spirit body made by his Father (Ac 2:24; 1Pe 3:18). In the Scriptures, the figurative use of a temple being applied to people is not unusual. The Messiah was foretold to be "the chief cornerstone" (Ps 118:22; Isa 28:16, 17; Ac 4:10, 11), and Paul and Peter used similar comparisons regarding Jesus and his followers at 1Co 3:16, 17; 6:19; Eph 2:20; and 1Pe 2:6, 7.

2:20 This temple was built in 46 years:

The Jews were referring to the temple rebuilding work done by King Herod. The first temple in Jerusalem, built by Solomon, was destroyed by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E. It was rebuilt under the direction of Zerubbabel after the Babylonian captivity. (Ezr 6:13-15; Hag 2:2-4) According to Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities*, XV, 380 [xi, 1]), Herod started his rebuilding project in the 18th year of his reign. If counted in the way that the Jews viewed the regnal years of their kings, that could mean 18/17 B.C.E. Actually, work continued on the temple in the form of additions until six years before its destruction in 70 C.E.

2:21 temple of his body: As this comment by the apostle John shows, Jesus was using figurative speech, comparing his anticipated death and resurrection to

the demolition and reconstruction of a building.

2:25 he knew what was in man: Jesus was able to discern the thinking, reasoning, and motives of humans. This was foretold by the prophet Isaiah, who said about the Messiah: "The spirit of Jehovah will settle upon him," so that his judgment would not be based on "what appears to his eyes."—Isa 11:2, 3; Mt 9:4; see study note on Mr 2:8.

3:1 Nicodemus: A Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews, that is, a member of the Sanhedrin. (See  Glossary, "Sanhedrin.") The name Nicodemus, which means "Conqueror of the People," was well-known among the Greeks and had been adopted by some Jews. Nicodemus is mentioned only in John's Gospel (Joh 3:4, 9; 7:50; 19:39), and Jesus calls him "a teacher of Israel" at Joh 3:10.—See study note on Joh 19:39.

him: “Most truly I say to you, unless anyone is born again,^a he cannot see the Kingdom of God.”^b **4** Nic-o-de’mus said to him: “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter into the womb of his mother a second time and be born, can he?” **5** Jesus answered: “Most truly I say to you, unless anyone is born from water^c and spirit,^d he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. **6** What has been born from the flesh is flesh, and what has been born from the spirit is spirit. **7** Do not be amazed because I told you: You people must be born again.^e **8** The wind blows where it wants to, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from and where it is going. So it is with everyone who has been born from the spirit.”^f **9** In answer Nic-o-de’mus said to him: “How can these things be?” **10** Jesus replied: “Are you a teacher of Israel and yet do

CHAP. 3

- a Joh 1:12, 13
 1Pe 1:3
 1Pe 1:23
 1Jo 3:9
- b 1Co 15:50
- c Mt 28:19
 Ac 8:36
 Ac 10:47
- d Mt 3:11
 Joh 1:33
 Ac 1:5
 Ac 10:45
 Ac 11:16
 Ac 19:5, 6
 1Co 12:13
- e 1Pe 1:3, 23
- f Ro 8:14
 Ro 8:16

STUDY NOTES

3:3 born again: Jesus reveals to Nicodemus that in order to see the Kingdom of God, a human has to be born a second time. Nicodemus’ response in verse 4 indicates that he understood Jesus’ words to mean experiencing a literal second birth as a human. Jesus, however, goes on to describe this second birth as being “born from . . . spirit.” (Joh 3:5) Those who were “to become God’s children” “were born, not from blood or from a fleshly will or from man’s will, but from God.” (Joh 1:12, 13) At 1Pe 1:3, 23, Peter uses a synonymous Biblical expression, saying that anointed Christians are given “a new birth.” Although most Bibles use the expression “born again,” a number of Bibles say “born from above,” which is also a possible rendering because the Greek word *a’no-then* usually means “from above.” (Joh 3:31; 19:11; Jas 1:17; 3:15, 17) Both renderings harmonize with the idea that those who would enter the Kingdom would experience a new birth that is “from God” and thus from above. (1Jo 3:9) But considering Nicodemus’ response, in this context the Greek term has also been understood to mean “again; anew.”

the Kingdom of God: This expression occurs only twice in the Gospel of John. —Joh 3:5; see study notes on Mt 3:2; Mr 1:15.

3:5 born from water and spirit: Nicodemus was likely familiar with the baptisms performed by John the Baptist. (Mr 1:4-8; Lu 3:16; Joh 1:31-34) So when Jesus spoke about water, it is reasonable to assume that Nicodemus would have discerned that Jesus was referring to water used for baptism. Nicodemus would also have been familiar with the way the Hebrew Scriptures use the term “spirit of God,” that is, God’s active force. (Ge 41:38; Ex 31:3; Nu 11:17; Jg 3:10; 1Sa 10:6; Isa 63:11) Therefore, when Jesus used the word “spirit,” Nicodemus would have understood it to be holy spirit. Jesus’ own experience illustrates the point he made to Nicodemus. When Jesus was baptized in water, holy spirit descended upon him. So he was “born from water and spirit.” (Mt 3:16, 17; Lu 3:21, 22) At that time, God declared that Jesus was his Son, apparently indicating that he had brought forth Jesus as a spiritual son who had the prospect of returning to heaven. A follower of Jesus who is “born from water” is one who has turned away from his former course of life, repented of his sins, and been baptized in water. Those who are born from both “water and spirit” are begotten, or brought forth, by God to be sons of God with the promise of spirit life in the heavens and with the prospect of ruling in the Kingdom of God.—Lu 22:30; Ro 8:14-17, 23; Tit 3:5; Heb 6:4, 5.

spirit: Or “active force.” The Greek word *pneu’ma* refers here to God’s active force. —See [Glossary](#).

3:6 What has been born from the flesh is flesh: The Greek word for “flesh” (*sarx*) is here used to refer to a living being with fleshly or human heritage, along with its limitations.—See study note on Joh 17:2.

is spirit: Apparently referring to a spiritual son of God, one who is anointed with God’s spirit.

3:8 wind . . . spirit: The Greek word *pneu’ma*, usually rendered “spirit,” occurs twice in this verse. The first occurrence is the only place in the Christian Greek Scriptures where it is rendered “wind,” though the corresponding Hebrew word *ru’ach* is rendered “wind” some 100 times. (Ge 8:1; Ex 10:13; 1Ki 18:45; Job 21:18; Zec 2:6; see [Glossary](#), “Spirit.”) Both terms generally denote something invisible to the human eye, often giving evidence of force in motion. Jesus uses the expression to teach a deep spiritual truth. At the end of the verse, *pneu’ma* is used in the expression **everyone who has been born from the spirit**, that is, who has been begotten by God’s holy spirit, or active force. (See study note on Joh 3:5.) He tells Nicodemus that being “born from the spirit” can be illustrated with the blowing of the wind. Nicodemus could hear, feel, and see the effects of the wind, but he could not understand its source

CHAP. 3

- a Joh 8:26
 b Joh 3:32
 c Lu 22:66, 67
 1Co 2:14
 d Ac 2:34
 Heb 9:8
 e Joh 6:38
 Joh 8:23, 42
 1Co 15:47
 Eph 4:8-10
 f Nu 21:8, 9
 g Joh 8:28
 Ga 3:13

not know these things? **11** Most truly I say to you, what we know we speak, and what we have seen we bear witness to,^a but you do not receive the witness we give.^b **12** If I have told you earthly things and you still do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?^c **13** Moreover, no man has ascended into heaven^d but the one who descended from heaven,^e the Son of man. **14** And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,^f so the Son of man must be lifted up,^g **15** so that everyone believing in him may have everlasting life.^h **16** “For God loved the world so much that he gave his

^h Joh 3:36; Joh 20:31.

 STUDY NOTES

or its final destination. Similarly, those lacking spiritual insight would find it difficult to grasp how Jehovah, by means of his spirit, could cause a person to be born again; nor could they grasp the glorious future that lies ahead for such a person.

3:13 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

3:14 so the Son of man must be lifted up: Jesus here likens his being executed on the stake to the placing of the copper serpent on a pole in the wilderness. In order to live, the Israelites bitten by the poisonous serpents had to gaze at the copper serpent put up by Moses. Similarly, sinful humans who desire to gain everlasting life must look intently at Jesus by exercising faith in him. (Nu 21:4-9; Heb 12:2) To many, the fact that Jesus was put to death on a stake made him appear to be an evildoer and a sinner; according to the Mosaic Law, a person hung on a stake was considered cursed. (De 21:22, 23) Quoting from this passage of the Law, Paul explains that Jesus had to be hung on a stake to release the Jews “from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse instead of [them].”—Ga 3:13; 1Pe 2:24.

3:16 loved: This is the first occurrence of the Greek verb *a-ga-pa’o* (“to love”) in the Gospel of John. This Greek verb and the related noun *a-ga’pe* (love) are used in his Gospel a total of 44 times—more often than in the other three Gospels combined. In the Bible, *a-ga-pa’o* and *a-ga’pe* often refer to unselfish love guided, or governed, by principle. This is

shown by its use in this verse, since God is spoken of as loving **the world**, that is, the world of mankind in need of redemption from sin. (Joh 1:29) The noun is used at 1Jo 4:8, where John says “God is love.” Love (*a-ga’pe*) is listed first as an aspect of “the fruitage of the spirit” (Ga 5:22), and it is described at length at 1Co 13:4-7. The way the word is used in the Scriptures shows that love often involves more than an emotional response to another person. In many contexts, it is broader in scope; this type of love is often expressed more thoughtfully and deliberately. (Mt 5:44; Eph 5:25) Therefore, the love cultivated by Christians should include a moral sense that takes into account duty, principle, and propriety. However, it is not without feeling, since it often includes warm personal affection. (1Pe 1:22) This is shown in the use of the term in John’s Gospel. When John wrote “the Father loves the Son” (Joh 3:35), he used a form of the word *a-ga-pa’o*, but when he recorded Jesus’ statement describing this same relationship, he used a form of the Greek verb *phi-le’o* (“to have affection”).—Joh 5:20.

the world: The Greek word *ko’smos* is closely linked with mankind in secular Greek literature and particularly so in the Bible. (See study note on Joh 1:10.) In this context, *ko’smos* refers to the entire world of redeemable mankind who at Joh 1:29 are described as being guilty of “sin,” that is, sin inherited from Adam.

only-begotten Son,^a so that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.^b **17** For God did not send his Son into the world for him to judge the world, but for the world to be saved through him.^c **18** Whoever exercises faith in him is not to be judged.^d Whoever does not exercise faith has been judged already, because he has not exercised faith in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.^e **19** Now this is the basis for judgment: that the light has come into the world,^f but men* have loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were wicked.^g **20** For whoever practices vile things hates the light and does not come to the light, so that his works may not be reprov^{ed}.^h **21** But whoever does what is true comes to the light,^h so that his works may be made manifest as having been done in harmony with God.”

e Mt 10:33; Heb 10:29; f Joh 1:9; Joh 8:12; Joh 9:5; Joh 12:46, 48; g Job 24:13-17; Isa 5:20; 1Jo 2:9; h Joh 12:36; Joh 12:46; 1Jo 1:7.

CHAP. 3

a Ge 22:2, 16
Joh 1:14
Ro 5:8
Ro 8:32
1Jo 4:9, 10
1Jo 4:19

b Ps 133:3
Joh 6:40
Joh 17:3
Joh 20:31
Ro 6:23
2Ti 3:15
1Jo 2:25
1Jo 5:13

c Lu 19:10
Joh 12:47
1Co 15:22
2Co 5:18, 19
1Ti 1:15
1Jo 2:1, 2
1Jo 4:14

d Joh 5:24
Ro 8:1

FOOTNOTES

3:19 *Or “people.” **3:20** *Or “exposed.”

STUDY NOTES

3:16 only-begotten Son: The Greek word *mo-no-ge-nes*, traditionally rendered “only-begotten,” has been defined as “the only one of its kind; one and only; unique.” In the apostle John’s writings, this term is exclusively used of Jesus. (Joh 1:14; 3:18; 1Jo 4:9; see study note on Joh 1:14.) Although the other spirit creatures produced by God were called sons, Jesus alone is called the “only-begotten Son.” (Ge 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:4-7) Jesus, the firstborn Son, was the sole *direct* creation of his Father, so he was unique, different from all other sons of God. They were created, or begotten, by Jehovah *through* that firstborn Son. The Greek word *mo-no-ge-nes* is used in a similar way when Paul says that Isaac was Abraham’s “only-begotten son.” (Heb 11:17) Though Abraham fathered Ishmael by Hagar and several sons by Ke-turah (Ge 16:15; 25:1, 2; 1Ch 1:28, 32), Isaac was “only-begotten” in a special sense. He was Abraham’s only son by God’s promise as well as the only son of Sarah.—Ge 17:16-19.

exercising faith in him: Lit., “believing into him.” The Greek verb *pi-steu’o* (related to the noun *pi’stis*, generally rendered “faith”) has the basic meaning “to believe; to have faith,” but it can express different shades of meaning, depending on context and grammatical constructions. The meaning of this term often goes beyond mere belief or recognition that someone exists. (Jas 2:19) It includes the idea of faith and trust that lead to obedient action. At Joh 3:16, the Greek verb *pi-steu’o* is used together with the preposition *eis*, “into.” Regarding this Greek phrase, one scholar noted: “Faith is thought of as an activity, as something men do, i.e. putting faith *into* someone.” (*An Introductory Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Paul L. Kaufman, 1982, p. 46) Jesus obviously refers to a life characterized by faith, not just a single act of faith. At Joh 3:36, the similar expression “the one who exercises faith in the Son” is contrasted with “the one who *disobeys* the Son.” Therefore, in that context, “to exercise faith” includes the idea of demonstrating one’s strong beliefs or faith through obedience.

3:17 judge: Or “condemn.” Jehovah did not send his Son to judge adversely, or condemn, **the world** of mankind, but he sent Jesus on a loving mission to save those who showed faith.—Joh 3:16; 2Pe 3:9.

3:18 judged: Or “condemned.”—See study note on Joh 3:17.

3:19 the light: The first occurrence of “light” in this verse indicates that Jesus personified light in his life and teachings and that he reflected understanding and enlightenment from Jehovah God. Jesus is also figuratively referred to as “the light” at Joh 1:7-9.—For the expression **come into the world**, see study note on Joh 1:9.

3:22 he . . . was baptizing: It seems that the baptizing was done under Jesus’ direction, since Joh 4:2 states that “Jesus himself did not baptizing but his disciples did.”

3:23 baptizing: Or “immersing.” The Greek word *ba-pti’zo* means “to dip; to plunge.” The Bible indicates that baptism involves complete immersion. This account tells us that John was baptizing at this location “because there was a great quantity of water there.” (See study note on **Aenon** in this verse.) When Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch, they both “went down into the water.” (Ac 8:38) The same Greek word is used in the *Septuagint* at 2Ki 5:14 when describing that Naaman “plunged into the Jordan seven times.”

Aenon: A place having a **great quantity of water** available. It was near the ap-

CHAP. 3

John's Final Witness About Jesus

- a Joh 4:2
 b Mr 1:10
 Ac 8:38
 c Mt 3:1
 Mt 3:5, 6
 d Mt 14:3
 Lu 3:19, 20
 e Joh 1:6, 7
 Joh 1:33, 34
 f Joh 1:19, 20
 Ac 13:25
 g Mal 3:1
 Mt 11:7, 10
 Lu 1:13, 17
 Joh 1:8
 h Mt 22:2
 2Co 11:2
 Eph 5:25
 Re 21:9
 i Joh 4:1, 2

22 After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Ju-de'an countryside, and there he spent some time with them and was baptizing.^a **23** But John too was baptizing in Ae'non near Sa'-lim, because there was a great quantity of water there,^b and people kept coming and were being baptized;^c **24** for John had not yet been thrown into prison.^d

25 Now the disciples of John had a dispute with a Jew concerning purification. **26** So they came to John and said to him: "Rabbi, the man who was with you across the Jordan, about whom you bore witness,^e see, this one is baptizing, and all are going to him." **27** In answer John said: "A man cannot receive a single thing unless it has been given him from heaven. **28** You yourselves bear me witness that I said, 'I am not the Christ,^f but I have been sent ahead of that one.'^g **29** Whoever has the bride is the bridegroom.^h But the friend of the bridegroom, when he stands and hears him, has a great deal of joy on account of the voice of the bridegroom. So my joy has been made complete. **30** That one must keep on increasing, but I must keep on decreasing."ⁱ

 STUDY NOTES

parently better-known place named **Salim**. The exact locations of these places are uncertain; however, Eusebius indicates a location in the Jordan Valley about eight Roman miles (12 km; 7.5 mi) S of Scythopolis (Beth-shean). In this area is Tell Ridgha (Tel Shalem), tentatively identified with Salim. Nearby are several springs that might fit Eusebius' description of the place called Aenon. In the Bible, these two locations, Aenon and Salim, are mentioned only here.

3:26 across the Jordan: Or "on the other [eastern] side of the Jordan." The places mentioned at Joh 3:23, Aenon and Salim, were on the western side of the Jordan, whereas John baptized Jesus at "Bethany across the Jordan," that is, on the eastern side.—See study note on Joh 1:28 and  App. B10.

3:29 the friend of the bridegroom: In Bible times, a close acquaintance of the bridegroom acted as his legal representative and played a key role in making arrangements for the marriage. He was

viewed as the one who brought the bride and bridegroom together. On the wedding day, the bridal procession would arrive at either the house of the bridegroom or that of his father, where the marriage feast would be held. During this feast, the friend of the bridegroom would be happy when he heard **the voice of the bridegroom** as he talked with his bride, since the friend would feel that he had successfully done his duty. John the Baptist likened himself to "the friend of the bridegroom." In this case, Jesus was the bridegroom and the disciples as a class made up his symbolic bride. Preparing the way for the Messiah, John the Baptist introduced the first members of "the bride" to Jesus Christ. (Joh 1:29, 35; 2Co 11:2; Eph 5:22-27; Re 21:2, 9) "The friend of the bridegroom" accomplished his objective by making successful introductions; he was then no longer a principal figure. Likewise, John said of himself in relation to Jesus: "That one must keep on increasing, but I must keep on decreasing."—Joh 3:30.

The One From Above

31 The one who comes from above^a is over all others.* The one who is from the earth is from the earth and speaks of things of the earth. The one who comes from heaven is over all others.^b **32** He bears witness to what he has seen and heard,^c but no man accepts his witness.^d **33** Whoever has accepted his witness has put his seal to it that God is true.^e **34** For the one whom God sent speaks the sayings of God,^f for He does not give the spirit sparingly.* **35** The Father loves the Son^g and has given all things into his hand.^h **36** The one who exercises faith in the Son has everlasting life;ⁱ the one who disobeys the Son will not see life,^j but the wrath of God remains upon him.^k

j 2Th 1:7, 8; 1Jo 5:12; *k* Ro 2:8; Eph 5:5, 6; Heb 10:26, 27.

CHAP. 3

- a Joh 8:23
- b Mt 3:11
- c Joh 8:26
Joh 15:15
- d Joh 1:11
Joh 3:11
- e 1Jo 5:10
- f Joh 7:16
Joh 8:28
Joh 12:49, 50
Joh 14:10, 24
- g Joh 5:20
Joh 15:9, 10
- h Mt 11:27
Lu 10:22
- i Joh 3:16
Joh 6:47
Ro 1:17
Heb 5:9

FOOTNOTES

3:31 *Or “all things.” **3:34** *Or “by measure.”

STUDY NOTES

3:31 The one who comes from above:

The words at Joh 3:31-36 seem to be those of the Gospel writer, the apostle John, not a continuation of the quoted words of John the Baptist or a direct quotation of Jesus' words. The context indicates that Jesus' words to Nicodemus end at Joh 3:21 and are followed by the apostle John's narration of events, continuing to Joh 3:25. Beginning at Joh 3:26, a conversation between John the Baptist and his disciples is recorded, and his words to them end at Joh 3:30. Although the words of Joh 3:31-36 are not presented as spoken by Jesus, they undoubtedly represent truths that Jesus taught the apostle John.

3:33 **has put his seal to it:** Or “has confirmed.” The Greek word for “to seal; to put a seal on” is here used figuratively and conveys the idea of confirming a statement as being true, or truthful, just as a seal certifies that a document is authentic. A person who accepts the Messiah's **witness**, or testimony, acknowledges that **God is true**—in this case, regarding his prophetic word about the Messiah.—Compare Ro 3:4.

3:36 **exercises faith . . . disobeys:** See study note on Joh 3:16.

4:4 **Samaria:** In Jesus' time, Samaria was the name of the Roman district through which Jesus occasionally traveled. Later, his disciples took the message of Christianity there. Though its exact boundaries are not known today, it lay between Galilee in the N and Judea in the S, and it extended W from the Jordan River to the coastal plains of the Mediterranean Sea. For the most part, the district embraced the territories once belonging to the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh (W of the Jordan). Though Jesus occasionally passed through Samaria on his way to and from Jerusalem (Joh 4:3-6; Lu 9:51, 52; 17:11), he told his apostles to avoid preaching in Samaritan cities because their primary assignment was to go “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” that is, the Jews (Mt 10:5, 6). This restriction, however, was for a limited time only. Just before his ascension to heaven, Jesus told his disciples that they should carry the good news to “Samaria” as well as “to the most distant part of the earth.” (Ac 1:8, 9) When persecution broke out in Jerusalem, some of the disciples, Philip in particular, declared the good news throughout Samaria. Peter and John were later sent there so that the Samaritans could receive holy spirit.—Ac 8:1-17, 25; 9:31; 15:3.

4:5 **Sychar:** A city of Samaria that has been identified with the village of 'Askar, near modern-day Nablus, about 1 km (0.6 mi) NE of Shechem and 0.7 km

(0.4 mi) NNE of Jacob's well. (See  App. B6 and B10.) Some have identified Sychar with Shechem, based on some early non-Biblical writers and the reading “Sychem” in the Codex Syriac Sinaiticus. However, the best Greek manuscripts support the reading “Sychar,” and archaeologists have shown that the site of Shechem (Tell Balata) was not occupied at the time of this account.

4:6 **Jacob's well:** The traditional site of this well is Bir Ya'qub (Be'er Ya'aqov), situated about 2.5 km (1.5 mi) SE of modern-day Nablus, not far from Tell Balata, the site of Shechem. This well is deep; its water level never rises to the top. Measurements made in the 19th century indicate that the depth of the well was about 23 m (75 ft) at that time. There is debris at the bottom, so the well might have been even deeper in ancient times. (Joh 4:11) Because the well is usually dry from about the end of May until the autumn rains, some reason that its water is derived from rain and percolation. Others believe that the well is also spring fed. (See study note on **well** in this verse.) The Bible does not directly state that Jacob dug the well, but it does indicate that Jacob had property in this vicinity. (Ge 33:18-20; Jos 24:32) Jacob likely dug this well or had it dug, perhaps to provide water for his large household and flocks. He could thereby prevent trouble with his neighbors, who doubtless already owned the other water sources in the re-

CHAP. 4

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

- a Joh 3:22
 b Mt 4:12
 Lu 4:14
 c Ge 33:18, 19
 Jos 24:32
 d Joh 4:12
 e 2Ki 17:24
 Lu 9:52, 53
 Ac 10:28
 f Eph 2:8

4 When the Lord became aware that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing^a more disciples than John— **2** although Jesus himself did no baptizing but his disciples did— **3** he left Ju-de'a and departed again for Gal'i-lee.^b **4** But it was necessary for him to go through Sa-mar'i-a. **5** So he came to a city of Sa-mar'i-a called Sy'char, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.^c **6** In fact, Jacob's well was there.^d Now Jesus, tired out as he was from the journey, was sitting at the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman of Sa-mar'i-a came to draw water. Jesus said to her: "Give me a drink." **8** (For his disciples had gone off into the city to buy food.) **9** So the Sa-mar'i-tan woman said to him: "How is it that you, despite being a Jew, ask me for a drink even though I am a Sa-mar'i-tan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Sa-mar'i-tans.)^e **10** In answer Jesus said to her: "If you had known of the free gift of God^f and who it is who says to

STUDY NOTES

gion. Or he may have needed another water supply when other wells in the area dried up.

tired out as he was: This is the only place in the Scriptures where Jesus is said to be "tired out." It was about 12:00 noon, and that morning Jesus had likely made **the journey** from the Jordan Valley in Judea to Sychar in Samaria, a steep ascent of almost 900 m (3,000 ft).—Joh 4:3-5; see  App. A7.

well: Or "spring; fountain." In this context, two different Greek words are used to refer to Jacob's well at Sychar. The Greek word *pe-ge'*, twice rendered "well" in this verse, often denotes a spring, or fountain, which may have been the source of Jacob's well. At Jas 3:11, the term is used to refer to a literal "spring," and it is used in a figurative sense at Joh 4:14, where it is also rendered "spring." At Joh 4:12, Jacob's well is referred to by the Greek word *phre'ar*, which can mean a well, a cistern, or a vertical shaft. (1Sa 19:22, *Septuagint*; Lu 14:5; Re 9:1) Springs were often a source for wells, sometimes being cleared and deepened, which may explain why "spring" and "well" are here used interchangeably for the same water

source.—See study note on **Jacob's well** in this verse.

about the sixth hour: That is, about 12:00 noon.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

4:9 Jews have no dealings with Samaritans: The Samaritans first referred to in the Bible were Jews who lived in the ten-tribe kingdom before it was conquered by the Assyrians. (2Ki 17:29) The Samaritans' separation from the rest of the Jews began earlier when Jeroboam established idol worship in the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. (1Ki 12:26-30) After the Assyrian conquest, "Samaritan" came to refer to the descendants of those left in the region of Samaria as well as to the foreigners brought in to populate the land. Though the Samaritans claimed descent from the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim only, some undoubtedly mixed with the foreigners, and the Scriptures indicate that this mixed population further corrupted worship in Samaria. (2Ki 17:24-41) When the Jews returned from Babylonian exile, the Samaritans claimed devotion to Jehovah, but they opposed the rebuilding of the temple and city walls in Jerusalem. Then, probably in the fourth century B.C.E., on Mount Gerizim, they built their own temple, which was destroyed by the Jews in

128 B.C.E. However, the Samaritans continued to worship in that mountain, and in the first century, they populated the Roman district of Samaria that lay between Judea and Galilee. They accepted only the first five books of the Bible, and perhaps the book of Joshua, but they made changes in some verses to support the location of their temple. By Jesus' day, the name Samaritan had an ethnic and religious connotation, and the Samaritans were treated with scorn by the Jews.—Joh 8:48.

... with Samaritans: Although this parenthetical comment is not included in some manuscripts, it has strong support in a number of early, authoritative manuscripts.

you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”^a **11** She said to him: “Sir, you do not even have a bucket for drawing water, and the well is deep. From what source, then, do you have this living water? **12** You are not greater than our forefather Jacob, who gave us the well and who together with his sons and his cattle drank out of it, are you?” **13** In answer Jesus said to her: “Everyone drinking from this water will get thirsty again. **14** Whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty at all,^b but the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water bubbling up to impart everlasting life.”^c **15** The woman said to him: “Sir, give me this water, so that I may neither thirst nor keep coming over to this place to draw water.”

CHAP. 4

a Joh 7:37

b Joh 6:35

c Joh 7:38

Ro 6:23

1Jo 5:20

Re 22:17

STUDY NOTES

4:10 living water: This Greek expression is used in a literal sense to refer to flowing water, spring water, or freshwater from a well supplied by springs. This is in contrast with stagnant water from a cistern. At Le 14:5, the Hebrew expression for “running water” is literally “living water.” At Jer 2:13 and 17:13, Jehovah is described as “the source [or, “spring”] of living water,” that is, life-giving symbolic water. When speaking with the Samaritan woman, Jesus used the term “living water” figuratively, but it appears that she initially took his words literally.—Joh 4:11; see study note on Joh 4:14.

4:11 the well is deep: See study note on Joh 4:6.

4:12 our forefather Jacob: The Samaritans claimed descent from Jacob through Joseph, a claim that many Jews of the day would likely have refuted. To emphasize the Samaritans’ descent from foreign peoples, some Jews called them by the Hebrew term “Cuthim,” or “Cuthaeans,” that is, people of Cuth and Cuthah. The names Cuth and Cuthah refer to the original home of the people who had been moved by the king of Assyria to the cities of Samaria after Israel went into exile in 740 B.C.E. These places were probably located about 50 km (30 mi) NE of Babylon.—2Ki 17:23, 24, 30.

4:14 the water that I will give: The terms “water” and “spring” are here used figuratively. Earlier in the conversation between

Jesus and the Samaritan woman, Jesus referred to “living water.” (See study note on Joh 4:10.) He goes on to explain that the water he provides becomes in those who receive it **a spring of water** that can **impart everlasting life**. God’s Word uses water as a symbol of God’s provisions for restoring mankind to perfect life. An important component of this symbolic water is Jesus’ ransom sacrifice. In this context, Jesus focuses on the spiritual benefits that come to those who listen to him and become his disciples. As they are “coming to know” Jehovah God and Jesus Christ and acting on that knowledge with faith, they have the prospect of gaining everlasting life. (Joh 17:3) Jesus said that for a person who accepts this symbolic water, it would become in him a spring **bubbling up** life-giving benefits. Such a person also feels impelled to share this “water of life” with others.—Re 21:6; 22:1, 17; see study note on Joh 7:38.

4:20 this mountain: That is, Mount Gerizim. (See  App. B10.) This mountain is mentioned four times in the Hebrew Scriptures. (De 11:29; 27:12; Jos 8:33; Jg 9:7) A Samaritan temple rivaling the one in Jerusalem was constructed on the mountain, perhaps in the fourth century B.C.E., and was destroyed by the Jews in 128 B.C.E. The Samaritans accepted only the first five books of the Bible, and possibly the book of Joshua, but only their revised version, known as the Samaritan Pentateuch. It was written in their own characters, derived from an-

cient Hebrew. The text differs from the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible in some 6,000 instances. Most variances are minor details, but there are some major differences. For example, at De 27:4, “Mount Gerizim” is substituted for “Mount Ebal” as the place where the Law of Moses was to be written on plastered stones. (De 27:8) The obvious reason for this change was to give credence to the Samaritans’ belief that Gerizim was the holy mountain of God.

See  Gallery, image 117, Mount Gerizim.

4:22 salvation begins with the Jews: Or “salvation originates with the Jews.” Jesus’ statement implies that the Jewish people had been entrusted with God’s Word, pure worship, and the truth that could lead to salvation. (Ro 3:1, 2) They were also chosen as the people from whom the Messiah would come, fulfilling God’s promise regarding the “offspring” of Abraham. (Ge 22:18; Ga 3:16) When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman, it was only through the Jews that a person could learn the truth about God and what he required as well as details about the Messiah. Israel was still God’s channel, and any who wished to serve Jehovah had to do so in association with his chosen nation.

4:24 God is a Spirit: The Greek word *pneu'ma* is used here in the sense of a spirit person, or being. (See  Glossary, “Spirit.”) The Scriptures show that God, the glorified Jesus, and the angels are

CHAP. 4

a Mt 21:11
Lu 7:16
Lu 24:19
Joh 9:17

b De 12:5, 6
1Ki 9:3
2Ch 7:12
Ps 122

c 2Ki 17:29
2Ki 17:33

d Isa 2:3
Ro 9:4

e 2Ch 16:9
Ps 43:3
1Ti 2:3, 4
2Jo 4

f 2Co 3:17
1Ti 1:17
Heb 11:27

g Ro 12:1

16 He said to her: “Go, call your husband and come to this place.” **17** The woman replied: “I do not have a husband.” Jesus said to her: “You are right in saying, ‘I do not have a husband.’ **18** For you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. This you have said truthfully.” **19** The woman said to him: “Sir, I see that you are a prophet.^a **20** Our forefathers worshipped on this mountain, but you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where people must worship.”^b **21** Jesus said to her: “Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. **22** You worship what you do not know;^c we worship what we know, because salvation begins with the Jews.^d **23** Nevertheless, the hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father with spirit and truth, for indeed, the Father is looking for ones like these to worship him.^e **24** God is a Spirit,^f and those worshipping him must worship with spirit and truth.”^g **25** The woman said to him: “I know that Mes-si’ah is coming, who is called

STUDY NOTES

spirits. (1Co 15:45; 2Co 3:17; Heb 1:14) A spirit has a form of life that differs greatly from that of humans, and it is invisible to human eyes. Spirit beings have a body, “a spiritual one,” that is far superior to “a physical body.” (1Co 15:44; Joh 1:18) Although Bible writers speak of God as having a face, eyes, ears, hands, and so forth, such descriptions are figures of speech to help humans understand what God is like. The Scriptures clearly show that God has a personality. He also exists in a location beyond the physical realm; so Christ could speak of “going to the Father.” (Joh 16:28) At Heb 9:24, Christ is said to enter “into heaven itself, so that he . . . appears before God on our behalf.”

worship with spirit: As shown in the  Glossary article “Spirit,” the Greek word *pneu’ma* can have a number of meanings, among them God’s active force, or holy spirit, as well as the force that impels individuals, that is, their mental disposition. One of the things that the different meanings of the term “spirit” have in common is in reference to things that are invisible to human sight. Jesus explained at Joh 4:21 that worship of the

Father would not be centered on a physical location, such as Mount Gerizim in Samaria or the temple in Jerusalem. Because God is not material and cannot be seen or felt, worship of him would no longer need to revolve around a physical temple or a mountain. In other Bible verses, Jesus showed that to worship God acceptably, a person would need to be guided by God’s invisible holy spirit, also called a “helper.” (Joh 14:16, 17; 16:13) Therefore, “worship with spirit” apparently refers to worship that is guided by God’s spirit, which would help an individual to be attuned to God’s thinking through study and application of His Word. So Jesus’ statement about worshipping God “with spirit” involves far more than being sincere and having a spirited, or enthusiastic, mental disposition about serving God.

worship with . . . truth: Worship that is acceptable to God cannot be based on imagination, myths, or lies. It has to be in harmony with facts and consistent with “the truth” that God has revealed in his Word about himself and his purposes. (Joh 17:17) Such worship must conform to the “realities that are not seen” but are revealed in God’s Word.—Heb 9:24; 11:1;

see also the study note on **worship with spirit** in this verse.

4:25 Messiah: The Greek word *Mes-si’as* (a transliteration of the Hebrew word *ma-shi’ach*) occurs only twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures (here and at Joh 1:41). The Hebrew verb, from which the title *ma-shi’ach* is derived, is *ma-shach’*, meaning “to smear or spread (with liquid)” and “to anoint.” (Ex 29:2, 7) In Bible times, priests, rulers, and prophets were ceremonially anointed with oil. (Le 4:3; 1Sa 16:3, 12, 13; 1Ki 19:16) The corresponding title **Christ** (Greek, *Khri-stos*) occurs more than 500 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures and is equivalent to the title “Messiah,” both meaning “Anointed One.”—See study note on Mt 1:1.

I know that Messiah is coming: The Samaritans accepted only the five books of Moses, now known as the Pentateuch. They rejected the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures, with the possible exception of the book of Joshua. Nevertheless, because they accepted Moses’ writings, the Samaritans looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, the prophet greater than Moses.—De 18:18, 19.

Christ. Whenever that one comes, he will declare all things to us openly.”^a **26** Jesus said to her: “I am he, the one speaking to you.”^b

27 Just then his disciples arrived, and they were surprised because he was speaking with a woman. Of course, no one said: “What are you looking for?” or “Why are you talking to her?” **28** So the woman left her water jar and went off into the city and told the people: **29** “Come and see a man who told me everything I did. Could this not perhaps be the Christ?” **30** They left the city and began coming to him.

31 Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him: “Rabbi,^c eat.” **32** But he said to them: “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” **33** So the disciples said to one another: “No one brought him anything to eat, did he?” **34** Jesus said to them: “My food is to do the will of him who sent me^d and to finish his work.^e **35** Do you not say that there are yet four months before the harvest comes? Look! I say to you: Lift up your eyes and view the fields, that they are white for harvesting.^f **36** Already the reaper is receiving wages and gathering fruit for everlasting life, so that the sower and the reaper may rejoice together.^g **37** For in this respect the saying is true: One is the sower and another the reaper. **38** I sent you to reap what you did not labor on. Others have labored, and you have entered into the benefit of their labor.”

CHAP. 4

a De 18:18

b Joh 9:35-37

c Joh 1:38

d Mt 4:4

Mt 26:42

Joh 6:38

Heb 10:7

e Joh 5:17

Joh 5:30, 36

Joh 17:4

Joh 19:30

f Mt 9:37

g 1Co 3:8

STUDY NOTES

4:26 I am he: Lit., “I am.” Greek, *e-go’ ei-mi*. Some consider this expression to be an allusion to the *Septuagint* reading of Ex 3:14 and use it to identify Jesus with God. However, Ex 3:14 uses different wording (*e-go’ ei-mi ho on*, “I am The Being; I am The Existing One”) from that used at Joh 4:26. Moreover, the expression *e-go’ ei-mi* is used in the *Septuagint* to render words spoken by Abraham, Eliezer, Jacob, David, and others. (Ge 15:2; 23:4; 24:34; 30:2; 1Ch 21:17) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the phrase *e-go’ ei-mi* is not limited to the rendering of words expressed by Jesus. The same Greek words are used at Joh 9:9 in recording a reply by a man whom Jesus had cured. They simply convey the message: “It is I.” These words are also used by the angel Gabriel as well as by Peter,

Paul, and others. (Lu 1:19; Ac 10:21; 22:3) Obviously, these statements are not references to Ex 3:14. A comparison of the parallel accounts in the synoptic Gospels shows that the phrase *e-go’ ei-mi* found at Mr 13:6 and Lu 21:8 (“I am he”) is a shorter way of expressing the more complete thought found at Mt 24:5, which is rendered “I am the Christ.”

I am he, the one speaking to you: This is apparently the first time that Jesus openly identifies himself as the Messiah, or the Christ. He does so to a woman who is not even a Jew but a Samaritan. (Joh 4:9, 25) Most Jews had disdain for and refused to greet Samaritans, and many Jewish men looked down on women. Jesus later dignified other women in a similar way, granting them the privilege of being the first witnesses of his resurrection.—Mt 28:9, 10.

4:27 speaking with a woman: Contrary to the spirit of the Mosaic Law, Jewish tradition discouraged men from speaking to women in public. It appears that this view was widespread in Jesus’ day. That would explain why even his disciples “were surprised” when they saw Jesus speaking with the Samaritan woman. According to the Talmud, ancient rabbis advised that a scholar “should not converse with a woman in the street.” And according to the Mishnah, one rabbi said: “Talk not much with womankind. . . . He that talks much with womankind brings evil upon himself and neglects the study of the Law and at the last will inherit Gehenna.”—*Aboth* 1:5.

4:35 there are yet four months before the harvest comes: The barley harvest begins in the Jewish month Nisan (March/April), about Passover time. (See  App. B15.) Counting back four months would indicate that Jesus spoke these words in

CHAP. 4

Many Samaritans Believe in Jesus

- a Joh 4:29
 b Isa 49:6
 Mt 1:21
 Joh 1:29
 1Ti 1:15
 1Jo 4:14
 c Mt 13:57
 Mr 6:4
 Lu 4:24
 d Joh 2:23
 e De 16:16
 f Joh 2:1-11

39 Many of the Sa-mar'i-tans from that city put faith in him because of the word of the woman who bore witness, saying: "He told me all the things I did."^a **40** So when the Sa-mar'i-tans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. **41** As a result, many more believed because of what he said, **42** and they said to the woman: "We no longer believe just because of what you said; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the savior of the world."^b

Jesus Heals an Official's Son

43 After the two days, he left there for Gal'i-lee. **44** Jesus himself, however, bore witness that a prophet has no honor in his own homeland.^c **45** So when he arrived in Gal'i-lee, the Gal-i-le'ans welcomed him, because they had seen all the things he did in Jerusalem at the festival,^d for they too had gone to the festival.^e

46 Then he came again to Ca'na of Gal'i-lee, where he had turned the water into wine.^f Now there was a royal official whose son was sick in Ca-per'na-um. **47** When this man heard

STUDY NOTES

the month of Chislev (November/December). That was the time when rains were becoming heavier and colder weather was ahead. So Jesus' words about a **harvesting** that was **already** taking place apparently refer to a figurative harvest, or ingathering of people, rather than to a literal harvest.—Joh 4:36.

white: That is, ripe. The Greek word *leu-kos*^f denotes white and different shades of light color, such as light yellow, indicating that the crop was ripe and was ready to be harvested. Since Jesus here states that there are "four months before the harvest comes," the surrounding fields were likely green—the color of recently sprouted barley. So when Jesus spoke about the fields' being ripe **for harvesting**, he no doubt had a spiritual harvest in mind, not a literal one. Some scholars have suggested that when Jesus encouraged his listeners to **view the fields**, he may have been referring to a crowd of Samaritans approaching and

that his remark about the fields' being "white" could have been an allusion to the white robes that they may have worn. Or the remark may have been a figure of speech indicating that they were ready to accept the message.—Joh 4:28-30.

4:36 See  Gallery, image 53, Reapers.

4:39 Many of the Samaritans . . . put faith in him: The effect of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman was evident. Because of her testimony, many Samaritans began to believe in Jesus. While the initial spiritual harvest took place mainly among the Jews, an even greater harvest that included the Samaritans would soon become a reality, as the inspired record shows. Jesus' preaching to the Samaritan woman no doubt laid the foundation for many of these Samaritans to respond to Philip's preaching.—Joh 4:34-36; Ac 1:8; 8:1, 14-17.

4:42 savior of the world: This expression, appearing only here and at 1Jo 4:14, indicates that Jesus would save from sin those from "the world" of mankind who

demonstrate faith.—See study notes on Joh 1:29; 3:17.

4:44 his own homeland: Lit., "his father's place." The Greek word rendered "homeland" is translated "home territory" at Mt 13:54; Mr 6:1; and Lu 4:24, where it refers to Jesus' hometown, Nazareth. In this context, however, it seems to refer to all of Galilee.—Joh 4:43.

4:46 a royal official: Or "a certain attendant of the king." The Greek term *ba-si-li-kos*^f refers to one connected with the king (*ba-si-leus*^f), whether by blood or by office. Here it seems to refer to a royal attendant, or member of the royal court, of Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee. He was popularly referred to as "king."—See study notes on Mt 14:9; Mr 6:14.

Canana of Galilee . . . Capernaum: The distance by road between Cana (Khirbet Qana) and Capernaum is about 40 km (25 mi).—See study note on Joh 2:1.

that Jesus had come out of Ju-de'a into Gal'i-lee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of dying. **48** But Jesus said to him: "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe."^a **49** The royal official said to him: "Lord, come down before my young child dies." **50** Jesus said to him: "Go your way; your son lives."^b The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he left. **51** But while he was on his way down, his slaves met him to say that his boy was alive.* **52** So he asked them at what hour he got better. They replied to him: "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour."^c **53** The father then knew that it was in the very hour that Jesus had said to him: "Your son lives."^d So he and his whole household believed. **54** This was the second sign^e Jesus performed when he came from Ju-de'a into Gal'i-lee.

CHAP. 4

- a Mt 16:1
Joh 2:18
1Co 1:22
b Mt 8:13
Mr 7:29, 30
c Mt 8:14, 15
Ac 28:8
d Mt 8:13
e Joh 2:11

CHAP. 5

- f Ex 12:14
De 16:1
De 16:16
Joh 2:13
Joh 6:4
g Ne 3:1

Sick Man Healed at Bethzatha

5 After this there was a festival^f of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **2** Now in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate^g is a pool called in Hebrew *Beth-za'tha*, with five colonnades. **3** Within these a multitude of the sick, blind, lame, and those

FOOTNOTES

4:51 *Or "was recovering."

STUDY NOTES

4:47 come down: That is, to Capernaum. In ancient times, a road led past Khirbet Qana (most likely the Biblical Cana; see study note on Joh 2:1) down to the shores of the Sea of Galilee and along the shoreline to Capernaum, which lay over 200 m (650 ft) below sea level; hence, the expression "come down" to Capernaum.

4:52 the seventh hour: That is, about 1:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

4:54 the second sign: The reference here is to the second of two miracles that Jesus performed in Galilee on returning from Judea. The first sign, or miracle, is referred to at Joh 2:11. Jesus did other powerful works in Jerusalem before he performed this second sign in Galilee.—Joh 2:23.

5:1 a festival of the Jews: Although John does not specify which festival is referred to, there are good reasons to

conclude that it is the Passover of 31 C.E. John's account was generally in chronological order. The context places this festival shortly after Jesus said that there were "yet four months before the harvest." (Joh 4:35) The harvest season, particularly the barley harvest, got under way about Passover time (Nisan 14). So it seems that Jesus' statement was made about four months before that, about the month of Chislev (November/December). Two other festivals, the festivals of Dedication and of Purim, fell during the time period from Chislev to Nisan. However, these festivals did not require an Israelite to go up to Jerusalem. So in this context, the Passover seems to be the most likely "festival of the Jews" that required Jesus to attend in Jerusalem according to God's Law to Israel. (De 16:16) It is true that John records only a few events before the next mention of the Passover (Joh 6:4), but a consideration of the chart in **■** App. A7 shows that John's account of Jesus' early ministry was abbreviated, and many events already covered by the other three Gospel writers were not mentioned. In fact, the

great amount of activity of Jesus recorded in the other three Gospels lends weight to the conclusion that an annual Passover did indeed come between the events recorded at Joh 2:13 and those at Joh 6:4.—See **■** App. A7 and study note on Joh 2:13.

5:2 Hebrew: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, inspired Bible writers used the term "Hebrew" in designating the language spoken by the Jews (Joh 19:13, 17, 20; Ac 21:40; 22:2; Re 9:11; 16:16), as well as the language in which the resurrected and glorified Jesus addressed Saul of Tarsus (Ac 26:14, 15). At Ac 6:1, "Hebrew-speaking Jews" are distinguished from "Greek-speaking Jews." While some scholars hold that the term "Hebrew" in these references should instead be rendered "Aramaic," there is good reason to believe that the term actually applies to the Hebrew language. When the physician Luke says that Paul spoke to the people of Jerusalem "in the Hebrew language," Paul was addressing those whose life revolved around studying the Law of Moses in Hebrew. Also, of the great number of

CHAP. 5

- a Ps 72:13
Isa 53:3
- b Mt 9:6
Mr 2:10, 11
Lu 5:24, 25
Ac 3:7
- c Joh 9:14
- d Ex 20:9, 10
Mt 12:2
Lu 6:2

with withered* limbs were lying down. **4** — **5** But one man was there who had been sick for 38 years. **6** Seeing this man lying there and being aware that he had already been sick for a long time, Jesus said to him: “Do you want to get well?”^a **7** The sick man answered him: “Sir, I do not have anyone to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am on my way, another steps down ahead of me.” **8** Jesus said to him: “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”^b **9** And the man immediately got well, and he picked up his mat and began to walk. That day was the Sabbath.^c **10** So the Jews began to say to the cured man: “It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry the mat.”^d **11** But he answered them: “The same one who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” **12** They asked him: “Who is the man who told you, ‘Pick it up and walk?’” **13** But the healed man did not know who he was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

FOOTNOTES

5:3 *Or “paralyzed.” Lit., “dried-up.”

STUDY NOTES

fragments and manuscripts comprising the Dead Sea Scrolls, the majority of Biblical and non-Biblical texts are written in Hebrew, showing that the language was in daily use. The smaller number of Aramaic fragments found shows that both languages were used. So it seems highly unlikely that when Bible writers used the word “Hebrew,” they actually meant the Aramaic or Syrian language. (Ac 21:40; 22:2; compare Ac 26:14.) The Hebrew Scriptures earlier distinguished between “Aramaic” and “the language of the Jews” (2Ki 18:26), and first-century Jewish historian Josephus, considering this passage of the Bible, speaks of “Aramaic” and “Hebrew” as distinct tongues. (*Jewish Antiquities*, X, 8 [i, 2]) It is true that there are some terms that are quite similar in both Aramaic and Hebrew and possibly other terms that were adopted into Hebrew from Aramaic. However, there seems to be no reason for the writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures to have said Hebrew if they meant Aramaic.

Bethzatha: The Hebrew name means “House of the Olive [or, of Olives].” Ac-

cording to some manuscripts, the pool is called “Bethesda,” possibly meaning “House of Mercy.” Other manuscripts read “Bethsaida,” meaning “House of the Hunter [or, Fisherman].” Many scholars today prefer the name Bethzatha.

See  Gallery, image 118, Pool of Bethzatha.

5:3 the sick . . . were lying down: It was commonly believed that people could be healed by getting into the pool when the water was stirred up. (Joh 5:7) As a result, those seeking a cure congregated at the site. However, the Bible does not say that an angel of God performed miracles at the pool of Bethzatha. (See study note on Joh 5:4.) What it does say is that Jesus performed a miracle at the pool. It is worth noting that the man did not enter the water; yet, he was instantly cured.

5:4 Some manuscripts add, in whole or in part, the following text, beginning at the end of verse 3 and continuing as verse 4: “waiting for the movement of the water. **4** For an angel of the Lord [or, “of Jehovah”] would come down into the pool from season to season and disturb the water; the first one then to step in after the disturbance of the water would become sound in health from whatever disease it was by which he was afflicted.” These words, however, do not appear

in the earliest authoritative manuscripts and most likely are not part of the original text of John. (See  App. A3.) Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew, referred to as J⁹, 22, 23 in  App. C4, read “an angel of Jehovah” instead of “an angel of the Lord.”

5:8 mat: Or “bed.” In Bible lands, a bed was often a simple mat made of straw or rushes, perhaps with quilting or a mattress of some sort added for comfort. When not in use, these beds were rolled up and stored away. In this context, the Greek word *kra'bat-tos* evidently refers to a poor man's bed. In the account at Mr 2:4-12, the same Greek word refers to some kind of “stretcher” on which the paralytic man was carried.

5:10 the Jews: As used in the Gospel of John, this term conveys somewhat different meanings depending on the context. It can refer to Jewish people in general, to those living in Judea, or to those living in or near Jerusalem. The term may also refer to Jews who zealously adhered to human traditions connected with the Mosaic Law and who were hostile to Jesus. In this context, “the Jews” may refer to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders, but the term may also have been used broadly to include other Jews who were zealous for the traditions.

14 After this Jesus found him in the temple and said to him: “See, you have become well. Do not sin anymore, so that something worse does not happen to you.” **15** The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. **16** For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things during the Sabbath.^a **17** But he answered them: “My Father has kept working until now, and I keep working.”^b **18** This is why the Jews began seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath but he was also calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God.^c

CHAP. 5

a Mt 12:10, 14

b Joh 4:34

Joh 5:36

Joh 9:4

Joh 10:25

Joh 14:10

c Joh 10:33

Joh 14:28

Php 2:5, 6

d Joh 5:30

Joh 7:28

Joh 8:28

Joh 12:49

e Mt 3:17

Joh 3:35

Joh 10:17

2Pe 1:17

f Lu 8:25

Joh 6:10, 11

Joh 6:19

Jesus Given Authority by His Father

19 Therefore, in response Jesus said to them: “Most truly I say to you, the Son cannot do a single thing of his own initiative, but only what he sees the Father doing.^d For whatever things that One does, these things the Son does also in like manner. **20** For the Father has affection for the Son^e and shows him all the things he himself does, and he will show him works greater than these, so that you may marvel.^f **21** For just

STUDY NOTES

5:14 Do not sin anymore: Jesus' words here do not mean that this man's sickness was due to some sin he had committed. Rather, the man whom Jesus cured had been sick for 38 years because of inherited imperfection. (Joh 5:5-9; compare Joh 9:1-3.) Now that the man had been shown mercy and was healed, Jesus urged him to follow the way of salvation and avoid willful sin that could result in **something worse** than sickness, that is, everlasting destruction.—Heb 10:26, 27.

5:16 were persecuting: The imperfect form of the Greek verb used here indicates that **the Jews**—perhaps referring to the Jewish leaders or to Jews who zealously adhered to human traditions connected with the Mosaic Law—began to persecute Jesus and continued doing so.

5:18 making himself equal to God: While properly referring to God as his Father, Jesus never claimed equality with God. (Joh 5:17) Rather, it was the Jews who accused Jesus of attempting to make himself God's equal by claiming God as his Father. Just as the Jews were wrong in stating that Jesus was a Sabbath breaker,

they were wrong in making this accusation. Jesus makes this evident by what he says as recorded in verses 19 through 24—he could do nothing of his own initiative. Clearly, he was not claiming to be equal to God.—Joh 14:28.

5:19 of his own initiative: Or “on his own,” that is, independently. Lit., “from himself.” As God's Chief Representative, Jesus always listens to Jehovah's voice and speaks what Jehovah directs.

5:20 the Father has affection for the Son: Jesus here describes the warm bond of unity and friendship that has existed between him and the Father from the dawn of creation. (Pr 8:30) When John recorded Jesus' statement describing this relationship, he used a form of the Greek verb *phi-le'o* (“to have affection”). This verb often describes a very close bond, the kind that exists between genuine friends. For example, it is used to describe the bond of friendship that existed between Jesus and Lazarus. (Joh 11:3, 36) It is also used to describe the family relationship between parents and children. (Mt 10:37) The same verb, *phi-le'o*, is used to show the strong, warm, person-

al attachment Jehovah has for his Son's followers and the warm feelings the disciples had for God's Son.—Joh 16:27.

5:24 judgment: The Greek term *kri'sis*, here rendered “judgment,” may convey several shades of meaning. The context determines what is meant. For example, this term can denote the act of judging (Joh 5:22), the quality of justice (Mt 23:23; Lu 11:42), or a court of law (Mt 5:21). It can also refer to a judgment that is either favorable or unfavorable, but most of the occurrences in the Christian Greek Scriptures convey the idea of a condemnatory judgment. In this verse, “judgment” is used in parallel with **death** and set in contrast with **life** and **everlasting life**; therefore, it refers to a judgment that results in loss of life.—2Pe 2:9; 3:7; see study note on Joh 5:29.

has passed over from death to life:

Jesus is apparently speaking about those who were once spiritually dead but who upon hearing his words put faith in him and discontinue walking in their sinful course. (Eph 2:1, 2, 4-6) They pass over “from death to life” in that the condemnation of death is lifted from them, and

CHAP. 5

- a 2Ki 4:32-34
Heb 11:35
- b Lu 7:12, 14
Lu 8:52-54
Joh 11:25
- c Ac 10:42
Ac 17:31
2Co 5:10
2Ti 4:1
- d Lu 10:16
Joh 15:23
1Jo 2:23
- e Joh 3:16
Joh 6:40
Joh 8:51
- f 1Jo 3:14
- g Ps 36:9
Ac 17:28
- h Joh 11:25
- i Joh 5:22
2Ti 4:1
- j Da 7:13
- k Job 14:13
Isa 25:8
Isa 26:19
Ac 24:15
- l Re 20:12
Re 20:15

as the Father raises the dead up and makes them alive,^a so the Son also makes alive whomever he wants to.^b **22** For the Father judges no one at all, but he has entrusted all the judging to the Son,^c **23** so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.^d **24** Most truly I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes the One who sent me has everlasting life,^e and he does not come into judgment but has passed over from death to life.^f

The Dead Will Hear Jesus' Voice

25 “Most truly I say to you, the hour is coming, and it is now, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have paid attention will live. **26** For just as the Father has life in himself,^g so he has granted also to the Son to have life in himself.^h **27** And he has given him authority to do judging,ⁱ because he is the Son of man.^j **28** Do not be amazed at this, for the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice^k **29** and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, and those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment.^l **30** I cannot do a single thing of my

STUDY NOTES

they are given the hope of everlasting life because of their faith in God. In a similar way, Jesus apparently referred to spiritually dead ones when he said to the Jewish son who wanted to go home to bury his father: “Let the dead bury their dead.”—Lu 9:60; see study notes on Lu 9:60; Joh 5:25.

5:25 the dead: Jesus said that the **hour**, or time, for the dead to “hear [his] voice” **is now**, so he could only mean living humans who inherited sin from Adam and were therefore condemned to death. (Ro 5:12) From God’s standpoint, mankind in general has no right to life because “the wages” that sin pays to them is death. (Ro 6:23) By hearing and heeding Jesus’ “word,” individuals could figuratively ‘pass over from death to life.’ (See study note on Joh 5:24.) The terms “hear” and “listen” are frequently used in the Bible with the meaning of “pay heed to” or “obey.”

5:26 has life in himself: Or “has in himself the gift of life.” Jesus has “life in

himself” because his Father granted him powers that originally only Jehovah had. These powers no doubt include the authority to give humans the opportunity to have a fine standing before God and thus gain life. They would also include the ability to impart life by resurrecting the dead. About a year after Jesus made the statement recorded here, he indicated that his followers could have life in themselves. —For the meaning of the expression “life in yourselves” as it applies to Jesus’ followers, see study note on Joh 6:53.

5:27 Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

5:28 the memorial tombs: This term renders the Greek word *mne-meí'on*, which comes from the verb *mi-mne'sko-mai*, “to remember; to remind (oneself),” and refers to a tomb or a grave. Thus, the term carries the implication of preserving the memory of the deceased person. In this context, it suggests that the person who died is remembered by God. This connotation gives added meaning to the term used by Luke in recording

the plea of the criminal executed alongside Jesus: “Remember [form of the verb *mi-mne'sko-mai*] me when you get into your Kingdom.”—Lu 23:42.

5:29 resurrection: See study note on Mt 22:23.

of life . . . of judgment: Here and at Joh 5:24, “judgment” is set in contrast with “life” and “everlasting life,” implying a judgment that results in death. (2Pe 2:9; 3:7; see study note on Joh 5:24.) Most occurrences of the Greek word rendered “judgment” (*kri'sis*) in the Christian Greek Scriptures carry the force of condemnatory judgment. As indicated by the context and by other scriptures, the judgment Jesus speaks of is not based on what a person did before he died but on his actions after he is resurrected. Ro 6:7 states that a person “who has died has been acquitted from his sin.” Each person who is resurrected will show by his course of action whether he is obedient, with eternal “life” as a reward, or disobedient, resulting in the “judgment” of death.

own initiative. Just as I hear, I judge, and my judgment is righteous^a because I seek, not my own will, but the will of him who sent me.^b

Testimonies About Jesus

31 “If I alone bear witness about myself, my witness is not true.^c **32** There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the witness he bears about me is true.^d **33** You have sent men to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.^e **34** However, I do not accept the witness from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. **35** That man was a burning and shining lamp, and for a short time you were willing to rejoice greatly in his light.^f **36** But I have the witness greater than that of John, for the very works that my Father assigned me to accomplish, these works that I am doing, bear witness that the Father sent me.^g **37** And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me.^h You have neither heard his voice at any time nor seen his form,ⁱ **38** and you do not have his word residing in you, because you do not believe the very one whom he sent.

39 “You are searching the Scriptures^j because you think that you will have everlasting life by means of them; and these are the very ones that bear witness about me.^k **40** And yet you do not want to come to me^l so that you may have life. **41** I do not accept glory from men,^{*} **42** but I well know that you do not have the love of God in you. **43** I have come in the name of my Father, but you do not receive me. If someone else came in his own name, you would receive that one. **44** How can you believe, when you are accepting glory from one another^m and you

CHAP. 5

- a Isa 11:4
- b Mt 26:39
Joh 4:34
Joh 6:38
- c De 19:15
- d Mt 3:17
Mr 9:7
Joh 12:28-30
1Jo 5:9
- e Joh 1:15
Joh 1:32
- f Mt 3:1
Mt 3:5, 6
Mr 6:20
- g Mt 11:5
Joh 3:2
Joh 7:31
Joh 10:25
- h Mr 1:11
Joh 8:18
- i De 4:11, 12
Joh 1:18
Joh 6:46
- j Lu 11:52
- k De 18:15
- l Isa 53:3
Joh 1:11
- m Mt 6:5
Lu 11:43

FOOTNOTES

5:41 *Or “people; humans.”

STUDY NOTES

5:30 of my own initiative: Or “on my own,” that is, independently. Lit., “from myself.” As God’s Chief Representative, Jesus always listens to Jehovah’s voice and speaks what Jehovah directs.

Just as I hear: That is, from the Father as the Supreme Judge.

5:32 another: No doubt referring to the Father.—Joh 5:34, 37.

5:39 the Scriptures: This expression is often used to refer to the inspired Hebrew writings as a whole. The Jews who were carefully **searching** the Scriptures could easily have discerned that Jesus was the Messiah by comparing his life and teachings with what the Scriptures foretold. But these Jews refused to make a sincere examination of the abundant Scriptural evidence that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Although they thought that they could **have everlasting life by means of** the Scriptures, they refused to accept Jesus as the one whom the Scriptures pointed to as the true means to gain life.—De 18:15; Lu 11:52; Joh 7:47, 48.

these: That is, **the Scriptures** mentioned in the first part of the verse. These Scriptures contained Messianic prophecies that pointed to Jesus as the one through whom his listeners could gain “everlasting life.”

5:44 the only God: Some early manuscripts do not include the word “God” and could be rendered “the only One.” But the main text reading has strong support in other early authoritative manuscripts.

6:1 the Sea of Galilee, or Tiberias: The Sea of Galilee was sometimes called the Sea of Tiberias—after the city on its western shore that was named for Roman

CHAP. 5

- a Joh 12:42, 43
 b De 31:26, 27
 Joh 7:19
 c De 18:15
 Lu 24:44
 Joh 1:45
 Ac 26:22, 23
 d Lu 16:31

are not seeking the glory that is from the only God?^a **45** Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you, Moses,^b in whom you have put your hope. **46** In fact, if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.^c **47** But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe what I say?”^d

CHAP. 6

- e Mt 14:13
 Lu 9:10
 f Mr 6:33
 g Lu 9:11
 h Joh 2:13
 Joh 5:1
 i Joh 1:44
 j Mt 14:14-17
 Mr 6:35-38
 Lu 9:12, 13
 k 2Ki 4:42-44
 l Mt 14:19-21
 Mr 6:39-44
 Lu 9:14-17

Jesus Feeds About 5,000 Men

6 After this Jesus set out across the Sea of Gal'i-lee, or Ti-be'ri-as.^e **2** And a large crowd kept following him,^f because they were observing the miraculous signs he was performing in healing the sick.^g **3** So Jesus went up on a mountain and sat down there with his disciples. **4** Now the Passover,^h the festival of the Jews, was near. **5** When Jesus raised his eyes and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, he said to Philip:ⁱ “Where will we buy bread for these people to eat?”^j **6** However, he was saying this to test him, for he knew what he was about to do. **7** Philip answered him: “Two hundred de-nar'i-i worth of bread is not enough for each of them to get even a little.” **8** One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him: **9** “Here is a little boy who has five barley loaves and two small fish. But what are these among so many?”^k

10 Jesus said: “Have the people sit down.” As there was a lot of grass in that place, the men sat down there, about 5,000 in number.^l **11** Jesus took the bread, and after giving thanks, he distributed it to those who were sitting there; he did likewise with the small fish, and they had as much as they wanted. **12** But when they had eaten their fill, he said to his disciples: “Gather together the fragments left over, so that nothing is

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Emperor Tiberius Caesar. (Joh 6:23) The name Sea of Tiberias occurs here and at Joh 21:1.—See study note on Mt 4:18.

6:4 the Passover: Apparently referring to the Passover of 32 C.E., the third Passover during Jesus' earthly ministry.—See study notes on Joh 2:13; 5:1; 11:55 and App. A7.

6:5 Where will we buy bread for these people to eat?: This is the only miracle of Jesus that is recorded in all four Gospels.

—Mt 14:15-21; Mr 6:35-44; Lu 9:10-17; Joh 6:1-13.

6:7 denarii: See  Glossary, “Denarius” and  App. B14.

6:10 Have the people sit down: Or “Have the people recline.” Here “people” translates a form of the Greek word *an'thro-pos*, which often includes both men and women. The occurrence of “men” in this verse translates a form of the Greek word *a-ner'*, which in view of Mt 14:21 included only adult males in this context.—See study note on Mt 14:21.

the men sat down there, about 5,000 in number: Only Matthew's account adds “as well as women and young children” when reporting this miracle. (Mt 14:21) It is possible that the total number of those miraculously fed was well over 15,000.

wasted.” **13** So they gathered them together and filled 12 baskets with fragments left over by those who had eaten from the five barley loaves.

14 When the people saw the sign he performed, they began to say: “This really is the Prophet who was to come into the world.”^a **15** Then Jesus, knowing that they were about to come and seize him to make him king, withdrew^b again to the mountain all alone.^c

Jesus Walks on Water

16 When evening fell, his disciples went down to the sea,^d **17** and boarding a boat, they set out across the sea for Ca-per’-na-um. By now it had grown dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.^e **18** Also, the sea was getting rough because a strong wind was blowing.^f **19** However, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and getting near the boat, and they became fearful. **20** But he said to them: “It is I; do not be afraid!”^g **21** Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and right away the boat arrived at the land to which they had been heading.^h

Food That Remains for Everlasting Life

22 The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there except a small one, and that Jesus had not boarded the boat with his disciples, but his disciples had left by themselves. **23** Boats from Ti-be’ri-as, however, arrived near the place where they ate the

CHAP. 6

a De 18:15, 18
Lu 24:19
Ac 3:22

b Joh 17:16
Joh 18:36

c Mt 14:23
Mr 6:45

d Mt 14:22

e Mr 6:47-51

f Mt 8:24
Mt 14:24-33

g Mt 14:27
Mr 6:50

h Mt 14:34

STUDY NOTES

6:13 See  Gallery, image 59, Baskets.

6:14 the Prophet: Many Jews in the first century C.E. expected that the prophet like Moses, mentioned at De 18:15, 18, would be the Messiah. In this context, the expression **come into the world** seems to refer to the expected appearance of the Messiah. Only John recorded the events mentioned in this verse.—See study note on Joh 1:9.

6:15 to make him king: Only John recorded this incident. Jesus resolutely refused to get involved in the politics of his homeland. He would accept kingship only in God’s way and in God’s due time. Jesus later emphasized that his followers

were to take the same position.—Joh 15:19; 17:14, 16; 18:36.

6:17 the sea: That is, the Sea of Galilee.—See study notes on Mt 4:18; Joh 6:1.

6:19 about three or four miles: About 5 or 6 km. Lit., “about 25 or 30 stadia.” The Greek word *sta’di-on* denotes a linear measurement that equaled 185 m (606.95 ft), or one eighth of a Roman mile. Since the Sea of Galilee is about 12 km (8 mi) wide, the disciples may have been in about the middle of the lake.—Mr 6:47; see study note on Mt 4:18 and  App. A7 and B14.

6:23 Tiberias: A city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, about 15 km (9.5 mi) S of Capernaum and just N of

some hot springs that were famous in ancient times. It was built by Herod Antipas sometime between 18 and 26 C.E. as his new capital and residence. He named the city in honor of Tiberius Caesar, Roman emperor at the time, and it is still called Tiberias (Hebrew: Teverya). Though it was the largest city in the region, this is the only mention of it in the Scriptures. It is never stated that Jesus visited Tiberias, perhaps because of its strong foreign influence. (Compare Mt 10:5-7.) According to Josephus, the city of Tiberias had been built on the site of tombs; therefore, many Jews had been reluctant to move there. (Num 19:11-14) After the Jewish revolt in the second century C.E., Tiberias was declared cleansed and became the

CHAP. 6

- a Joh 1:38
 b Joh 6:11
 c Mt 6:31-33
 d Joh 4:14
 Joh 17:3
 Ro 6:23
 e Mt 3:17
 Ac 2:22
 2Pe 1:17
 f Joh 7:29
 Joh 8:42
 Ac 16:31
 1Jo 3:23
 g Mt 12:38
 Mr 8:12
 Joh 2:18
 1Co 1:22
 h Ex 16:4, 15
 Nu 11:7
 i Ne 9:15
 Ps 78:24
 Ps 105:40
 j Joh 3:16

bread after the Lord had given thanks. **24** So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they boarded their boats and came to Ca-per'na-um to look for Jesus.

25 When they found him across the sea, they said to him: "Rabbi,^a when did you get here?" **26** Jesus answered them: "Most truly I say to you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate from the loaves and were satisfied.^b **27** Work, not for the food that perishes,^c but for the food that remains for everlasting life,^d which the Son of man will give you; for on this one the Father, God himself, has put his seal of approval."^e

Jesus Is "the Bread of Life"

28 So they said to him: "What must we do to carry out the works of God?" **29** In answer Jesus said to them: "This is the work of God, that you exercise faith in the one whom he sent."^f **30** Then they said to him: "What are you performing as a sign,^g so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you doing? **31** Our forefathers ate the manna in the wilderness,^h just as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'ⁱ **32** Jesus then said to them: "Most truly I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. **33** For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."^j **34** So they said to him: "Lord, always give us this bread."

STUDY NOTES

leading city of Jewish scholarship and the seat of the Sanhedrin. The Mishnah and the Palestinian (Jerusalem) Talmud were compiled here, as well as the Masoretic text that was later used for translating the Hebrew Scriptures.—See  App. B10.

6:27 food that perishes . . . food that remains for everlasting life: Jesus understood that some people were associating with him and his disciples solely for material advantage. While physical food sustains people day by day, "food" from God's Word will make it possible for humans to stay alive forever. Jesus urges the crowd to **work . . . for** "the food that remains for everlasting life," that is, to put forth effort to satisfy their spiritual need and to exercise faith in what they learn.—Mt 4:4; 5:3; Joh 6:28-39.

6:31 Our forefathers ate the manna:

The Jews wanted a Messianic King who could supply them with material food. As a justification, they reminded Jesus that God had given their forefathers manna **in the wilderness** of Sinai. Quoting from Ps 78:24, they referred to the miraculously provided manna as **bread** [or, "grain"] **from heaven**. When requesting "a sign" from Jesus (Joh 6:30), they may have had in mind the miracle he had performed just the day before when he multiplied five barley loaves and two small fish into enough food to feed thousands.—Joh 6:9-12.

6:33 the world: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *ko'smos* generally refers to the world of mankind or a part of it. (See study note on Joh 1:10.) At Joh 1:29, Jesus as the Lamb of God is said to take away "the sin of the world." At

Joh 6:33, Jesus is described as **the bread of God**, Jehovah's channel of **life** and blessings to mankind.

35 Jesus said to them: “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will not get hungry at all, and whoever exercises faith in me will never get thirsty at all.^a **36** But as I said to you, you have even seen me and yet do not believe.^b **37** All those whom the Father gives me will come to me, and I will never drive away the one who comes to me;^c **38** for I have come down from heaven^d to do, not my own will, but the will of him who sent me.^e **39** This is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose none out of all those whom he has given me,^f but that I should resurrect^g them on the last day. **40** For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who recognizes the Son and exercises faith in him should have everlasting life,^h and I will resurrectⁱ him on the last day.”

41 Then the Jews began to murmur about him because he had said: “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”^j **42** And they began saying: “Is this not Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?^k How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’” **43** In response Jesus said to them: “Stop murmuring among yourselves. **44** No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him,^l and I will resurrect him on the last day.^m **45** It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught* by Jehovah.’ⁿ Everyone who has listened to the Father and has learned comes to me.

CHAP. 6

- a Joh 4:14
Joh 7:37
Re 22:17
b Joh 6:64
c Mt 11:28, 29
Joh 17:6
d Joh 3:13
Joh 8:23
Joh 8:42
e Mt 26:39
Joh 5:30
f Joh 17:12
Joh 18:9
g Joh 5:28, 29
Ro 6:5
h Joh 10:27, 28
i Joh 11:24
Ac 17:31
1Th 4:16
Re 20:12
j Joh 6:33
k Mt 13:55
Mr 6:3
Lu 4:22
l Joh 6:65
2Th 2:13
m Joh 11:24
n Isa 54:13
Jer 31:33, 34
Mic 4:2

FOOTNOTES

6:45 *Or “be those taught.”

STUDY NOTES

6:35 the bread of life: This expression occurs only twice in the Scriptures. (Joh 6:35, 48) In this context, **life** refers to “everlasting life.” (Joh 6:40, 47, 54) During this discussion, Jesus refers to himself as “the true bread from heaven” (Joh 6:32), “the bread of God” (Joh 6:33), and “the living bread” (Joh 6:51). He points out that the Israelites were given the manna in the wilderness (Ne 9:20); yet, this divinely provided food did not sustain their lives forever (Joh 6:49). By contrast, Christ’s faithful followers have available to them heavenly manna, or “bread of life” (Joh 6:48-51, 58), which makes it possible for them to live forever. They ‘eat of this bread’ by exercising faith in the re-

deeming power of Jesus’ flesh and blood that he sacrificed.

6:39 I should resurrect them on the last day: Jesus states four times that he will resurrect people on the last day. (Joh 6:40, 44, 54) At Joh 11:24, Martha too refers to “the resurrection on the last day.” (Compare Da 12:13; see study note on Joh 11:24.) At Joh 12:48, this “last day” is associated with a time of judgment, which will apparently correspond to the Thousand Year Reign of Christ when he will judge mankind, including all those resurrected from the dead.—Re 20:4-6.

6:40 everlasting life: On this occasion, the expression “everlasting life” is used four times (Joh 6:27, 40, 47, 54) by Jesus and once (Joh 6:68) by one of his disciples. The expression “everlasting life” occurs 17 times in the Gospel of John compared with 8 times in the three other Gospels combined.

6:44 draws him: Although the Greek verb for “draw” is used in reference to hauling in a net of fish (Joh 21:6, 11), it does not suggest that God drags people against their will. This verb can also mean “to attract,” and Jesus’ statement may allude to Jer 31:3, where Jehovah said to his ancient people: “I have drawn you to me with loyal love.” (The *Septuagint* uses the same Greek verb here.) Joh 12:32 (see study note) shows that in a similar way, Jesus draws men of all sorts to himself. The Scriptures show that Jehovah has given humans free will. Everyone has a choice when it comes to serving Him. (De 30:19, 20) God gently draws to himself those who have a heart that is rightly disposed. (Ps 11:5; Pr 21:2; Ac 13:48) Jehovah does so through the Bible’s message and through his holy spirit. The prophecy from Isa 54:13, quoted in Joh 6:45, applies to those who are drawn by the Father.—Compare Joh 6:65.

CHAP. 6

a Ex 33:17
Ex 33:20

b Mt 11:27
Lu 10:22
Joh 1:18

c Joh 3:16

d Joh 6:33

e Joh 6:31

f Heb 10:10

g Joh 6:33

h Joh 6:40
1Co 15:51, 52
1Th 4:16

i Joh 15:4

j Joh 5:26
1Co 15:22

k Joh 6:51

46 Not that any man has seen the Father,^a except the one who is from God; this one has seen the Father.^b **47** Most truly I say to you, whoever believes has everlasting life.^c

48 “I am the bread of life.^d **49** Your forefathers ate the manna in the wilderness and yet they died.^e **50** This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that anyone may eat of it and not die. **51** I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever; and for a fact, the bread that I will give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world.”^f

52 Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying: “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” **53** So Jesus said to them: “Most truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves.^g **54** Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life, and I will resurrect^h him on the last day; **55** for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. **56** Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood remains in union with me, and I in union with him.ⁱ **57** Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will live because of me.^j **58** This is the bread that came down from heaven. It is not as when your forefathers ate and yet died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”^k

STUDY NOTES

6:45 Jehovah: In this quote from Isa 54:13, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text. Existing Greek manuscripts of the Gospel of John use the word *the-os*’ here (perhaps reflecting the term used at Isa 54:13 in copies of the *Septuagint*), which explains why most translations say “God.” However, in view of the Hebrew Scripture background of this quotation, the divine name is used in the main text.—See  App. C.

6:53 life in yourselves: At Joh 5:26, Jesus said that he was granted “life in himself” just as his Father has “life in himself.” (See study note on Joh 5:26.) Now, about a year later, Jesus uses the same expression regarding his followers. Here he equates having “life in yourselves” with gaining “everlasting life.” (Joh 6:54) Rath-

er than denoting the power to impart life, in this context the expression “life in oneself” seems to refer to entering into the very fullness of life, or being fully alive. Anointed Christians become fully alive when they are resurrected to immortal life in heaven. Faithful ones with an earthly hope will be fully alive after they pass the final test that will occur right after the end of the Millennial Reign of Christ.—1Co 15: 52, 53; Re 20:5, 7-10.

6:54 feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood: The context indicates that those who feed and drink do so in a figurative sense by exercising faith in Jesus Christ. (Joh 6:35, 40) Jesus made this statement in 32 C.E., so he was not discussing the Lord’s Evening Meal, which he would institute a year later. He made this declaration just prior to “the Passover, the festival of the Jews” (Joh 6:4), so his listeners would likely have been reminded of the impending festival and the significance of the

lamb’s blood in saving lives on the night that Israel left Egypt (Ex 12:24-27). Jesus was emphasizing that his blood would likewise play an essential role in making it possible for his disciples to gain **everlasting life**.

6:56 in union with me: Or “in me.” This expression indicates close association, harmony, and unity.

59 He said these things as he was teaching in a synagogue in Ca-per'na-um.

Many Stumble at Jesus' Words

60 When they heard this, many of his disciples said: "This speech is shocking; who can listen to it?" 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were murmuring about this, said to them: "Does this stumble you?"* 62 What, therefore, if you should see the Son of man ascending to where he was before?^a 63 It is the spirit that is life-giving;^b the flesh is of no use at all. The sayings that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.^c 64 But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning those who did not believe and the one who would betray him.^d 65 He went on to say: "This is why I have said to you, no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."^e

66 Because of this, many of his disciples went off to the things behind^f and would no longer walk with him. 67 So Jesus said to the Twelve: "You do not want to go also, do you?"

68 Simon Peter answered him: "Lord, whom shall we go away to?^g You have sayings of everlasting life.^h 69 We have believed

CHAP. 6

- a Joh 3:13
Joh 6:38
Joh 8:23
Ac 1:9
Eph 4:8
- b Ga 6:8
- c De 8:3
Mt 4:4
- d Mt 9:3, 4
Joh 2:24, 25
Joh 13:11
- e Joh 6:44
- f Lu 9:62
- g Mt 16:16
Mr 8:29
- h Joh 6:63
Joh 17:3

FOOTNOTES

6:61 *Or "Does this offend you; Does this cause you to be offended?"

STUDY NOTES

6:59 a synagogue: Or possibly, "public assembly." The Greek noun *syna-gogē* used here literally means "a bringing together; an assembly." In most occurrences in the Christian Greek Scriptures, it refers to the building or place where Jews assembled for Scripture reading, instruction, preaching, and prayer. (See **■** Glossary, "Synagogue.") Although the term in this context could be used in a broader sense to refer to any type of gathering that was accessible to the public, it most likely refers to "a synagogue" where Jesus was addressing a Jewish audience who were under the Mosaic Law.

6:61 Does this stumble you?: Or "Does this cause you to take offense?" or "Does this cause you to believe no longer?" In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *skan-da-li'zo* refers to stumbling in a figurative sense, often with reference to

falling into sin or causing someone to fall into sin. Depending on the context, stumbling may involve breaking one of God's laws on morals, losing faith, accepting false teachings, or taking offense.—See study notes on Mt 5:29; 18:7.

6:63 the spirit: Apparently referring to God's holy spirit. Jesus adds that in contrast with the power and wisdom that God grants through his spirit, **the flesh is of no use at all**. This indicates that the power as well as the wisdom of humans, as reflected in their writings, philosophies, and teachings, cannot lead to everlasting life.

the flesh: This expression seems to refer broadly to things connected with the limitations of a fleshly or human existence, including human reasoning and achievements. The sum total of human experience and wisdom, all its writings, philosophies, and teachings, are **of no use at all** as a means to gain eternal life.

are spirit and are life: The Greek word rendered "are" (*e-stin*) may here have the

sense of "mean," so this phrase could be rendered "means spirit and means life." (See study notes on Mt 12:7; 26:26.) Jesus is apparently indicating that his sayings are inspired by holy spirit and that these sayings are life-giving.

6:64 from the beginning: This expression does not refer to Judas' birth or to his being selected as an apostle, which happened after Jesus had prayed the entire night. (Lu 6:12-16) Rather, it refers to the start of Judas' acting treacherously, which Jesus immediately discerned. (Joh 2:24, 25; Re 1:1; 2:23; see study notes on Joh 6:70; 13:11.) This also shows that Judas' actions were premeditated and planned, not the result of a sudden change of heart. The meaning of the term "beginning" (Greek, *ar-khe*) in the Christian Greek Scriptures is relative, depending on the context. For example, at 2Pe 3:4, "beginning" refers to the start of creation. But in most instances, it is used in a more limited sense. For instance, Peter said that the holy spirit fell on the Gentiles "just as it did also on us in the beginning." (Ac 11:15) Peter was not re-

CHAP. 6

- a Lu 9:20
 b Lu 6:13
 c Lu 22:3
 Joh 13:18
 d Mt 26:14, 15
 Lu 6:13, 16
 Joh 12:4

and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.”^a
70 Jesus answered them: “I chose you twelve, did I not?^b Yet one of you is a slanderer.”^c **71** He was, in fact, speaking of Judas the son of Simon Is-car’i-ot, for this one was going to betray him, although he was one of the Twelve.^d

Jesus Goes to the Festival of Tabernacles

CHAP. 7

- e Joh 5:18
 f Le 23:34
 g Mt 12:46
 Mt 13:55, 56
 Mr 6:3
 Lu 8:19
 Joh 2:12
 Ac 1:14
 Ga 1:19
 h Mr 3:21
 i Joh 2:4
 Joh 7:30
 j Joh 3:19
 Joh 15:19
 k Joh 8:20

7 After this Jesus continued traveling* about in Gal’i-lee, for he did not want to do so in Ju-de’a because the Jews were seeking to kill him.^e **2** However, the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles^f was near. **3** So his brothers^g said to him: “Leave here and go into Ju-de’a, so that your disciples may also see the works you are doing. **4** For no one does anything in secret when he seeks to be known publicly. If you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.” **5** His brothers were, in fact, not exercising faith in him.^h **6** So Jesus said to them: “My time has not yet arrived,ⁱ but your time is always at hand. **7** The world has no reason to hate you, but it hates me, because I bear witness about it that its works are wicked.^j **8** You go up to the festival; I am not yet going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come.”^k **9** So after he told them these things, he remained in Gal’i-lee.

FOOTNOTES

7:1 *Or “walking.”

STUDY NOTES

ferring to the time of his birth or to the time when he was called to be an apostle. Rather, he was referring to the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., that is, “the beginning” of the outpouring of holy spirit for a specific purpose. (Ac 2:1-4) Other examples of how the context affects the meaning of the term “beginning” can be found at Lu 1:2; Joh 15:27; and 1Jo 2:7.

Jesus knew . . . the one who would betray him: Jesus was referring to Judas Iscariot. Jesus spent the entire night in prayer to his Father before selecting the 12 apostles. (Lu 6:12-16) So at first, Judas was faithful to God. However, Jesus knew from Hebrew Scripture prophecies that he would be betrayed by a close associate. (Ps 41:9; 109:8; Joh 13:18, 19) When Judas started to go bad, Jesus, who could read hearts and thoughts, de-

tected this change. (Mt 9:4) By use of his foreknowledge, God knew that a trusted companion of Jesus would turn traitor. But it is inconsistent with God’s qualities and past dealings to think that Judas had to be the one who would fail, as if his failure were predestined.

6:70 a slanderer: Or “a devil.” The Greek word *di-a’bo-los*, most often used with reference to the Devil, means “slanderer.” It is rendered “slanderers” (2Ti 3:3) or “slandorous” (1Ti 3:11; Tit 2:3) in the few other occurrences where the term does not refer to the Devil. In Greek, when used about the Devil, it is almost always preceded by the definite article. (See study note on Mt 4:1 and  Glossary, “Definite Article.”) Here the term is used to describe Judas Iscariot, who had developed a bad quality. It is possible that at this point Jesus detected that Judas was starting down a wrong course, one that later allowed Satan to use Judas as an ally in having Jesus killed.—Joh 13:2, 11.

7:1 the Jews: As used in the Gospel of John, this term conveys different meanings, depending on the context. In addition to referring to Jewish or Judean people in general or to those living in or near Jerusalem, the term may also refer more specifically to Jews who zealously adhered to human traditions connected with the Mosaic Law, which were often contrary to the spirit of that Law. (Mt 15:3-6) Foremost among these “Jews” were the Jewish authorities or religious leaders who were hostile to Jesus. In this passage and in some of the other occurrences of this term in John chapter 7, the context indicates that the Jewish authorities or religious leaders are referred to.—Joh 7:13, 15, 35a.—See  Glossary, “Jew.”

7:2 Festival of Tabernacles: Or “Festival of Booths.” This is the only mention of this festival in the Christian Greek Scriptures. This festival refers to the one observed in the fall of 32 C.E.—See  Glossary, “Festival of Booths,” and  App. B15.

10 But when his brothers had gone up to the festival, then he also went up, not openly but in secret. **11** So the Jews began looking for him at the festival and saying: “Where is that man?” **12** And there was a lot of subdued talk about him among the crowds. Some would say: “He is a good man.” Others would say: “He is not. He misleads the crowd.”^a **13** Of course, no one would speak about him publicly because of fear of the Jews.^b

Jesus Teaches at the Festival

14 When the festival was half over, Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. **15** And the Jews were astonished, saying: “How does this man have such a knowledge of the Scriptures^c when he has not studied at the schools?”^d **16** Jesus, in turn, answered them and said: “What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him who sent me.^e **17** If anyone desires to do His will, he will know whether the teaching is from God^f or I speak of my own originality. **18** Whoever speaks of his own originality is seeking his own glory; but whoever seeks the glory of the one who sent him,^g this one is true* and there is no unrighteousness in him. **19** Moses gave you the Law,^h did he not? But not one of you obeys the Law. Why are you seeking to kill me?”ⁱ **20** The crowd answered: “You have a demon.*^j Who is seeking to kill you?” **21** In answer Jesus said to them: “One deed I performed, and you are all surprised. **22** For this reason Moses has given you circumcision^k—not that it is from Moses, but it is from the forefathers!—and you circumcise a man on a sabbath. **23** If a man receives circumcision on a sabbath

CHAP. 7

- a Joh 9:16
- b Joh 9:22
Joh 12:42
Joh 19:38
- c Lu 4:16, 17
- d Mt 13:54
Mr 6:2
Lu 2:46, 47
Ac 4:13
- e Joh 3:34
Joh 8:28
Joh 12:49
Joh 14:10
- f Joh 8:47
- g Joh 5:41
Joh 8:50
- h Ex 24:3
- i Mt 12:14
Mr 3:6
- j Joh 8:48
Joh 10:19-21
- k Le 12:2, 3
- l Ge 17:9, 10

FOOTNOTES

7:18 *Or “is truthful.” **7:20** *Or “You are possessed by a demon; You are demonized.”

STUDY NOTES

7:11 the Jews: Here the term “the Jews” may refer to people in general who were gathering for the Festival of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, although it may also refer to the Jewish religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

7:13 the Jews: Apparently referring to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

7:15 the Jews: This expression seems to refer to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders, a conclusion that is indicated by Jesus’ question to them in verse 19: “Why are you seeking to kill me?”—See study note on Joh 7:1.

the Scriptures: Lit., “writings; letters,” that is, units of an alphabet. The expression “know (have a knowledge of) letters” is an idiom meaning “have a knowledge of writings (books, literature).” In this context, it apparently refers to knowledge of the inspired Scriptures.

when he has not studied at the schools: Or “without having been taught.” Lit., “not having learned.” Jesus was not uneducated, but he had not studied at the rabbinic schools of higher learning.

7:17 of my own originality: Or “on my own.” Lit., “from myself.” As God’s Chief Representative, Jesus always listens to Jehovah’s voice and speaks what Jehovah directs.

7:23 circumcision on a sabbath: For males, circumcision was a mandatory requirement of the Mosaic Law. (Le 12:2, 3) It was considered so important that even if the eighth day fell on the highly regarded Sabbath, circumcision was to be performed.—See  Glossary, “Circumcision.”

7:26 the rulers: Here referring to Jewish rulers. In the days of Jesus’ earthly ministry, Israel was under the dual rule of the Roman Empire and the Jewish rulers. The chief body of the Jewish rulers was the

CHAP. 7

- a Joh 5:8, 9
Joh 5:15, 16
- b Isa 11:3, 4
Mt 23:23
- c Joh 5:18
- d Mt 13:55
- e Joh 5:19
Joh 8:42
- f Joh 8:54, 55
- g Mt 11:27
Joh 1:18
Joh 10:15
- h Mr 11:18
Lu 19:47
- i Lu 22:53
Joh 8:20
- j Joh 2:23
Joh 8:30
Joh 10:40
Joh 10:42
Joh 11:45
- k Joh 11:47
- l Joh 13:33
Joh 16:16
- m Joh 8:21, 22

so that the Law of Moses may not be broken, are you violently angry at me because I made a man completely well on a Sabbath?^a **24** Stop judging by the outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”^b

Different Opinions About the Christ

25 Then some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem began to say: “This is the man they are seeking to kill, is it not?^c **26** And yet see! he is speaking in public, and they say nothing to him. Have the rulers come to know for certain that this is the Christ? **27** On the contrary, we know where this man is from;^d yet when the Christ comes, no one is to know where he is from.” **28** Then as he was teaching in the temple, Jesus called out: “You know me and you know where I am from. And I have not come of my own initiative,^e but the One who sent me is real, and you do not know him.^f **29** I know him,^g because I am a representative from him, and that One sent me.” **30** So they began seeking to get hold of him,^h but no one laid a hand on him, for his hour had not yet come.ⁱ **31** Still, many of the crowd put faith in him,^j and they were saying: “When the Christ comes, he will not perform more signs than this man has done, will he?”^k

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things about him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize* him. **33** Jesus then said: “I will be with you a little while longer before I go to the One who sent me.^l **34** You will look for me, but you will not find me, and where I am you cannot come.”^m **35** Therefore, the Jews said among themselves: “Where does this man intend to go, so that we will not find

FOOTNOTES

7:32 *Or “arrest.”

STUDY NOTES

Sanhedrin, a council of 71 elders, including the high priest, to which the Roman government granted limited authority over Jewish affairs.—See  Glossary, “Sanhedrin.”

7:29 I am a representative from him:

Lit., “beside him I am.” The use of the preposition *pa-ra’* (lit., “beside”) emphasizes not only that Jesus is “from” God but that he is very close, or near, to Jehovah. In this sense, Jesus is a “representative” from God.

7:32 officers: That is, guards of the temple in Jerusalem. Likely, they were agents of the Sanhedrin and under the authority of the chief priests. They functioned as religious police.

7:35 the Jews: In this context where the chief priests and Pharisees are mentioned (Joh 7:32, 45), the designation “the Jews” apparently refers to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

him? He does not intend to go to the Jews dispersed among the Greeks and teach the Greeks, does he? **36** What does he mean when he says, ‘You will look for me, but you will not find me, and where I am you cannot come?’”

37 On the last day, the great day of the festival,^a Jesus stood up and he called out: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.^b **38** Whoever puts faith in me, just as the scripture has said: ‘From deep within him streams of living water will flow.’”^c **39** However, he said this concerning the spirit, which those who put faith in him were about to receive; for as yet there was no spirit,^d because Jesus had not yet been glorified.^e **40** Some in the crowd who heard these words began saying: “This really is the Prophet.”^f **41** Others were saying: “This is the Christ.”^g But some were saying: “The Christ is not coming out of Gal’i-lee, is he?”^h **42** Does the scripture not say that the

CHAP. 7

- a Joh 7:2
- b Joh 4:14
Joh 6:35
- c Ex 17:6
Nu 20:8
Joh 4:14
- d Joe 2:28
Joh 14:16, 26
Joh 15:26
Joh 16:7
Ac 2:17
- e Joh 12:16
Joh 13:31, 32
Ac 2:33
1Ti 3:16
- f De 18:18
Joh 6:14
- g Joh 4:40
Joh 4:42
Joh 6:68, 69
- h Joh 1:46
Joh 7:52

STUDY NOTES

7:35 the Jews dispersed: Lit., “the dispersion.” In this context, the Greek word *di-a-spo-ra*’ refers to Jews living outside Israel. This dispersion, or Diaspora, took place because the Jews were exiled from their homeland when conquered by other nations—first the Assyrians, in 740 B.C.E., and then the Babylonians, prior to and in 607 B.C.E. (2Ki 17:22, 23; 24:12-17; Jer 52:28-30) Only a remnant of the exiles returned to Israel; the rest remained scattered. (Isa 10:21, 22) By the fifth century B.C.E., Jewish communities were apparently found in the 127 provinces of the Persian Empire. (Es 1:1; 3:8) The expression used here at Joh 7:35 refers specifically to those who had been scattered **among the Greeks**. In the first century, there were Jewish populations in many Greek-speaking communities outside of Israel, for example, in Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt, as well as in the European part of the Roman Empire, including Greece and Rome. Efforts to win converts to Judaism meant that, in time, a large number of people came to have some knowledge of Jehovah and of the Law that he gave to the Jews. (Mt 23:15) Jews and proselytes from many lands were present in Jerusalem for the Festival of Pentecost in 33 C.E., and they heard the good news about Jesus. Therefore, the dispersion of Jews throughout the Roman

Empire contributed to the rapid spread of Christianity.

7:37 On the last day: That is, the seventh day of the Festival of Tabernacles, or Booths, Tishri 21. It was called “the great day of the festival.”—De 16:13; see study note on Joh 7:2 and  Glossary, “Festival of Booths,” and  App. B15.

7:38 just as the scripture has said: Jesus does not seem to be quoting a particular verse here but is alluding to such scriptures as Isa 44:3; 58:11; and Zec 14:8. Over two years earlier, when Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman about **living water**, he focused on the benefits of receiving this water. (Joh 4:10, 14) But in this verse, Jesus indicates that this “living water” would **flow** from his followers who put **faith** in him as they shared it with others. (Joh 7:37-39) The Christian Greek Scriptures provide abundant evidence that Jesus’ followers, after receiving holy spirit beginning at Pentecost 33 C.E., were impelled to impart life-giving water to all who would listen.—Ac 5:28; Col 1:23.

streams of living water will flow:

Jesus may here have alluded to a custom followed during the Festival of Tabernacles, or Booths. The custom involved the drawing of water from the pool of Siloam and pouring it from a golden vessel, along with wine, on the altar at the time of the morning sacrifice. (See

study note on Joh 7:2;  Glossary, “Festival of Booths,” and  App. B15.) Though this feature of the festival was not mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures but was added later, most scholars say that this occurred on seven days of the festival but not on the eighth. On the opening day of the festival, a sabbath, the water that a priest poured out had been brought to the temple from the pool of Siloam on the preceding day. On the subsequent days, the priest would go to the pool of Siloam to collect water in a golden pitcher. He would time his return to the temple so that he arrived just as the priests were ready to lay the pieces of the sacrifice on the altar. As he came through the Water Gate and into the Court of the Priests, his entry was announced by a threefold blast from the priests’ trumpets. The water was then poured out into a basin leading to the base of the altar at the same time that wine was being poured into a different basin. Then the temple music accompanied the singing of the Hallel Psalms (Ps 113-118) while the worshippers waved their palm branches toward the altar. This ceremony may have reminded the joyful celebrants of Isaiah’s prophetic words: “With rejoicing you will draw water from the springs of salvation.”—Isa 12:3.

CHAP. 7

- a 2Ch 13:5
Ps 89:3, 4
Ps 132:11
Jer 23:5
- b Mic 5:2
Mt 2:4-6
Lu 2:4
- c 1Sa 16:1
- d Mt 7:28, 29
Lu 4:22
- e Joh 12:42
Ac 6:7
- f Joh 3:1, 2
- g De 1:16, 17

Christ is coming from the offspring of David^a and from Beth-le-hem,^b the village where David was?”^c **43** So a division over him arose among the crowd. **44** Some of them, though, wanted to seize* him, but no one laid his hands on him.

45 Then the officers went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, and the latter said to them: “Why did you not bring him in?” **46** The officers replied: “Never has any man spoken like this.”^d **47** In turn the Pharisees answered: “You have not been misled also, have you? **48** Not one of the rulers or of the Pharisees has put faith in him, has he?”^e **49** But this crowd who do not know the Law are accursed people.” **50** Nic-o-de-mus, who had come to him previously^f and who was one of them, said to them: **51** “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and learns what he is doing, does it?”^g **52** In answer they said to him: “You are not also out of Gal'i-lee, are you?

FOOTNOTES

7:44 *Or “arrest.”

STUDY NOTES

7:39 for as yet there was no spirit: The Greek word for “spirit,” *pneu'ma*, occurs twice in this verse and refers to God's holy spirit, or active force. Jesus and those who listened to him knew that God had long used His holy spirit (Ge 1:2, fn.; 2Sa 23:2; Ac 28:25) and that He had imparted that spirit to His faithful servants, such as Othniel, Jephthah, and Samson (Jg 3:9, 10; 11:29; 15:14). Therefore, John was clearly referring to a new way that the spirit would benefit imperfect humans. None of those earlier servants of God had been called to heavenly life by means of the spirit. At Pentecost 33 C.E., Jesus poured out on his followers the holy spirit that he, as a glorified spirit, had received from Jehovah. (Ac 2:4, 33) This was the first time that imperfect humans were given the hope of spirit life in heaven. Having this anointing, the Christians were able to understand the meaning of many things that they had not understood before.

7:49 accursed people: The proud and self-righteous Pharisees and Jewish leaders looked down on the common people who listened to Jesus, calling them “accursed people.” The Greek word used

here, *e-pa'ra-tos*, is a term of contempt, which implies that those so described were under a curse from God. The Jewish religious leaders also used a Hebrew term, *'am ha-'a'rets*, or “people of the land,” to express their contempt for the common people. Originally, this was a term of respect for citizens of a specific territory, embracing not only the poor and lowly but also the prominent. (Ge 23:7; 2Ki 23:35; Eze 22:29) By Jesus' day, however, the term was used of those who were considered ignorant of the Mosaic Law or who failed to observe the smallest details of rabbinic traditions. Later rabbinic writings confirm that attitude. Many religious leaders viewed such people as contemptible, refusing to eat with them, buy from them, or associate with them.

7:52 You are not also out of Galilee, are you?: This question apparently reflects the contempt that these Judeans felt toward Galileans. When Nicodemus spoke up in defense of Jesus (Joh 7:51), the Pharisees were, in effect, asking: “Are you defending and supporting him, putting yourself on the level of a backward Galilean?” Since the Sanhedrin and the temple were in Jerusalem, no doubt a great concentration of teachers of the Law was to be found there, which likely gave rise to the Jewish proverb: “Go north [to Galilee] for riches, go south [to Judea] for wisdom.” But evidence indicates that the

Galileans were not ignorant of God's Law. Throughout the cities and villages of Galilee, there were teachers of the Law as well as synagogues that served as educational centers. (Lu 5:17) This arrogant reply to Nicodemus indicates that the Pharisees did not make any effort to learn that Bethlehem was Jesus' actual birthplace. (Mic 5:2; Joh 7:42) They also failed to discern Isaiah's prophecy that likened the Messiah's preaching to “a great light” that would shine in Galilee.—Isa 9:1, 2; Mt 4:13-17.

Search and see that no prophet is to be raised up out of Gal'i-lee.”^a

CHAP. 7

^a Joh 1:46
Joh 7:41

The Father Bears Witness About Jesus

CHAP. 8

8 **12** Then Jesus spoke again to them, saying: “I am the light of the world.^b Whoever follows me will by no means walk in darkness, but will possess the light^c of life.” **13** So the Pharisees said to him: “You bear witness about yourself; your witness is not true.” **14** In answer Jesus said to them: “Even if I do bear witness about myself, my witness is true, because I know where I came from and where I am going.^d But you do not know where I came from and where I am going. **15** You judge according to the flesh;^e I do not judge any man at all. **16** And yet even if I do judge, my judgment is truthful, because I am not alone, but the Father who sent me is with me.^f **17** Also, in your own Law it is written: ‘The witness of two men is true.’^g **18** I am one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me.”^h **19** Then they said to

^b Isa 9:2
Isa 49:6
Mt 4:16
Joh 1:5, 9
Joh 12:35
^c Joh 12:46
1Pe 2:9
1Jo 2:8
^d Joh 7:28
Joh 13:3
Joh 16:28
^e Joh 7:24
^f Joh 14:10
^g De 17:6
De 19:15
^h Joh 5:37
2Pe 1:17
1Jo 5:9

FOOTNOTES

8:15 * Or “by human standards; by outward appearance.”

STUDY NOTES

7:52 no prophet . . . out of Galilee: This statement ignores the prophetic words of Isa 9:1, 2, foretelling that a great light would come from Galilee. Some scholars also suggest that the Pharisees were making a sweeping generalization that no prophet had ever arisen or could ever arise out of lowly Galilee. This ignores the fact that the prophet Jonah was from the Galilean town of Gath-hepher, just 4 km (2.5 mi) NNE of Nazareth, where Jesus grew up.—2Ki 14:25.

7:53

The earliest authoritative manuscripts do not have the passage from Joh 7:53 to 8:11. These 12 verses were obviously added to the original text of John’s Gospel. (See  App. A3.) They are not found in the two earliest available papyri containing the Gospel of John, Papyrus Bodmer 2 (P66) and Papyrus Bodmer 14, 15 (P75), both from the second centu-

ry C.E., nor are they found in the Codex Sinaiticus or Codex Vaticanus, both from the fourth century C.E. They first appear in a Greek manuscript from the fifth century (Codex Bezae) but are not found in any other Greek manuscripts until the ninth century C.E. They are omitted by most of the early translations into other languages. One group of Greek manuscripts places the added words at the end of John’s Gospel; another group puts them after Lu 21:38. That this portion appears at different places in different manuscripts supports the conclusion that it is a spurious text. Scholars overwhelmingly agree that these verses were not part of the original text of John.

Greek manuscripts and translations into other languages that include these verses read (with some variations) as follows:

53 So they went each one to his home.

8 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2 At daybreak, however, he again presented himself at the temple, and all the people began coming to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. **3** Now the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught at adultery, and, after standing her in their midst, **4** they said to him:

“Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of committing adultery. **5** In the Law Moses prescribed for us to stone such sort of women. What, really, do you say?” **6** Of course, they were saying this to put him to the test, in order to have something with which to accuse him. But Jesus bent down and began to write with his finger in the ground. **7** When they persisted in asking him, he straightened up and said to them: “Let the one of you that is sinless be the first to throw a stone at her.” **8** And bending over again he kept on writing in the ground. **9** But those who heard this began going out, one by one, starting with the older men, and he was left alone, and the woman that was in their midst. **10** Straightening up, Jesus said to her: “Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?” **11** She said: “No one, sir.” Jesus said: “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way; from now on practice sin no more.”

8:12 the light of the world: The metaphor Jesus used to describe himself may have reminded his listeners of the four giant lampstands in the Court of the Women, which were lit during the Festival of Booths, or Tabernacles.

CHAP. 8

- a Joh 16:3
 b Mt 11:27
 Joh 14:7
 c Mr 12:41
 d Joh 7:8, 30
 e Joh 8:24
 f Joh 7:34
 Joh 13:33
 g Joh 3:13, 31
 Joh 6:62
 Joh 16:28
 h Joh 18:19, 20
 i Nu 21:8, 9
 Da 7:13
 Mt 26:64
 Joh 3:14
 Joh 12:32, 33
 Ga 3:13
 j Mt 27:54
 k Joh 5:19
 Joh 5:30
 l Joh 4:34
 Joh 14:10
 Heb 1:9

him: “Where is your Father?” Jesus answered: “You know neither me nor my Father.^a If you did know me, you would know my Father also.”^b **20** He spoke these words in the treasury^c as he was teaching in the temple. But no one seized him, for his hour had not yet come.^d

21 So he said to them again: “I am going away, and you will look for me, and yet you will die in your sin.^e Where I am going, you cannot come.”^f **22** The Jews then began to say: “He will not kill himself, will he? Because he says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’” **23** He went on to say to them: “You are from the realms below; I am from the realms above.^g You are from this world; I am not from this world. **24** That is why I said to you: You will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I am the one, you will die in your sins.” **25** So they began to say to him: “Who are you?” Jesus replied to them: “Why am I even speaking to you at all? **26** I have many things to speak concerning you and to pass judgment on. As a matter of fact, the One who sent me is true, and the very things I heard from him I am speaking in the world.”^h **27** They did not grasp that he was talking to them about the Father. **28** Jesus then said: “After you have lifted up the Son of man,ⁱ then you will know that I am he^j and that I do nothing of my own initiative;^k but just as the Father taught me, I speak these things. **29** And the One who sent me is with me; he did not abandon me to myself, because I always do the things pleasing to him.”^l **30** As he was saying these things, many put faith in him.

 STUDY NOTES

(Joh 7:2; see  App. B11.) The light from them illuminated the surroundings to a great distance. In addition, the expression “light of the world” echoes passages from Isaiah foretelling that “a great light” would be seen by “those dwelling in the land of deep shadow” and that the one referred to as Jehovah’s “servant” would be “a light of the nations.” (Isa 9:1, 2; 42:1, 6; 49:6) In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used the same metaphor when addressing his followers, saying: “You are the light of the world.” (Mt 5:14) The expression “light of the world” (where the Greek word *ko’smos* refers to the entire world of mankind) fits well with Isaiah’s words about the Messiah being “a light of the nations.” And at Ac 13:46,

47, Paul and Barnabas show that these prophetic words of Isa 49:6 constituted a command to all of Christ’s followers to continue to serve as a light to the nations. Both Jesus’ ministry and that of his followers would enlighten people spiritually and free them from enslavement to false religious teachings.

8:16 the Father: Some manuscripts read “he,” but the main text reading has strong support in ancient manuscripts.

8:20 the treasury: Or “near the treasury (contribution) chests.” The Greek word used here also occurs at Mr 12:41, 43 and Lu 21:1, where it is rendered “treasury chests.” Apparently, the term here refers to the area of the temple located in the Court of the Women, where there were 13 treasury chests. (See  App. B11.) It

is believed that the temple also contained a major treasury and that the money from the treasury chests was taken there. But it is unlikely that this verse speaks about that area.—See study note on Mr 12:41.

Children of Abraham

31 Then Jesus went on to say to the Jews who had believed him: “If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples, **32** and you will know the truth,^a and the truth will set you free.”^b **33** They replied to him: “We are Abraham’s offspring* and never have been slaves to anyone. How is it you say, ‘You will become free?’” **34** Jesus answered them: “Most truly I say to you, every doer of sin is a slave of sin.^c **35** Moreover, the slave does not remain in the household forever; the son remains forever. **36** So if the Son sets you free, you will be truly free. **37** I know that you are Abraham’s offspring. But you are seeking to kill me, because my word makes no progress among you. **38** I speak the things I have seen while with my Father,^d but you do the things you have heard from your father.” **39** In answer they said to him: “Our father is Abraham.” Jesus said to them: “If you were Abraham’s children,^e you would be doing the works of Abraham. **40** But now you are seeking to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God.^f Abraham did not do this. **41** You are doing the works of your father.” They said to him: “We were not born from immorality; we have one Father, God.”

CHAP. 8

- a Joh 17:17
Joh 18:37
- b Lu 4:18
Ro 6:14, 22
Jas 1:25
- c Ro 6:6
Ro 6:16
Ro 7:14
- d Joh 5:19
Joh 14:10
- e Mt 3:9
Ro 2:28, 29
Ro 9:7, 8
Ga 3:7, 29
- f Joh 8:26
- g Joh 16:27
1Jo 5:1
- h Joh 3:16
Joh 5:19
Joh 5:30
- i Ge 3:15
- j Heb 2:14
1Pe 5:8
1Jo 3:8

Children of the Devil

42 Jesus said to them: “If God were your Father, you would love me,^g for I came from God and I am here. I have not come of my own initiative, but that One sent me.^h **43** Why do you not understand what I am saying? Because you cannot listen to* my word. **44** You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father.ⁱ That one was a murderer when he began,^j and he did not stand fast in the truth, because truth is not in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks according to his own disposition, because he is a liar and the father

FOOTNOTES

8:33 * Lit., “seed.” **8:43** * Or “accept.”

STUDY NOTES

8:41 **immorality:** Or “sexual immorality.” Greek, *por·nei’a*.—See study note on Mt 5:32 and  Glossary, “Sexual immorality.”

We were not born from immorality: Or “We are not illegitimate children.” The Jews were claiming to be legitimate chil-

dren of God and of Abraham and, thus, heirs of the promises made to Abraham.

8:44 **when he began:** Or “from the beginning,” that is, from the beginning of the Devil’s course as a murderer, a liar, and a slanderer of God.—1Jo 3:8, ftn.

8:48 **a Samaritan:** Here the Jews used the term “Samaritan” as an expression of contempt and reproach.—See study note on Lu 10:33 and  Glossary, “Samaritans.”

8:56 **he saw it:** That is, with eyes of faith.—Heb 11:13; 1Pe 1:11.

8:57 **you have seen Abraham?:** A few manuscripts read “has Abraham seen you?,” but the main text reading has strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.

8:58 **I have been:** The opposing Jews wanted to stone Jesus for claiming that he had “seen Abraham,” although, as they said, Jesus was “not yet 50 years

CHAP. 8

- a Ge 3:4
2Co 11:3, 14
Re 12:9
- b 2Co 5:21
Heb 4:15
1Pe 2:22
1Jo 3:5
- c Joh 18:37
- d Joh 10:26
1Jo 4:6
- e Joh 4:9
- f Mt 12:24
Joh 7:20
Joh 10:20
- g Joh 5:41
Joh 7:18
- h Joh 5:24
Joh 11:25, 26
1Co 15:54
Re 20:6
- i Joh 5:41
Joh 13:31, 32
Ac 3:13
- j Joh 7:28, 29
- k Mt 13:17
Heb 11:13
- l Pr 8:22
Joh 1:1
Joh 17:5
Php 2:6, 7
Col 1:15-17

of the lie.^a **45** Because I, on the other hand, tell you the truth, you do not believe me. **46** Who of you convicts me of sin?^b If I speak truth, why is it that you do not believe me? **47** The one who is from God listens to the sayings of God.^c This is why you do not listen, because you are not from God.”^d

Jesus and Abraham

48 In answer the Jews said to him: “Are we not right in saying, ‘You are a Sa-mar’i-tan^e and have a demon?’”^f **49** Jesus answered: “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. **50** But I am not seeking glory for myself;^g there is One who is seeking and judging. **51** Most truly I say to you, if anyone observes my word, he will never see death at all.”^h **52** The Jews said to him: “Now we do know that you have a demon. Abraham died, also the prophets, but you say, ‘If anyone observes my word, he will never taste death at all.’ **53** You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died, are you? The prophets also died. Who do you claim to be?” **54** Jesus answered: “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me,ⁱ the one who you say is your God. **55** Yet you have not known him, but I know him.^j And if I said I do not know him, I would be like you, a liar. But I do know him and am observing his word. **56** Abraham your father rejoiced greatly at the prospect of seeing my day, and he saw it and rejoiced.”^k **57** Then the Jews said to him: “You are not yet 50 years old, and still you have seen Abraham?” **58** Jesus said to them: “Most truly I say to you, before Abraham came into existence, I have been.”^l **59** So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid and went out of the temple.

STUDY NOTES

old.” (Joh 8:57) Jesus’ response was to tell them about his prehuman existence as a mighty spirit creature in heaven before Abraham was born. Some claim that this verse identifies Jesus with God. They argue that the Greek expression used here, *e-go’ ei-mi’* (rendered “I am” in some Bibles), is an allusion to the *Sep-tuagint* rendering of Ex 3:14 and that both verses should be rendered the same way. (See study note on Joh 4:26.) In this context, however, the action expressed by the Greek verb *ei-mi’* started “before Abraham came into existence” and was still in

progress. It is therefore properly translated “I have been” rather than “I am,” and a number of ancient and modern translations use wording similar to “I have been.” In fact, at Joh 14:9, the same form of the Greek verb *ei-mi’* is used to render Jesus’ words: “Even after *I have been* with you men for such a long time, Phillip, have you not come to know me?” Most translations use a similar wording, showing that depending on context there is no valid grammatical objection to rendering *ei-mi’* as “have been.” (Other examples of rendering a present tense Greek verb using a present perfect tense verb are found at Lu 2:48; 13:7; 15:29; Joh 15:27; Ac 15:21;

2Co 12:19; 1Jo 3:8.) Also, Jesus’ reasoning recorded at Joh 8:54, 55 shows that he was not trying to portray himself as being the same person as his Father.

8:59 picked up stones to throw at him:

About two months later, the Jews again tried to kill Jesus in the temple. (Joh 10:31) Since the temple was still being renovated, it has been suggested that the Jews gathered the stones from a construction site.

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

9 As he was passing along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. **2** And his disciples asked him: “Rabbi,^a who sinned, this man or his parents, so that he was born blind?” **3** Jesus answered: “Neither this man sinned nor his parents, but it was so that the works of God might be made manifest in his case.^b **4** We must do the works of the One who sent me while it is day;^c the night is coming when no man can work. **5** As long as I am in the world, I am the world’s light.”^d **6** After he said these things, he spat on the ground and made a paste with the saliva, and he smeared the paste on the man’s eyes^e **7** and said to him: “Go wash in the pool of Si-lo’am” (which is translated “Sent Forth”). And he went and washed, and came back seeing.^f

8 Then the neighbors and those who formerly used to see that he was a beggar began to say: “This is the man who used to sit and beg, is it not?” **9** Some were saying: “This is he.” Others were saying: “No, but he looks like him.” The man kept saying: “I am he.” **10** So they asked him: “How, then, were your eyes opened?” **11** He answered: “The man called Jesus made a paste and smeared it on my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Si-lo’am and wash.’^g So I went and washed and gained sight.” **12** At this they said to him: “Where is that man?” He said: “I do not know.”

Healed Man Questioned by the Pharisees

13 They led the formerly blind man to the Pharisees. **14** Incidentally, the day that Jesus made the paste and opened his eyes^h was the Sabbath.ⁱ **15** So this time the Pharisees also began asking the man how he gained sight. He said to them: “He

CHAP. 9

- a Joh 1:38
- b Joh 11:2-4
- c Joh 4:34
Joh 11:9
- d Isa 42:6, 7
Isa 49:6
Isa 61:1
Joh 1:5, 9
Joh 8:12
- e Mr 8:23
- f 2Ki 5:10, 14
Isa 42:7
- g Joh 9:7
- h Joh 9:6
- i Lu 13:14
Joh 5:8, 9

STUDY NOTES

9:4 the night is coming: In the Bible, the word “night” is sometimes used in a figurative sense. Jesus is here referring to the time of his trial, execution, and death when he would be unable to engage in the works of his Father.—Job 10:21, 22; Ec 9:10; compare study note on Lu 22:53.

9:6 the saliva: On three occasions recorded in the Bible, Jesus used his saliva when miraculously healing someone. (Mr 7:31-37; 8:22-26; Joh 9:1-7) Saliva was commonly used in folk remedies, but

Jesus’ miracles were performed under the power of God’s spirit. Therefore, it was not his saliva that healed people. The man born blind was told: “Go wash in the pool of Siloam” before he received his sight. (Joh 9:7) This was undoubtedly a test of his faith, just as bathing in the Jordan River was required of Naaman before he was freed from his leprosy.—2Ki 5:10-14.

9:7 pool of Siloam: The remains of a first-century C.E. pool thought to be the pool of Siloam have been found S of the temple mount. It is at the base of

the southern spur on which the ancient city was first built, near the junction of the Tyropoeon Valley with the Kidron Valley. (See [☞](#) App. B12.) Siloam is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name “Shiloah,” which may be related to the Hebrew verb *sha-lach*, meaning “to send (out).” Thus, John translates the meaning of the name Siloam as **Sent Forth**. At Isa 8:6, where the Hebrew name Shiloah designates a water conduit or canal as part of Jerusalem’s water supply, the *Sep-tuagint* uses the name Siloam. The pool of Siloam was supplied with water from the

CHAP. 9

a Ex 20:9, 10

b Joh 3:2

c Lu 12:51

Joh 7:12

Joh 7:43

Joh 10:19

d Joh 4:19

e Joh 7:13

Joh 19:38

f Lu 6:22

Joh 12:42

Joh 16:2

put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.” **16** Some of the Pharisees then began to say: “This is not a man from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.”^a Others said: “How can a man who is a sinner perform signs of that sort?”^b So there was a division among them.^c **17** And again they said to the blind man: “What do you say about him, since it was your eyes that he opened?” The man said: “He is a prophet.”^d

18 However, the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had gained sight, until they called the parents of the man who could now see. **19** And they asked them: “Is this your son who you say was born blind? How, then, does he now see?” **20** His parents answered: “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. **21** But how it is that he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him. He is of age. He must speak for himself.” **22** His parents said these things because they were in fear of the Jews,^e for the Jews had already come to an agreement that if anyone acknowledged him as Christ, that person should be expelled from the synagogue.^f **23** This is why his parents said: “He is of age. Question him.”

24 So a second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him: “Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner.” **25** He answered: “Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know, that I was blind, but now I can see.” **26** Then they said to him: “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” **27** He answered them: “I told you already, and yet you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become his disciples also, do you?” **28** At this

 STUDY NOTES

Gihon Spring, which intermittently gushes, or sends forth, water. The name Siloam may be related to this. At Joh 9:7, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J7-14, 16-18, 22 in  App. C4) use the term “Shiloah.”

See  Gallery, image 119, Pool of Siloam.

9:18, 22 the Jews: Apparently referring to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders. —See study note on Joh 7:1.

9:21 He is of age: Or “He is old enough.” The expression might refer to the age at which men qualified for military service

under the Mosaic Law, which was 20. (Nu 1:3) This fits with the fact that he is called “a man” (Joh 9:1), not a child, and that he had been a beggar (Joh 9:8). Some consider the expression as referring to the age of legal maturity in Jewish society, which was 13.

9:22 expelled from the synagogue:

Or “excommunicated; banned from the synagogue.” The Greek adjective *a-po-sy-na'go-gos* is used only here and at Joh 12:42 and 16:2. An expelled person would be shunned and scorned as a social outcast. Such cutting off of fellowship from other Jews would have severe economic consequences for the family.

The synagogues, which were used primarily for education, to some extent were also used as places for local courts that had the power to inflict the penalties of scourging and excommunication.—See study note on Mt 10:17.

9:24 Give glory to God: An idiomatic expression used to put a person under obligation to tell the truth. The intended meaning of the idiom could be conveyed by saying: “Give glory to God by speaking the truth” or “Speak the truth before God.”—Compare Jos 7:19.

they scornfully told him: “You are a disciple of that man, but we are disciples of Moses. **29** We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he is from.” **30** The man answered them: “This is certainly amazing, that you do not know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes. **31** We know that God does not listen to sinners,^a but if anyone is God-fearing and does his will, he listens to this one.^b **32** From of old it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of one born blind. **33** If this man were not from God, he could do nothing at all.”^c **34** In answer they said to him: “You were altogether born in sin, and yet are you teaching us?” And they threw him out!^d

CHAP. 9

a Ps 66:18
Pr 28:9
Isa 1:15

b Ps 34:15
Pr 15:29

c Joh 3:1, 2
Joh 5:36

d Joh 9:22
Joh 16:2

e Joh 4:25, 26

f Lu 4:18
Joh 12:46

g Isa 29:14
Mt 11:25
Mt 13:13
Joh 3:19
Ac 28:25-28

h Mt 15:14

i Joh 15:22, 24

Blindness of the Pharisees

35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and on finding him, he said: “Are you putting faith in the Son of man?” **36** The man answered: “And who is he, sir, so that I may put faith in him?” **37** Jesus said to him: “You have seen him, and in fact, he is the one speaking with you.”^e **38** He said: “I do put faith in him, Lord.” And he did obeisance to him. **39** Jesus then said: “For this judgment I came into this world, that those not seeing might see^f and those seeing might become blind.”^g **40** Those of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things, and they said to him: “We are not blind also, are we?”^h **41** Jesus said to them: “If you were blind, you would have no sin. But now you say, ‘We see.’ Your sin remains.”ⁱ

STUDY NOTES

9:38 did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; prostrated himself to him; paid him homage.” When the Greek verb *pro-sky-ne’o* is used to refer to the rendering of worship to a god or a deity, it is translated “to worship.” (Mt 4:10; Lu 4:8) In this context, however, the healed man, who was born blind, recognized Jesus as God’s representative and did obeisance to him. He viewed him, not as God or a deity, but as the foretold “Son of man,” the Messiah with divine authority. (Joh 9:35) When he bowed down to Jesus, he apparently did so in a way similar to that of people mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. They bowed down when meeting prophets, kings, or other representatives of God. (1Sa 25:23, 24; 2Sa 14:4-7; 1Ki 1:16; 2Ki 4:36, 37) On many occasions,

the obeisance done to Jesus expressed a gratitude for divine revelation or recognition of divine favor like that expressed in earlier times.—Mt 14:32, 33; 28:5-10, 16-18; Lu 24:50-52; see also study notes on Mt 2:2; 8:2; 14:33; 15:25.

10:1 See  Gallery, image 120, Sheepfold.

10:4 they know his voice: Repeated observations regarding shepherding in the Middle East confirm that sheep have the amazing ability to distinguish between the voice of their own shepherd and that of other shepherds or strangers. As Jesus indicated, shepherds would name each sheep, even when flocks were large. (Joh 10:3, 27) So from an early age, the sheep would hear the shepherd’s voice calling out their names as he guided and trained them. In addition, shepherds would use

personalized sounds to distinguish themselves from other shepherds. They would teach the sheep to respond to different calls, or voice commands, in order to protect them from dangers or lead them to good pastures and water. Sheep can thus be said to *know* their shepherd’s unique voice, not only in the sense of identifying his voice as different from other voices but also in the sense of recognizing his tender care and protection for them individually and as a flock.

10:5 will by no means follow: The use of two Greek negatives with the verb emphatically expresses rejection of an idea, vividly emphasizing the permanence of Jesus’ words. In this context, the term **stranger** refers to someone who is not known to the sheep.

CHAP. 10

The Shepherd and the Sheepfolds

- a Mt 7:15
 b Mt 26:31
 Mr 14:27
 Joh 10:11
 c Lu 1:17
 Joh 3:28
 d Joh 10:27
 Joh 14:15
 e Ga 1:8
 Col 2:8
 Re 2:2
 f Joh 14:6
 Eph 2:18
 g Joh 21:17
 h Mt 7:15
 i Eze 34:23
 Mt 9:36
 j 1Sa 17:34, 35
 Mt 20:28
 Heb 13:20

10 “Most truly I say to you, the one who does not enter into the sheepfold through the door but climbs in by another way, that one is a thief and a plunderer.^a **2** But the one who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep.^b **3** The doorkeeper opens to this one,^c and the sheep listen to his voice.^d He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4** When he has brought all his own out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. **5** They will by no means follow a stranger but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”^e **6** Jesus spoke this comparison to them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

7 So Jesus said again: “Most truly I say to you, I am the door for the sheep.^f **8** All those who have come in place of me are thieves and plunderers; but the sheep have not listened to them. **9** I am the door; whoever enters through me will be saved, and that one will go in and out and find pasturage.^g **10** The thief does not come unless it is to steal and slay and destroy.^h I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance. **11** I am the fine shepherd;ⁱ the fine shepherd surrenders his life in behalf of the sheep.^j **12** The hired man, who is not a shepherd and to whom the sheep do not belong, sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and flees—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them— **13** because he is a hired

 STUDY NOTES

10:6 comparison: John is the only Gospel writer to use the Greek word *pa-roi-mi'a*. (Joh 10:6; 16:25, 29) It is similar in meaning to the Greek word *pa-ra-bo-le'* (“illustration” or “parable”) that is common in the other Gospels but not used at all in John’s account. (See study note on Mt 13:3.) The word *pa-roi-mi'a* may also convey the idea of a comparison or an analogy. Peter employed the same term with regard to the “proverb” of the dog that returns to its vomit and the sow that goes back to rolling in the mire. (2Pe 2:22) The same noun is used as the title of the book of Proverbs in the Greek *Sep-tuagint*.

10:11 fine: Or “excellent; good.” The Greek word *ka-jos'* may denote that which is intrinsically good and beautiful, some-

thing of fine quality. For example, the term is used of “fine fruit”; “fine soil”; “fine pearls.” (Mt 3:10; 13:8, 45) In this context, the term is used to denote that Jesus is a fine, excellent, superb shepherd.

life: Or “soul.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. Here it refers to Jesus’ life, which he as **the fine shepherd surrenders**, or voluntarily gives up, for the benefit of his sheep.—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

10:12 hired man: A flock of sheep was a valuable asset, so the owner, his children, or a relative often cared for these vulnerable creatures. (Ge 29:9; 30:31; 1Sa 16:11) An owner might also hire someone to care for the sheep. However, hired men were often motivated by the wages

they received rather than by loyalty to the owner or concern for the sheep. (Compare Job 7:1, 2.) In the Scriptures, shepherding is used in the figurative sense of caring for, protecting, and nourishing the sheeplike servants of God. (Ge 48:15) Spiritual shepherds in the Christian congregation must avoid the type of attitude displayed by the “hired man.” (Joh 10:13) Rather, they strive to imitate Jehovah’s example as the caring Shepherd of his people (Ps 23:1-6; 80:1; Jer 31:10; Eze 34:11-16) and the self-sacrificing love displayed by Jesus, “the fine shepherd.”—Joh 10:11, 14; Ac 20:28, 29; 1Pe 5:2-4.

See  Gallery, image 34, Wolf.

man and does not care for the sheep. **14** I am the fine shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me,^a **15** just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;^b and I surrender my life in behalf of the sheep.^c

16 “And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold;^d those too I must bring in, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd.^e **17** This is why the Father loves me,^f because I surrender my life,^g so that I may receive it again. **18** No man takes it away from me, but I surrender it of my own initiative. I have authority to surrender it, and I have authority to receive it again.^h This commandment I received from my Father.”

19 A division again resulted among the Jewsⁱ because of these words. **20** Many of them were saying: “He has a demon and is out of his mind.^j Why do you listen to him?” **21** Others said: “These are not the sayings of a demonized man. A demon cannot open blind people’s eyes, can it?”

CHAP. 10

- a Joh 10:27
- b Mt 11:27
- c Mt 20:28
Joh 15:13
1Jo 3:16
- d Lu 12:32
- e Eze 34:23
Eze 37:24
1Pe 5:4
- f Joh 3:35
Joh 17:23
- g Isa 53:12
Php 2:8
Heb 2:9
Heb 12:2
- h Ac 2:23, 24
- i Lu 12:51
Joh 7:12
Joh 9:16
- j Mt 11:18, 19
Joh 7:20
Joh 8:48

STUDY NOTES

10:15 life: Or “soul.”—See study note on Joh 10:11.

10:16 bring in: Or “lead.” The Greek verb *a’go* used here can mean “to bring (in)” or “to lead,” depending on the context. One Greek manuscript dated to about 200 C.E. uses a related Greek word (*sy-na’go*) that is often rendered “to gather.” As the Fine Shepherd, Jesus gathers, guides, protects, and feeds the sheep that belong to **this fold** (also referred to as “little flock” at Lu 12:32) and his **other sheep**. These become **one flock** under **one shepherd**. This word picture emphasizes the unity that Jesus’ followers would enjoy.

listen: Here the Greek word for “listen” has the sense of “giving attention to, understanding, and acting upon.”

10:17 life: Or “soul.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe’*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. Here it refers to Jesus’ life, which he was willing to **surrender**, or voluntarily give up, as a sacrifice.—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

10:22 the Festival of Dedication: The Hebrew name of this festival is Hanukkah

(*chanuk-kah’*), meaning “Inauguration; Dedication.” It was held for eight days, beginning on the 25th day of the month of Chislev, close to the winter solstice, (see study note on **wintertime** in this verse and  App. B15) to commemorate the rededication of Jerusalem’s temple in 165 B.C.E. Syrian King Antiochus IV Epiphanes had shown his contempt for Jehovah, the God of the Jews, by desecrating His temple. For example, he built an altar on top of the great altar, where formerly the daily burnt offering had been presented. On Chislev 25, 168 B.C.E., to defile Jehovah’s temple completely, Antiochus sacrificed swine on the altar and had the broth from its flesh sprinkled all over the temple. He burned the temple gates, pulled down the priests’ chambers, and carried away the golden altar, the table of showbread, and the golden lampstand. He then rededicated Jehovah’s temple to the pagan god Zeus of Olympus. Two years later, Judas Maccabaeus recaptured the city and the temple. After the temple was cleansed, the rededication took place on Chislev 25, 165 B.C.E., exactly three years after Antiochus had made his disgusting sacrifice on the altar to Zeus. The daily burnt offerings to Jehovah were then resumed. There is no

direct statement in the inspired Scriptures indicating that Jehovah gave Judas Maccabaeus victory and directed him to restore the temple. However, Jehovah had used men of foreign nations, such as Cyrus of Persia, to carry out certain purposes as regards His worship. (Isa 45:1) It is reasonable to conclude, then, that Jehovah might use a man of his dedicated people to accomplish His will. The Scriptures show that the temple had to be standing and operating in order for the prophecies regarding the Messiah, his ministry, and his sacrifice to be fulfilled. Also, the Levitical sacrifices were to be offered until the time when the Messiah would present the greater sacrifice, his life in behalf of mankind. (Da 9:27; Joh 2:17; Heb 9:11-14) Christ’s followers were not commanded to observe the Festival of Dedication. (Col 2:16, 17) However, there is no record that Jesus or his disciples condemned the celebrating of this festival.

wintertime: Referring to the last winter of Jesus’ ministry, in 32 C.E. The Festival of Dedication was in the month of Chislev, the ninth month, corresponding to November/December. In 32 C.E., the first day of the festival, Chislev 25, fell in the middle of December. (See  App. B15.) It

CHAP. 10

Jews Encounter Jesus at the Festival of Dedication

- a Ac 3:11
Ac 5:12
- b Joh 3:2
Joh 5:36
Joh 10:38
Joh 14:10
Ac 2:22
- c Joh 8:47
- d Joh 10:3
- e Joh 5:24
Joh 17:1, 2
- f Joh 6:37
Joh 18:9
- g 1Pe 1:4, 5
- h Joh 10:38
Joh 17:11
Joh 17:20-23
- i Joh 8:59
- j Le 24:16
Mt 9:2, 3
Mt 26:64, 65

22 At that time the Festival of Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was wintertime, **23** and Jesus was walking in the temple in the colonnade of Sol'o-mon.^a **24** Then the Jews surrounded him and began to say to him: "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." **25** Jesus answered them: "I told you, and yet you do not believe. The works that I am doing in my Father's name, these bear witness about me.^b **26** But you do not believe, because you are not my sheep.^c **27** My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.^d **28** I give them everlasting life,^e and they will by no means ever be destroyed, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.^f **29** What my Father has given me is something greater than all other things, and no one can snatch them out of the hand of the Father.^g **30** I and the Father are one."^h

31 Once again the Jews picked up stones to stone him.ⁱ **32** Jesus replied to them: "I displayed to you many fine works from the Father. For which of those works are you stoning me?" **33** The Jews answered him: "We are stoning you, not for a fine work, but for blasphemy;^j for you, although being a man, make yourself a god." **34** Jesus answered them: "Is it not written

STUDY NOTES

was common knowledge among the Jews that this festival occurred during wintertime. So the mention of wintertime may have been to emphasize the state of the weather as a reason for Jesus' choice of a sheltered place for his teaching, in "the colonnade of Solomon." (Joh 10:23) This location offered protection from the strong E wind in the winter.—See  App. B11.

10:23 See  Gallery, image 121, Solomon's Colonnade.

10:24 **keep us:** Or "keep our souls." The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered "soul," has to be determined by the context. In some contexts, it can be used as the equivalent of a personal pronoun. Other examples of this usage in the Christian Greek Scriptures are Mt 12:18; 26:38; and Heb 10:38, where "my *psy-khe'* (soul)" can be rendered "I."—See  Glossary, "Soul."

10:29 **What my Father has given me is something greater than all other things:** For this phrase, there are slightly different readings in Greek manuscripts and translations into other languages. Some manuscripts have a reading that can be rendered: "My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all others," but many scholars consider that the main text rendering was likely the original reading.

10:30 **one:** Or "at unity." Jesus' comment here shows that he and his Father are unified in protecting sheeplike ones and leading them to everlasting life. Such shepherding is a joint task of the Father and the Son. They are equally concerned about the sheep, not allowing anyone to snatch them out of their hand. (Joh 10:27-29; compare Eze 34:23, 24.) In John's Gospel, the unity in fellowship, will, and purpose between the Father and the Son is often mentioned. The Greek word here rendered "one" is, not in

the masculine gender (denoting "one person"), but in the neuter gender (denoting "one thing"), supporting the thought that Jesus and his Father are "one" in action and cooperation, not in person. (Joh 5:19; 14:9, 23) That Jesus referred, not to an equality of godship, but to a oneness of purpose and action is confirmed by comparing the words recorded here with his prayer recorded in John chapter 17. (Joh 10:25-29; 17:2, 9-11) This is especially evident when he prays that his followers "may be one just as we are one." (Joh 17:11) So the kind of oneness referred to in chapter 10 as well as in chapter 17 would be the same.—See study notes on Joh 17:11, 21; 1Co 3:8.

in your Law, ‘I said: “You are gods”?’^a **35** If he called ‘gods’^b those against* whom the word of God came—and yet the scripture cannot be nullified— **36** do you say to me* whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You blaspheme,’ because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’?^c **37** If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. **38** But if I am doing them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works,^d so that you may come to know and may continue knowing that the Father is in union with me and I am in union with the Father.”^e **39** So they tried again to seize him, but he escaped from their reach.^f

CHAP. 10

a Ps 82:6
1Co 8:5
b Ps 82:1
c Lu 1:35
Joh 5:18
d Joh 5:36
e Joh 14:10
Joh 17:21
f Joh 7:30
g Joh 1:28
h Joh 1:29

CHAP. 11

i Joh 11:18
j Lu 10:38-42
k Mt 26:6, 7
Mr 14:3
Joh 12:3
l Joh 11:36
m Joh 9:1-3

Many Across the Jordan Believe

40 And he went away again across the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first,^g and he stayed there. **41** And many people came to him and began saying: “John did not perform a single sign, but all the things John said about this man were true.”^h **42** And many put faith in him there.

Death of Lazarus

11 Now a man named Laz’a-rus was sick; he was from Beth’a-ny,ⁱ the village of Mary and her sister Martha.^j **2** This was the Mary who poured perfumed oil on the Lord and wiped his feet dry with her hair;^k it was her brother Laz’a-rus who was sick. **3** So his sisters sent a message to him, saying: “Lord, see! the one you have affection for is sick.”^l **4** But when Jesus heard it, he said: “This sickness is not meant to end in death, but is for the glory of God,^m so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

FOOTNOTES

10:35 *Or “to.” 10:36 *Or “of him.”

STUDY NOTES

10:34 in your Law: Here referring to the entire Hebrew Scriptures, not just to the Law of Moses. The quote that follows is taken from Ps 82:6. “Law” is used in the same sense at Joh 12:34; 15:25.

gods: Or “godlike ones.” Jesus here quotes from Ps 82:6, where the Hebrew word *’elo-him* (gods) is used of men, human judges in Israel. They were “gods” in their capacity as representatives of

and spokesmen for God. Similarly, Moses was told that he was to “serve as God” to Aaron and to Pharaoh.—Ex 4:16, ftn; 7:1, ftn.

10:38 in union with: Lit., “in.” In this context, the Greek preposition *en* is used to show close association. This use of the preposition is especially noteworthy in the writings of John and Paul. (Ga 1:22; 3:28; Eph 2:13, 15; 6:1) At 1Jo 3:24 and 4:13, 15, it describes a Christian’s relationship to God. Further supporting the rendering “in union with” is the way the preposition is used at Joh 17:20-23, where it occurs five times.

11:1 Lazarus: See study note on Lu 16:20.

Bethany: See study note on Mt 21:17.

11:8 Judeans: Or “Jews.” Though the Greek word can properly be rendered “Jews” here (as at Joh 10:31, 33), Jesus had just told his disciples: “Let us go into Judea again.” Therefore, the rendering “Judeans” is used to show that it was the Jews from Judea who had tried to stone him.—Joh 11:7.

11:11 has fallen asleep: In the Bible, death is often likened to sleep. (Ps 13:3; Mr 5:39; Ac 7:60; 1Co 7:39; 15:51; 1Th 4:13) Jesus was going to bring Lazarus back to life. Therefore, he may have said

CHAP. 11

- a Joh 1:38
 b Joh 8:59
 Joh 10:31
 c Joh 9:4
 Joh 12:35
 d Ps 13:3
 Mt 9:24
 Ac 7:59, 60
 1Co 15:6
 e Ec 9:5
 f Joh 11:8

5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Laz'a-rus. **6** However, when he heard that Laz'a-rus was sick, he actually remained in the place where he was for two more days. **7** Then after this he said to the disciples: "Let us go into Ju-de'a again." **8** The disciples said to him: "Rabbi,^a just lately the Ju-de'ans were seeking to stone you,^b and are you going there again?" **9** Jesus answered: "There are 12 hours of daylight, are there not?^c If anyone walks in daylight, he does not stumble into anything, because he sees the light of this world. **10** But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

11 After he said these things, he added: "Laz'a-rus our friend has fallen asleep,^d but I am traveling there to awaken him." **12** The disciples then said to him: "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will get well."^e **13** Jesus, however, had spoken about his death. But they imagined he was speaking about taking rest in sleep. **14** Then Jesus said to them plainly: "Laz'a-rus has died,^e **15** and I rejoice for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." **16** So Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples: "Let us also go, so that we may die with him."^f

Jesus Comforts Martha and Mary

17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Laz'a-rus had already been in the tomb for four days. **18** Now Beth'a-ny was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. **19** And many of the Jews had

FOOTNOTES

11:12 *Or "he will be saved."

STUDY NOTES

this to demonstrate that just as people can be awakened from a deep sleep, they can be brought back from death. The power to resurrect Lazarus came from Jesus' Father, "who makes the dead alive and calls the things that are not as though they are."—Ro 4:17; see study notes on Mr 5:39; Ac 7:60.

11:16 **Thomas:** This Greek name comes from an Aramaic word meaning "Twin." The apostle Thomas was known by another Greek name, *Di'dy-mos* (in some English Bibles rendered "Didymus"), which also means **Twin**.

11:17 **tomb:** Or "memorial tomb."—See  Glossary, "Memorial tomb."

already been in the tomb for four days: When Lazarus fell seriously ill, his sisters sent word to Jesus. (Joh 11:1-3) Jesus was a journey of two days or so from Bethany, and Lazarus apparently died about the time that the news reached Jesus. (Joh 10:40) Jesus "remained in the place where he was for two more days," and then he left for Bethany. (Joh 11:6, 7) By waiting for two days and then traveling for two days, he arrived at the tomb four days after Lazarus' death. Jesus had already performed at least two resurrections—one right after the death of the person and the other likely sometime later on the day of death. (Lu 7:11-17; 8:49-55; compare Mt 11:5.) But he had not yet

raised up someone who had been dead for four days and whose body had already begun to decompose. (Joh 11:39) There was an erroneous belief among the Jews that the soul remained with a dead body for three days, and then it left. Even those holding such a belief would be convinced that Jesus had performed an exceptional miracle in the case of Lazarus.—Joh 12:9, 10, 17.

11:18 **about two miles:** About 3 km. Lit., "about 15 stadia." The Greek word *sta'di-on* (singular) denotes a linear measurement that equaled 185 m (606.95 ft), or one eighth of a Roman mile.—See  Glossary, "Mile," and  App. B14.

come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. **20** When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary^a kept sitting at home. **21** Martha then said to Jesus: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. **22** Yet even now I know that whatever you ask God for, God will give you.” **23** Jesus said to her: “Your brother will rise.” **24** Martha said to him: “I know he will rise in the resurrection^b on the last day.” **25** Jesus said to her: “I am the resurrection and the life.^c The one who exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life; **26** and everyone who is living and exercises faith in me will never die at all.^d Do you believe this?” **27** She said to him: “Yes, Lord, I have believed that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.” **28** When she had said this, she went off and called Mary her sister, saying privately: “The Teacher^e is here and is calling you.” **29** On hearing this, she got up quickly and went to him.

30 Jesus had not yet come into the village, but he was still in the place where Martha had met him. **31** When the Jews who were with Mary in the house consoling her saw her get up quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb^f to weep there. **32** When Mary arrived where Jesus was and caught sight of him, she fell at his feet

CHAP. 11

- a Lu 10:38, 39
 b Isa 26:19
 Joh 5:28, 29
 Ac 24:15
 Heb 11:35
 Re 20:12
 c Joh 6:40, 44
 Joh 14:6
 Re 1:17, 18
 d Joh 8:51
 e Mt 23:8
 Joh 13:13
 f Joh 11:17

 STUDY NOTES

11:24 I know he will rise: Martha thought that Jesus was talking about the future resurrection, on the last day. (See study note on Joh 6:39.) Her faith in that teaching was remarkable. Some religious leaders of her day, called Sadducees, denied that there would be a resurrection, though it is a clear teaching in the inspired Scriptures. (Da 12:13; Mr 12:18) On the other hand, the Pharisees believed in the immortality of the soul. Martha knew, however, that Jesus taught the resurrection hope and had even performed resurrections, although not of anyone who had been dead as long as Lazarus had been.

11:25 I am the resurrection and the life: Jesus' own death and resurrection opened the way for the dead to return to life. After Jesus was resurrected, Jehovah granted him the power not only to resurrect the dead but also to impart eternal life. (See study note on Joh 5:26.)

At Re 1:18, Jesus calls himself “the living one,” who has “the keys of death and of the Grave.” Therefore, Jesus is the hope of the living and the dead. He promised to open up the tombs and give the dead life, either in the heavens as his corulers or on his new earth ruled by his heavenly government.—Joh 5:28, 29.

11:26 will never die at all: When Jesus spoke about not dying, or of living forever, he clearly did not mean that his listeners back then would never experience death. Jesus was making the point that faith in him could lead to everlasting life. That conclusion is supported by what Jesus said earlier, as recorded in John chapter 6, where he connects exercising faith with gaining everlasting life.—Joh 6:39-44, 54.

11:31, 38 tomb: Or “memorial tomb.” —See  Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

11:33 weeping: Or “crying.” The Greek word for “weeping” often refers to weep-

ing audibly. The same verb is used of Jesus on the occasion when he foretold the coming destruction of Jerusalem.—Lu 19:41.

within himself: Lit., “in the spirit.” The Greek word *pneuma* is apparently here used in the sense of the impelling force that issues from a person's figurative heart and causes him to say and do things in a certain way.—See  Glossary, “Spirit.”

groaned . . . and became troubled: The combination of these two original-language words describes Jesus' very intense emotions on this occasion. The Greek verb rendered “groaned” (*em-bri-ma'oi-mai*) generally denotes strong feeling, but in this context it indicates that Jesus was so deeply moved that he groaned. The Greek for “became troubled” (*ta-ras'oi*) literally refers to agitation. According to one scholar, in this context it means “to cause one inward commotion; to affect with great pain or

CHAP. 11

- a Lu 19:41
Heb 4:15
- b Joh 9:6, 7
- c Joh 9:1-3
Joh 11:4
- d Mt 14:19
Mr 7:34, 35
- e Joh 12:28-30
Joh 17:8
- f Lu 7:12
Lu 7:14

and said to him: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” **33** When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping, he groaned within himself and became troubled. **34** He said: “Where have you laid him?” They said to him: “Lord, come and see.” **35** Jesus gave way to tears.^a **36** At that the Jews began to say: “See, what affection he had for him!” **37** But some of them said: “Could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind man^b prevent this one from dying?”

Jesus Resurrects Lazarus

38 Then Jesus, after groaning again within himself, came to the tomb. It was, in fact, a cave, and a stone was lying against it. **39** Jesus said: “Take the stone away.” Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to him: “Lord, by now he must smell, for it has been four days.” **40** Jesus said to her: “Did I not tell you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?”^c **41** So they took the stone away. Then Jesus raised his eyes heavenward^d and said: “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. **42** True, I knew that you always hear me; but I spoke on account of the crowd standing around, so that they may believe that you sent me.”^e **43** When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice: “Laz’a-rus, come out!”^f **44** The man who had been dead came out with his feet and hands bound with wrappings, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them: “Free him and let him go.”

STUDY NOTES

sorrow.” The same verb is used at Joh 13:21 to describe Jesus’ reaction to the thought of being betrayed by Judas.—See study note on Joh 11:35.

11:35 gave way to tears: The word used here (*da-kry’o*) is the verb form of the Greek noun for “tears” that is used in such scriptures as Lu 7:38; Ac 20:19, 31; Heb 5:7; Re 7:17; 21:4. The focus seems to be more on the tears shed than on audible weeping. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, this Greek verb is used only here, and it is different from the one used at Joh 11:33 (see study note) to describe the weeping of Mary and the Jews. Jesus knew that he was going to resurrect Lazarus, but it saddened him greatly to see his beloved friends stricken with grief. Moved by deep love and compassion for his

friends, he shed tears openly. This account makes it clear that Jesus has fellow feeling for those who lose loved ones to Adamic death.

11:39 by now he must smell: Martha’s comment shows that Jewish custom did not involve an elaborate embalming process designed to preserve the body for a long time. She would not have expected the body to smell if Lazarus had actually been embalmed. Lazarus’ feet and hands were bound with wrappings and “his face was wrapped with a cloth,” but most likely not with the intention of preserving his body from decay.—Joh 11:44.

it has been four days: Lit., “it is fourth.” The Greek word is simply an ordinal number, with “day” being understood from the context. Apparently three full days plus a portion of a fourth day had passed.

11:43 Lazarus: See study note on Lu 16:20.

11:44 his face was wrapped with a cloth: The Jews had the custom of preparing bodies for burial by binding them with cloths of clean linen along with spices. This, however, was not an embalming process such as practiced by the Egyptians. (Ge 50:3; Mt 27:59; Mr 16:1; Joh 19:39, 40) When Lazarus was resurrected and came out of the tomb, his face was still wrapped with the cloth that had been placed over his head. The Greek word *sou-da’ri-on*, here rendered “cloth,” refers to a small piece of material used as a towel, napkin, or facecloth. The same Greek word is used at Joh 20:7 about “the cloth that had been on [Jesus’] head.”

See  Gallery, image 4, Jesus Resurrects Lazarus.

Plot to Kill Jesus

CHAP. 11

45 Therefore, many of the Jews who had come to Mary and who saw what he did put faith in him,^a **46** but some of them went off to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. **47** So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the Sanhedrin together and said: “What are we to do, for this man performs many signs?”^b **48** If we let him go on this way, they will all put faith in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.” **49** But one of them, Caiaphas,^c who was high priest that year, said to them: “You do not know anything at all, **50** and you have not reasoned that it is to your benefit for one man to die in behalf of the people rather than for the whole nation to be destroyed.”^d **51** He did not say this, however, of his own originality, but because he was high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was to die for the nation, **52** and not only for the nation but also to gather together into one the children of God who were scattered about.^e **53** So from that day on they conspired to kill him.^f

54 Therefore, Jesus no longer walked about publicly among the Jews, but he departed from there to the region near the wilderness,^g to a city called Ephraim,^h and he stayed there with the disciples. **55** Now the Passoverⁱ of the Jews was near, and many people from the countryside went up to Jerusalem before the Passover to cleanse themselves ceremonially. **56** They were looking for Jesus, and they were saying to one another as they stood around in the temple: “What is your opinion?”

- a Joh 2:23
Joh 10:42
Joh 12:10, 11
b Lu 16:31
Joh 12:37
Ac 4:15, 16
c Mt 26:3
Lu 3:2
Ac 4:5, 6
d Joh 18:14
e Ga 3:28
Eph 3:6
f Mt 26:4
Joh 5:18
g Mt 10:23
Joh 7:1
h 2Sa 13:23
2Ch 13:19
i Ex 12:14
De 16:1
Joh 2:13
Joh 5:1
Joh 6:4
Joh 12:1

STUDY NOTES

11:47 See  Gallery, image 91, The Sanhedrin.

11:48 our place: That is, our place of worship, or holy place, probably referring to the temple in Jerusalem.—Compare Ac 6:13, 14.

11:49 high priest: When Israel functioned as an independent nation, the high priest held his office for life. (Nu 35:25) However, during the Roman occupation of Israel, the rulers assigned by Rome had authority to appoint and to depose the high priest. (See  Glossary, “High priest.”) **Caiaphas**, appointed by the Romans, was a skillful diplomat who held his office longer than any of his immediate predecessors. He was appointed about

18 C.E. and remained in office until about 36 C.E. By saying that Caiaphas was high priest **that year**, that is, in 33 C.E., John apparently meant that Caiaphas’ term as high priest included the memorable year in which Jesus was executed.—See  App. B12 for the possible location of Caiaphas’ house.

11:54 Ephraim: A city generally considered to be the same as the Ephraim captured by Abijah the king of Judah from Jeroboam the king of Israel. (2Ch 13:19) The site commonly suggested for this city is the village of et-Taiyiba (also spelled et-Taiyibeh), about 6 km (3.5 mi) ENE of Bethel and 3 km (2 mi) ESE of the suggested location of Baal-hazor. (2Sa 13:23) It is located **near the wilderness**, overlooking the desert plains of Jericho and

the Dead Sea to the SE. According to the Jewish historian Josephus, the Roman General Vespasian conquered Ephraim during his march against Jerusalem.—*The Jewish War*, IV, 551 (ix, 9).

11:55 the Passover: That is, Passover 33 C.E., apparently the fourth Passover mentioned in the Gospel of John.—See study notes on Joh 2:13; 5:1; 6:4.

12:1 Six days before the Passover: Jesus must have arrived about the time when the Sabbath began on Nisan 8 (at sunset). Following the Sabbath (that is, at the beginning of Nisan 9), he enjoyed an evening meal in the home of Simon the leper, along with Martha, Mary, and Lazarus.—Joh 12:2-11; see study note on Mt 26:6 and  App. A7 and B12.

CHAP. 12

a Joh 11:18

b Joh 11:1
Joh 11:43

c Lu 10:40

d Lu 7:37, 38

e Mt 26:6-10
Mr 14:3-6f Mt 26:47
Mr 14:10
Lu 22:48
Joh 13:29
Ac 1:16g Mt 26:12
Mr 14:8
Joh 19:40

h De 15:11

i Mt 26:11
Mr 14:7

j Joh 11:43, 44

k Lu 16:31

l Joh 7:31
Joh 11:44, 45

That he will not come to the festival at all?" **57** But the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone got to know where Jesus was, he should report it, so that they could seize* him.

Mary Pours Oil on Jesus' Feet

12 Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Beth'a-ny,^a where Laz'a-rus^b was, whom Jesus had raised up from the dead. **2** So they spread an evening meal for him there, and Martha was serving them,^c but Laz'a-rus was one of those dining* with him. **3** Then Mary took a pound of perfumed oil, genuine nard, very costly, and she poured it on the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet dry with her hair.^d The house became filled with the scent of the perfumed oil.^e **4** But Judas Is-car'i-ot,^f one of his disciples, who was about to betray him, said: **5** "Why was this perfumed oil not sold for 300 de-nar'i-i and given to the poor?" **6** He said this, though, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief and had the money box and used to steal the money put in it. **7** Then Jesus said: "Let her alone, so that she may keep this observance in view of the day of my burial.^g **8** For you always have the poor with you,^h but you will not always have me."ⁱ

9 Meanwhile, a large crowd of Jews got to know that he was there, and they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Laz'a-rus, whom he had raised up from the dead.^j **10** The chief priests now conspired to kill Laz'a-rus also,^k **11** since it was because of him that many of the Jews were going there and putting faith in Jesus.^l

FOOTNOTES

11:57 *Or "arrest." **12:2** *Or "reclining at the table."

STUDY NOTES

12:1 Bethany: See study note on Mt 21:17.

Lazarus: See study note on Lu 16:20.

12:2 evening meal: That is, the meal held at the home of Simon the leper after sundown, at the beginning of Nisan 9.—Mt 26:6; Mr 14:3.

12:3 Mary: That is, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. (Joh 11:1, 2) In the parallel accounts at Mt 26:7 and Mr 14:3, she is referred to as "a woman."

pound: The Greek term *li'tra* is usually equated with the Roman pound (Latin, *libra*). Thus, it was about 327 g (11.5 oz).—See  App. B14.

perfumed oil, . . . very costly: John's account specifies that Judas Iscariot said that the oil could be sold for "300 denarii." (Joh 12:5) That sum represented about a year's wages for an ordinary laborer. The source of such perfumed oil is generally thought to be an aromatic plant (*Nardostachys jatamansi*) found in the Himalayas. Nard was often adulterated, even counterfeited, but both Mark and John say that this oil was **genuine nard**.—Mr 14:3; see  Glossary, "Nard."

she poured it on the feet of Jesus: See study note on Mr 14:3.

12:4 who was about to betray him:

The combination of the two Greek verbs used here (one rendered "was about to" and one rendered "betray"), both in the present tense, allows for the idea that Judas' betrayal of Jesus was, not impulsive, but premeditated. The statement made at Joh 6:64 supports this understanding.—See study note on Joh 6:64.

12:5 300 denarii: See study note on Mr 14:5.

12:7 this observance in view of . . . my burial: See study note on Mt 26:12.

12:9 there: That is, at Bethany.—Joh 12:1.

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

12 The next day the large crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. **13** So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him,^a and they began to shout: “Save, we pray you! Blessed is the one who comes in Jehovah’s name,^b the King of Israel!”^c **14** When Jesus found a young donkey, he sat on it,^d just as it is written: **15** “Have no fear, daughter of Zion. Look! Your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”^e **16** These things his disciples did not understand at first,^f but when Jesus was glorified,^g they recalled that these things were written about him and that they did these things to him.^h

17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Laz’arus out of the tombⁱ and raised him up from the dead kept bearing witness.^j **18** This is also why the crowd went to meet him, because they heard he had performed this sign. **19** So the Pharisees said among themselves: “You see that you are not getting anywhere. Look! The whole world has gone after him.”^k

Jesus Foretells His Imminent Death

20 Now there were some Greeks among those who had come to worship at the festival. **21** So these approached Philip,^l who was from Beth-sa’i-da of Gal’i-lee, and they began to request

CHAP. 12

- a Re 7:9
- b Ps 118:25, 26
- c Mt 21:8, 9
Mr 11:8, 9
Joh 1:49
- d Mt 21:7
Mr 11:7
Lu 19:35
- e 1Ki 1:33, 34
Isa 62:11
Zec 9:9
Mt 21:5
- f Lu 18:34
- g Joh 7:39
- h Lu 24:45
Joh 14:26
- i Joh 11:1
Joh 11:43
- j Mt 21:15
Lu 19:37
- k Lu 19:39
Joh 11:48
- l Joh 1:44

STUDY NOTES

12:12 next day: That is, the morning of Nisan 9, 33 C.E. Nisan 9 started at sunset the evening before. On that evening, Jesus enjoyed a meal in the home of Simon the leper.—See study note on Joh 12:1 and  App. B12.

the festival: As shown by the context, the festival referred to is the Passover. (Joh 11:55; 12:1; 13:1) In Jesus’ time, the Passover, celebrated on Nisan 14, and the Festival of the Unleavened Bread, which lasted from Nisan 15 to 21 (Le 23:5, 6; Nu 28:16, 17; see  App. B15), had become so closely connected that all eight days, from Nisan 14 to 21, were treated as one festival. (Lu 22:1) Josephus speaks of “a feast for eight days, which is called the feast of unleavened bread.”—See  App. B12.

12:13 Save, we pray you: See study note on Mt 21:9.

Jehovah’s: In this quote from Ps 118:25, 26, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. A5 and C.

See  Gallery, image 122, Palm Tree.

12:14 just as it is written: The quote that follows at Joh 12:15 is taken from Zec 9:9.

See  Gallery, image 68, Colt, or Young Donkey.

12:15 daughter of Zion: See study note on Mt 21:5.

a donkey’s colt: That is, a young donkey. The accounts of Mark (11:2), Luke (19:35), and John mention only one animal, the colt, when describing this event. Matthew’s account (21:2-7) adds the detail that the parent donkey was also present.—See study notes on Mt 21:2, 5.

12:17 tomb: Or “memorial tomb.”—See  Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

12:20 Greeks: There were many Greek colonies in Palestine in the first century, but in this context, the term apparently refers to Greek proselytes, or converts, to the Jewish religion. Note that at Joh 12:32, Jesus prophetically said: “I . . . will draw all sorts of men to myself.”

12:25 his life: Or “his soul.”—See  Glossary, “Soul.”

12:26 minister to: Or “serve.” The Greek noun *di-a’ko-nos*, rendered **minister** (or, “servant”) in this same verse, is related to the Greek verb *di-a-ko-ne’o* used here. The Bible often uses the Greek word *di-a’ko-nos* to refer to one who does not let up in humbly rendering service in behalf of others.—See study note on Mt 20:26.

12:27 I am: Or “my soul is.” The Greek word *psy-khe’*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to a person’s entire being. So “my soul” can be rendered “my

CHAP. 12

- a Joh 1:40, 44
 b Joh 13:31, 32
 Joh 17:1
 c Mt 16:21
 Ro 14:9
 1Co 15:36
 d Re 12:11
 e Mt 10:28
 Mt 16:25
 Mr 8:35
 Lu 9:24
 f Joh 14:3
 Joh 17:24
 1Th 4:17
 g Mt 26:38
 Mr 14:34
 h Lu 12:50
 Lu 22:41, 42
 Heb 5:7
 i Mt 3:17
 Mt 17:5
 Mr 1:11
 Mr 9:7
 Lu 3:22
 Lu 9:35
 2Pe 1:17
 j Joh 17:1
 k Joh 11:42
 l Joh 14:30
 Joh 16:11
 Ac 26:17, 18
 2Co 4:3, 4
 Eph 2:1, 2
 1Jo 5:19
 m Lu 10:18
 Re 12:9

him, saying: “Sir, we want to see Jesus.” **22** Philip came and told Andrew.^a Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus.

23 But Jesus answered them: “The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified.^b **24** Most truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just one grain; but if it dies,^c it then bears much fruit. **25** Whoever is fond of his life destroys it, but whoever hates his life^d in this world will safeguard it for everlasting life.^e **26** If anyone would minister to me, let him follow me, and where I am, there my minister will be also.^f If anyone would minister to me, the Father will honor him. **27** Now I am troubled,^g and what should I say? Father, save me out of this hour.^h Nevertheless, this is why I have come to this hour. **28** Father, glorify your name.” Then a voiceⁱ came out of heaven: “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.”^j

29 The crowd that was standing there heard it and began to say that it had thundered. Others said: “An angel has spoken to him.” **30** Jesus answered: “This voice has occurred, not for my sake, but for your sakes.^k **31** Now there is a judging of this world; now the ruler of this world^l will be cast out.^m **32** And yet I, if I am lifted up from the earth,ⁿ will draw all sorts of men to myself.”^o **33** This he was really saying to indicate what sort of death he was about to die.^p **34** Then the crowd answered

n Joh 3:14; Joh 8:28; o Ro 5:18; Heb 2:9; p Mt 20:18, 19; Ac 5:30.

STUDY NOTES

whole being” or simply “I.”—See **M** Glossary, “Soul.”

12:28 a voice: The third of three instances in the Gospel accounts where Jehovah is reported as speaking directly to humans. The first instance occurred at Jesus’ baptism in 29 C.E. and is recorded at Mt 3:16, 17; Mr 1:11; and Lu 3:22. The second instance was in connection with Jesus’ transfiguration in 32 C.E. and is recorded at Mt 17:5; Mr 9:7; and Lu 9:35. The third instance, mentioned only in the Gospel of John, happened in 33 C.E., shortly before Jesus’ last Passover. Jehovah responded to Jesus’ request that his Father glorify His own name.

12:31 the ruler of this world: A similar expression occurs at Joh 14:30 and 16:11 and refers to Satan the Devil. In this context, the term “world” (Greek, *kosmos*)

refers to human society that is alienated from God and whose behavior is out of harmony with his will. God did not produce this unrighteous world; it is “lying in the power of the wicked one.” (1Jo 5:19) Satan and his “wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places” act as the invisible “world rulers [form of the Greek word *ko-smo-kra’tor*] of this darkness.”—Eph 6:11, 12.

will be cast out: Jesus’ prophetic words point to a future time when Satan will be expelled from his position as **ruler of this world**.

12:32 I am lifted up from the earth: Apparently referring to Jesus’ execution on a stake, as indicated by the verse that follows.

all sorts of men: Or “people of all sorts.” Jesus declares that he will draw people of all backgrounds to himself, regardless of

nationality, race, or economic status. (Ac 10:34, 35; Re 7:9, 10; see study note on Joh 6:44.) It is worth noting that on this occasion, “some Greeks” worshipping at the temple wanted to see Jesus. (See study note on Joh 12:20.) Many translations render the Greek word *pas* (“everyone; all [people]”) in a way that indicates that every human will ultimately be drawn to Jesus. This idea, however, would not agree with the rest of the inspired Scriptures. (Ps 145:20; Mt 7:13; Lu 2:34; 2Th 1:9) While the Greek word literally means “all; everyone” (Ro 5:12), Mt 5:11 and Ac 10:12 clearly show that it can mean “every sort” or “all sorts”; in these verses many translations use renderings such as “every sort of; all kinds of.”—Joh 1:7; 1Ti 2:4.

him: “We heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever.^a How can you say that the Son of man must be lifted up?^b Who is this Son of man?” **35** So Jesus said to them: “The light will be among you a little while longer.^c Walk while you still have the light, so that darkness does not overpower you; whoever walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.^d **36** While you have the light, exercise faith in the light, so that you may become sons of light.”^e

Jews’ Lack of Faith Fulfills Prophecy

Jesus said these things and went off and hid from them. **37** Although he had performed so many signs before them, they were not putting faith in him, **38** so that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, who said: “Jehovah, who has put faith in the thing heard from us?^{*f} And as for the arm of Jehovah, to whom has it been revealed?”^g **39** The reason why they were not able to believe is that again Isaiah said: **40** “He has blinded their eyes and has made their hearts hard, so that they would not see with their eyes and understand with their hearts and turn around and I heal them.”^h **41** Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory, and he spoke about him.ⁱ **42** All the same, many even of the rulers actually put faith in him,^j but they would not acknowledge him because of the Pharisees, so that they would not be expelled from the synagogue;^k **43** for they loved the glory of men even more than the glory of God.^{*l}

CHAP. 12

a Ps 89:35, 36
Ps 110:4
Isa 9:7

b Joh 3:14

c Joh 1:9

d Joh 11:10

e Eph 5:8

f Ro 10:16

g Isa 53:1

h Isa 6:10

Mt 13:14

Mr 4:11, 12

Ac 28:27

i Isa 6:1

Isa 6:8

j Joh 19:38

k Joh 7:13

Joh 9:22

Joh 16:2

l Joh 5:44

FOOTNOTES

12:38 *Or “in our report (message)?”

12:43 *Or “the praise (approval) from humans even more than the praise (approval) from God.”

STUDY NOTES

12:38 **Jehovah:** In this quote from Isa 53:1, the original Hebrew text uses the divine name only once, in the expression “the arm of Jehovah.” John, however, apparently quotes from the *Septuagint* translation of Isaiah’s prophecy, where the Greek text begins with the form of the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) used for direct address. (See Ro 10:16, where Isa 53:1 is also quoted.) The translators may have inserted the divine name in this first occurrence in order to clarify to the reader that the prophet addresses his questions

to God. As previously noted, *Ky’ri-os* in later copies of the *Septuagint* is often used as a substitute for the Tetragrammaton in the original Hebrew text (as is the case in the second occurrence of *Ky’ri-os* in this quote). Therefore, the divine name has here been used in the main text. A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J12, 14, 16-18, 22, 23 in  App. C4) use the divine name at its first occurrence at Joh 12:38.

arm of Jehovah: In this quote from Isa 53:1, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs once in the original Hebrew text. (See study note on the first occurrence of **Jehovah** in this verse and  App. A5 and C.) The Hebrew and Greek terms for **arm** are often used figuratively in the Bible to represent the ability to ex-

ert strength or power. Through the signs and miracles that Jesus performed, Jehovah revealed His “arm,” His might and ability to exercise power.

12:41 **Isaiah . . . saw his glory:** When Isaiah saw a vision of the heavenly courts where Jehovah was sitting on his lofty throne, Jehovah asked Isaiah: “Who will go for us?” (Isa 6:1, 8-10) The use of the plural pronoun “us” indicates that at least one other person was with God in this vision. So it is reasonable to conclude that when John wrote that Isaiah “saw his glory,” this refers to Jesus’ prehuman glory alongside Jehovah. (Joh 1:14) This harmonizes with such scriptures as Ge 1:26, where God said: “Let us make man in our image.” (See also Pr 8:30, 31; Joh 1:1-3; Col 1:15, 16.) John adds that Isaiah **spoke about him**, that is, the Christ, because a

CHAP. 12

- a Mt 10:40
Mr 9:37
1Pe 1:21
- b Joh 14:9
- c Joh 3:19
Joh 8:12
Joh 9:5
- d Joh 12:35
- e Joh 3:16, 17
- f De 18:18, 19
- g Joh 5:19
Joh 8:38
Joh 14:10
- h Joh 6:40
- i Joh 3:34

CHAP. 13

- j Mt 26:2
Joh 12:23
Joh 17:1
- k Joh 16:28
Joh 17:11
- l Joh 15:9
Ga 2:20
Eph 5:2
1Jo 3:16
- m Mt 10:2, 4
Lu 22:3, 4
Joh 13:27
- n Mt 26:14-16
Mt 26:24
Mr 14:10, 11
- o Joh 16:28

Jesus Came to Save the World

44 However, Jesus called out and said: “Whoever puts faith in me puts faith not only in me but also in him who sent me;^a **45** and whoever sees me sees also the One who sent me.^b **46** I have come as a light into the world,^c so that everyone putting faith in me may not remain in the darkness.^d **47** But if anyone hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I came, not to judge the world, but to save the world.^e **48** Whoever disregards me and does not receive my sayings has one to judge him. The word that I have spoken is what will judge him on the last day.^f **49** For I have not spoken of my own initiative, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak.^g **50** And I know that his commandment means* everlasting life.^h So whatever I speak, I speak just as the Father has told me.”ⁱ

Jesus Washes His Disciples’ Feet

13 Now because he knew before the festival of the Passover that his hour had come^j for him to leave this world and go to the Father,^k Jesus, having loved his own who were in the world, loved them to the end.^l **2** The evening meal was going on,^m and the Devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Is-car’i-ot,^m the son of Simon, to betray him.ⁿ **3** So Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he came from God and was going to God,^o **4** got up from the evening meal and laid aside his outer garments. And taking a

FOOTNOTES

12:50 *Or “is.” **13:2** *Or possibly, “was being prepared.”

STUDY NOTES

large portion of Isaiah’s writings focuses on the foretold Messiah.

12:42 **the rulers:** Here the Greek word for “rulers” apparently refers to members of the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin. The term is used at Joh 3:1 with reference to Nicodemus, a member of that court.—See study note on Joh 3:1.

expelled from the synagogue: See study note on Joh 9:22.

12:47 **judge:** Or “condemn.”—See study note on Joh 3:17.

13:1 **the festival of the Passover:** That is, Passover of 33 C.E.—See study note on Joh 2:13.

having loved: Love becomes a prominent theme throughout the remaining chapters of John’s Gospel. In the first 12 chapters of John’s account, the Greek verb *a-ga-pa’o* (to love) and the noun *a-ga’pe* (love) are used a combined total of eight times. But in John chapters 13 to 21, these terms appear a total of 36 times. In fact, Jesus’ deep love for his Father and for his disciples is nowhere made more apparent than in the closing chapters of John’s Gospel. For instance, all four Gospel accounts reveal Jesus’ love for Jehovah, but only John records that Jesus explicitly stated: “I love the Father.” (Joh 14:31) And it is during Jesus’ parting

counsel to his disciples that he not only states that Jehovah loves him but also explains why.—Joh 15:9, 10.

loved them to the end: The Greek phrase used here likely refers to the end of Jesus’ life as a human. However, others understand the Greek expression in this context to mean “loved them completely (fully); loved them continually.”

towel, he wrapped it around his waist.^a **5** After that he put water into a basin and started to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them off with the towel that was wrapped around him.^b

6 Then he came to Simon Peter. He said to him: “Lord, are you washing my feet?” **7** Jesus answered him: “What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will understand after these things.” **8** Peter said to him: “You will certainly never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him: “Unless I wash you,^c you have no share with me.” **9** Simon Peter said to him: “Lord, wash not only my feet but also my hands and my head.” **10** Jesus said to him: “Whoever has bathed does not need to have more than his feet washed, but is completely clean.^d And you men are clean, but not all of you.” **11** For he knew the man who was betraying him.^e This is why he said: “Not all of you are clean.”

12 When, now, he had washed their feet and had put his outer garments on, he again reclined at the table and said to them: “Do you understand what I have done to you? **13** You address me as ‘Teacher’^f and ‘Lord,’ and you are correct, for I am such.^g **14** Therefore, if I, the Lord and Teacher, washed your feet,^h you also should wash the feet of one another.ⁱ **15** For I set the pattern for you, that just as I did to you, you should also do.^j

CHAP. 13

- a Php 2:5-7
 b Ge 18:3, 4
 Lu 7:44
 c 1Co 6:11
 Eph 5:25, 26
 Tit 3:5
 Heb 10:22
 d 2Co 7:1
 e Joh 6:64
 f Joh 1:38
 g Mt 23:8
 h Lu 22:27
 i Mt 20:26, 27
 Lu 9:48
 Lu 22:26
 Ro 12:10
 Ga 5:13
 1Pe 5:5
 j Php 2:5
 1Pe 2:21
 1Jo 2:6

STUDY NOTES

13:4 he wrapped it around his waist:

Or “he girded himself.” Usually, it was a slave’s job to wash and dry the feet of others. (Joh 13:12-17) By performing this menial task, Jesus taught his disciples a powerful lesson about the attitude Jehovah requires his servants to display. The apostle Peter, present that night, may have had this event in mind when he later admonished fellow believers: “All of you clothe [or, “gird”] yourselves with humility.”—1Pe 5:5; ftn.

13:5 wash the feet of the disciples:

In ancient Israel, sandals were the most common footwear. They were little more than a sole strapped to the foot and ankle, so a traveler’s feet would inevitably get dirty from the dusty or muddy roads and fields. Therefore, it was customary for a person to remove his sandals upon entering a home, and a hospitable host would make sure that his guest’s feet were washed. The Bible contains a number of references to this practice. (Ge

18:4, 5; 24:32; 1Sa 25:41; Lu 7:37, 38, 44) When Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, he used this custom to give them an object lesson in humility and in serving one another.

that was wrapped around him: Or “with which he was girded.”—See study note on Joh 13:4.

13:10 you men are clean: The disciples had just had their feet washed by the Master and were **completely clean** physically. Yet, one of them was spiritually unclean. Like the deceitful Pharisees who cleansed the outside of a cup or dish but left the inside dirty, Judas Iscariot was physically clean but spiritually unclean.—Mt 23:25, 26.

13:11 he knew: Since Jesus could discern the thinking and attitudes of those around him, it is clear that Judas did not have a treasonous attitude when he was selected to be an apostle. (Mt 9:4; Mr 2:8; Joh 2:24, 25) However, when Judas later began to develop a bad attitude, Jesus detected it and was able to identify his

betrayal. Despite knowing that Judas would betray him, Jesus still washed the feet of this traitor.—See study notes on Joh 6:64; 6:70.

13:14 should: Or “are under obligation to.” The Greek verb used here is often used in a financial sense, basically meaning “to be indebted to someone; to owe something to someone.” (Mt 18:28, 30, 34; Lu 16:5, 7) Here and in other contexts, it is used in the broader sense of being obligated to or under obligation to do something.—1Jo 3:16; 4:11; 3Jo 8.

wash the feet of one another: The context of this statement shows that Jesus is here teaching his faithful followers to show humble concern not only for their brothers’ physical needs but also for their spiritual needs. He had just given his disciples a lesson in humility and service to one another when he, their Master, washed their feet. Then he said: “You men are clean, but not all of you,” indicating that he was not just talking about a literal washing of feet. (Joh 13:10) At

CHAP. 13

- a Mt 10:24
 b Mt 7:24, 25
 Lu 11:28
 Jas 1:25
 c Joh 17:12
 d Ps 41:9
 Mt 26:23
 e Joh 14:29
 Joh 16:4
 f Mt 25:40
 g Mt 10:40
 h Mt 26:21
 Mr 14:18
 Lu 22:21
 Joh 6:70
 Ac 1:16
 i Mt 26:22
 Lu 22:23
 j Joh 19:26
 Joh 20:2
 Joh 21:7,
 20, 24

16 Most truly I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.^a

17 If you know these things, happy you are if you do them.^b

18 I am not talking about all of you; I know the ones I have chosen. But this was so that the scripture might be fulfilled:^c ‘The one who was eating my bread has lifted his heel against me.’^d **19** From this moment on, I am telling you before it occurs, so that when it does occur you may believe that I am he.^e

20 Most truly I say to you, whoever receives anyone I send receives me also,^f and whoever receives me receives also the One who sent me.”^g

Jesus Identifies Judas as Betrayer

21 After saying these things, Jesus became troubled in spirit, and he bore witness, saying: “Most truly I say to you, one of you will betray me.”^h **22** The disciples began to look at one another, being at a loss as to which one he was talking about.ⁱ

23 One of the disciples, the one whom Jesus loved,^j was reclining close to Jesus. **24** Therefore, Simon Peter nodded to this

STUDY NOTES

Eph 5:25, 26, Jesus is spoken of as cleansing the Christian congregation with “the bath of water by means of the word” of truth. The disciples could imitate Jesus’ example by helping one another to keep clean from daily temptations and the entanglements with this world that might contaminate a Christian.—Ga 6:1; Heb 10:22; 12:13.

13:16 one who is sent: Or “a messenger (an envoy); an apostle.” The Greek word *a-po·sto·los* (derived from the verb *a-po·stel·lo*, meaning “to send out”) is rendered “apostle(s)” in 78 of the 80 occurrences in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (At Php 2:25, this Greek word is rendered “envoy.”) The only occurrence of the Greek term in John’s Gospel is in this verse.—Mt 10:5; Lu 11:49; 14:32; see study notes on Mt 10:2; Mr 3:14 and  Glossary, “Apostle.”

13:18 eating my bread: Eating bread with someone was a symbol of friendship, indicating that the guest was at peace with his host. (Ge 31:54; compare with Ex 2:20 and 18:12, where the Hebrew expression “eat bread” is rendered “eat” and

“eat a meal.”) A person who ate bread with his host and afterward did him harm was considered to be the vilest of traitors.—Ps 41:9.

has lifted his heel against me: Or “has turned against me.” Jesus here quotes the prophetic words of Ps 41:9, which literally reads “has made [his] heel great against me.” There David used figurative speech about a traitorous companion, perhaps referring to Ahithophel, “David’s adviser.” (2Sa 15:12) Jesus applies these words to Judas Iscariot. In this context, the expression thus indicates a treacherous action, one threatening harm to the person against whom the heel is “lifted.”

13:23 the one whom Jesus loved:

That is, the one whom Jesus especially loved. This is the first of five occurrences mentioning a certain disciple “whom Jesus [or “he”] loved” or “for whom Jesus had affection.” (Joh 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20) It is generally believed that this disciple is the apostle John, the son of Zebedee and the brother of James. (Mt 4:21; Mr 1:19; Lu 5:10) One reason for this identification is that the apostle John is not referred to by name in this Gospel, except

for the mention of “the sons of Zebedee” at Joh 21:2. Another indication is found at Joh 21:20-24, where the expression “the disciple whom Jesus loved” is used with reference to the writer of this Gospel. Also, Jesus said of that apostle: “If it is my will for him to remain until I come, of what concern is that to you?” This suggests that the one referred to would long survive Peter and the other apostles, a description that fits the apostle John.—See “Introduction to John” and study notes on **John**; Joh 1:6; 21:20.

close to: Lit., “in the bosom of.” This expression refers to the way people were positioned at a dining table in Jesus’ day. Guests reclined on their left side with a cushion supporting their left elbow. A guest could lean back on the bosom, or chest, of a friend reclining next to him and engage in a confidential conversation. (Joh 13:25) Being “close to,” or “in the bosom of,” someone meant being in a special relationship of favor and close fellowship with that person. This custom was apparently the background for the expressions used in Lu and Joh.—See study notes on Lu 16:22, 23; Joh 1:18.

one and said to him: “Tell us whom he is talking about.” **25** So the latter leaned back on the chest of Jesus and said to him: “Lord, who is it?”^a **26** Jesus answered: “It is the one to whom I will give the piece of bread that I dip.”^b So after dipping the bread, he took it and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Is-car’-i-ot. **27** After Judas took the piece of bread, then Satan entered into him.^c So Jesus said to him: “What you are doing, do it more quickly.” **28** However, none of those reclining at the table knew why he said this to him. **29** Some, in fact, were thinking that since Judas was holding the money box,^d Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the festival,” or that he should give something to the poor. **30** So after he received the piece of bread, he went out immediately. And it was night.^e

Jesus Gives a New Commandment

31 When, therefore, he had gone out, Jesus said: “Now the Son of man is glorified,^f and God is glorified in connection with him.^{*} **32** God himself will glorify him,^g and he will glorify him immediately. **33** Little children, I am with you a little longer. You will look for me; and just as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I go you cannot come,’^h I now say it also to you. **34** I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you,ⁱ you also love one another.^j **35** By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves.”^k

CHAP. 13

- a Joh 21:20
- b Ps 41:9
Mt 26:23
- c Lu 22:3, 4
- d Joh 12:4-6
- e Mt 26:20
- f Joh 12:23
- g Joh 17:1
- h Joh 7:34
Joh 8:21
- i Joh 15:9
- j Le 19:18
Joh 15:12
Ga 6:2
Eph 5:2
1Th 2:8
1Th 4:9
Jas 2:8
1Pe 1:22
1Jo 3:14, 16
- k Ro 13:8
1Co 13:8
1Co 13:13
1Jo 4:20

FOOTNOTES

13:31 * Or “by means of him.”

STUDY NOTES

13:29 for the festival: Apparently referring to the Festival of Unleavened Bread, which began after the Passover.

13:33 Little children: In the Gospels, there is no earlier record of Jesus’ addressing his disciples with this affectionate expression. The Greek word here rendered “little children,” *te-kni’on*, is the diminutive form of the word *te’knon* (child). In the Christian Greek Scriptures, diminutives are often used to indicate affection and familiarity. (See [L](#) Glossary, “Diminutive.”) This expression could therefore also be rendered “dear children” or “beloved children.” It occurs nine times in the Christian Greek Scriptures and is

always used in a figurative sense, referring to disciples.—Ga 4:19; 1Jo 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21.

13:34 new commandment: The Mosaic Law required that a person love his neighbor as he loved himself. (Le 19:18) It called for neighbor love but not necessarily for self-sacrificing love that would go even to the point of giving one’s life for a fellow human. Jesus’ commandment was “new,” or unprecedented, in that he said: **just as I have loved you**. He gave his followers a perfect model to follow in how to love and live unselfishly for others, a love that would move a person to die for others. Both Jesus’ life and his death exemplified the love called for by this new commandment.—Joh 15:13.

13:37 life: Or “soul.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally ren-

dered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. Here it refers to Peter’s life, which he says he is willing to give up for Jesus.—See [L](#) Glossary, “Soul.”

13:38 life: Or “soul.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. Here it refers to Peter’s life.—See study note on Joh 13:37 and [L](#) Glossary, “Soul.”

a rooster: All four Gospels mention that a rooster would crow, but only Mark’s account adds the detail that the rooster would crow twice. (Mt 26:34, 74, 75; Mr 14:30, 72; Lu 22:34, 60, 61; Joh 18:27) The Mishnah indicates that roosters were bred in Jerusalem in Jesus’ day, lending support to the Bible account. This crowing likely occurred very early in the morning.

CHAP. 13

- a Joh 14:3
 b Mt 26:33
 Mr 14:29
 Lu 22:33
 c Mt 26:34,
 74, 75
 Mr 14:30, 72
 Lu 22:34,
 60, 61
 Joh 18:27

Jesus Foretells Peter's Threefold Denial

36 Simon Peter said to him: “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered: “Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, but you will follow later.”^a **37** Peter said to him: “Lord, why is it I cannot follow you now? I will surrender my life in your behalf.”^b **38** Jesus answered: “Will you surrender your life in my behalf? Most truly I say to you, a rooster will by no means crow until you have disowned me three times.”^c

CHAP. 14

- d Joh 14:27
 e Mr 11:22
 1Pe 1:21
 f Lu 12:32
 1Pe 1:3, 4
 g Joh 17:24
 Ro 8:17
 Php 1:23
 1Th 4:16, 17
 2Ti 4:8
 h Joh 11:16
 i Joh 10:9
 Eph 2:18
 Heb 10:19, 20
 j Joh 1:14
 Joh 1:17
 Ro 15:8
 Eph 4:21
 k Joh 1:4
 Joh 6:63
 Joh 17:3
 Ro 6:23
 Re 2:10
 l Ac 4:12
 Ro 5:1, 2
 m Joh 8:19

Jesus, the Only Way of Approach to the Father

14 “Do not let your hearts be troubled.^d Exercise faith in God;^e exercise faith also in me. **2** In the house of my Father are many dwelling places. Otherwise, I would have told you, for I am going my way to prepare a place for you.^f **3** Also, if I go my way and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will receive you home to myself, so that where I am you also may be.^g **4** And where I am going, you know the way.”

5 Thomas^h said to him: “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”

6 Jesus said to him: “I am the wayⁱ and the truth^j and the life.^k No one comes to the Father except through me.^l **7** If you men had known me, you would have known my Father also;^m from this moment on you know him and have seen him.”ⁿ

8 Philip said to him: “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”

ⁿ Mt 11:27; Joh 1:18.

STUDY NOTES

14:2 dwelling places: Or “abodes.”

The Greek word *mo-ne'* occurs only here and at Joh 14:23, where it is rendered “dwelling.” Although the term was sometimes used in secular literature to refer to a stop or a resting place for a traveler on a journey, most scholars agree that in this context, Jesus was promising permanent dwelling places **in the house of his Father** in heaven, where he was going. For Jesus **to prepare a place for** his disciples required that he appear before God and present to Him the value of his blood. (Heb 9:12, 24-28) Only after he did that could humans follow him to heaven.—Php 3:20, 21.

prepare a place for you: This would involve Jesus' validating or inaugurating

the new covenant by appearing before God and presenting to Him the value of his blood. The preparation would also include Christ's receiving kingly power, after which the heavenly resurrection of his anointed followers would begin.—1Th 4:14-17; Heb 9:12, 24-28; 1Pe 1:19; Re 11:15.

14:6 I am the way and the truth and the life: Jesus is **the way** because it is only through him that it is possible to approach God in prayer. He is also “the way” for humans to be reconciled to God. (Joh 16:23; Ro 5:8) Jesus is **the truth** in that he spoke and lived in harmony with truth. He also fulfilled scores of prophecies that show his central role in the outworking of God's purpose. (Joh 1:14; Re 19:10) These prophecies became “‘yes’ [or were ful-

filled] by means of him.” (2Co 1:20) Jesus is **the life** because by means of the ransom, he made it possible for mankind to gain “the real life,” that is, “everlasting life.” (1Ti 6:12, 19; Eph 1:7; 1Jo 1:7) He will also prove to be “the life” for millions who will be resurrected with the prospect of living in Paradise forever.—Joh 5:28, 29.

14:8 show us the Father: Apparently, Philip wanted Jesus to provide for his disciples a visible manifestation of God, such as was granted in visions to Moses, Elijah, and Isaiah in ancient times.—Ex 24:10; 1Ki 19:9-13; Isa 6:1-5.

9 Jesus said to him: “Even after I have been with you men for such a long time, Philip, have you not come to know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father also.^a How is it you say, ‘Show us the Father’? **10** Do you not believe that I am in union with the Father and the Father is in union with me?^b The things I say to you I do not speak of my own originality,^c but the Father who remains in union with me is doing his works. **11** Believe me that I am in union with the Father and the Father is in union with me; otherwise, believe because of the works themselves.^d **12** Most truly I say to you, whoever exercises faith in me will also do the works that I do; and he will do works greater than these,^e because I am going my way to the Father.^f **13** Also, whatever you ask in my name, I will do this, so that the Father may be glorified in connection with the Son.^g **14** If you ask anything in my name, I will do it.

CHAP. 14

- a Joh 5:19
Joh 12:45
Col 1:15
Heb 1:3
- b Joh 10:38
Joh 17:21
- c Joh 7:16
Joh 8:28
Joh 12:49
- d Joh 5:36
Joh 10:25
- e Mt 21:21
Ac 1:8
Ac 2:41
- f Ac 2:32, 33
- g Mr 11:24
Joh 15:7, 16
Joh 16:23
- h Joh 13:34
Joh 15:10
Jas 1:22
1Jo 5:3
- i Lu 24:49
Joh 15:26
Joh 16:7
Ac 1:5
Ac 2:1
Ac 2:4
Ro 8:26
- j Mt 10:19, 20
Joh 16:13
1Co 2:12
1Jo 2:27
- k 1Co 2:14
- l Mt 28:20

Jesus Promises Holy Spirit

15 “If you love me, you will observe my commandments.^h **16** And I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever,ⁱ **17** the spirit of the truth,^j which the world cannot receive, because it neither sees it nor knows it.^k You know it, because it remains with you and is in you. **18** I will not leave you bereaved. I am coming to you.^l **19** In a little

STUDY NOTES

14:9 **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father also:** Philip’s request recorded at Joh 14:8 suggests that he wanted Jesus to provide his disciples with a visible manifestation of God, such as was granted in visions to Moses, Elijah, and Isaiah. (Ex 24:10; 1Ki 19:9-13; Isa 6:1-5) In such visions, God’s servants saw symbolic representations of God, not God himself. (Ex 33:17-23; Joh 1:18) Jesus’ reply indicated that Philip had already seen something better than such a vision of God. Because Jesus perfectly reflected the personality of his Father, seeing Jesus was like seeing God himself. (Mt 11:27) The disciples had “seen the Father” by perceiving God’s personality, will, and purpose through what Jesus said and did. So when the Bible describes Jesus—his love for his friends, his compassion that moved him to heal others, his empathy that caused him to give way to tears, and his powerful teaching—the reader might well picture

his Father, Jehovah, saying and doing those very things.—Mt 7:28, 29; Mr 1:40-42; Joh 11:32-36.

14:10 **of my own originality:** Or “on my own.” Lit., “from myself.” As God’s Chief Representative, Jesus always listens to Jehovah’s voice and speaks what Jehovah directs.

14:12 **works greater than these:** Jesus is not saying that the miraculous works his disciples would perform would be greater than his own miraculous works. Rather, he humbly acknowledges that the extent of their preaching and teaching work would be greater than his. His followers would cover more territory, reach more people, and preach for a longer period of time than he would. Jesus’ words clearly show that he expected his followers to continue his work.

14:13 **whatever you ask in my name:** Jesus here introduced a new feature to prayer. Never before had Jehovah re-

quired that people pray in someone’s name. For instance, even though Moses had been a mediator between the nation of Israel and God, Jehovah did not say that the Israelites should use Moses’ name when praying. However, on the last evening with his disciples before his death, Jesus revealed this new way to pray, mentioning the expression ‘ask in my name’ four times. (Joh 14:13, 14; 15:16; 16:23, 24) Since Jesus purchased the human race when he gave his perfect life as a ransom, he is the only channel through which God’s blessings are extended to mankind. (Ro 5:12, 18, 19; 1Co 6:20; Ga 3:13) That act made Jesus the only legal Mediator between God and man (1Ti 2:5, 6), the only one through whom a person can be freed from the curse of sin and death (Ac 4:12). Appropriately, then, Jesus is the only channel of approach to God. (Heb 4:14-16) Those who pray in Jesus’ name acknowledge the vital role he plays.

CHAP. 14

a Ac 10:40, 41

b Joh 6:56
Joh 10:38
Joh 15:4
Joh 17:21

c Joh 16:27

d Lu 6:13
Lu 6:16
Ac 1:13

e Joh 15:10

f 1Jo 2:24
Re 3:20g Joh 5:19
Joh 7:16
Joh 12:49

while the world will see me no more, but you will see me,^a because I live and you will live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in union with my Father and you are in union with me and I am in union with you.^b **21** Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. In turn, whoever loves me will be loved by my Father,^c and I will love him and will clearly show myself to him.”

22 Judas,^d not Is-car'i-ot, said to him: “Lord, what has happened that you intend to show yourself clearly to us and not to the world?”

23 In answer Jesus said to him: “If anyone loves me, he will observe my word,^e and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.^f **24** Whoever does not love me does not observe my words. The word that you are hearing is not mine, but belongs to the Father who sent me.^g

 STUDY NOTES

14:14 ask: This reading is supported by some ancient manuscripts and agrees with the wording at Joh 15:16 and 16:23. Other ancient manuscripts read: “ask me.”

14:16 another helper: This wording indicates that the disciples already had a “helper” in Jesus. In fact, 1Jo 2:1 used the same Greek term for “helper” (*pa-ra'kle-tos*) regarding the role of Jesus. But here Jesus promises that God’s spirit, or active force, would provide further help after his departure from the earthly scene.

helper: Or “comforter; encourager; advocate.” The word rendered “helper” (*pa-ra'kle-tos*) is used in the Bible to describe the roles of both the holy spirit (Joh 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) and Jesus (1Jo 2:1). It could literally be rendered “one called to someone’s side” to give help. When Jesus spoke of the holy spirit, an impersonal force, as a helper and referred to this helper as ‘teaching,’ ‘bearing witness,’ ‘giving evidence,’ ‘guiding,’ ‘speaking,’ ‘hearing,’ and ‘receiving’ (Joh 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15), he used a figure of speech called personification, that is, referring to something impersonal or inanimate as if it were alive. In the Scriptures, it is not unusual for something that is not actually a person to be per-

sonified. Some examples are wisdom, death, sin, and undeserved kindness. (Mt 11:19; Lu 7:35; Ro 5:14, 17, 21; 6:12; 7:8-11) It is obvious that not one of these things is an actual person. God’s spirit is often mentioned together with other impersonal forces or things, further supporting the fact that it is not a person. (Mt 3:11; Ac 6:3, 5; 13:52; 2Co 6:4-8; Eph 5:18) Some argue that the use of Greek masculine pronouns when referring to this “helper” shows that holy spirit is a person. (Joh 14:26) However, Greek grammar requires masculine pronouns when the activity of “the helper” is described, since the word for “helper” is in the masculine gender. (Joh 16:7, 8, 13, 14) On the other hand, when the neuter Greek word for “spirit” (*pneu'ma*) is used, neuter pronouns are used.—See study note on Joh 14:17.

14:17 spirit: Or “active force.” The Greek term *pneu'ma* is in the neuter gender and therefore neuter pronouns are used when referring to it. The Greek word has a number of meanings. All of them refer to that which is invisible to human sight and gives evidence of force in motion. (See  Glossary.) In this context, “spirit” refers to God’s holy spirit, which is here called **the spirit of the truth**, an expression that also occurs at Joh 15:26

and 16:13, where Jesus explains that “the helper” (Joh 16:7), that is, “the spirit of the truth,” will “guide” Jesus’ disciples “into all the truth.”

see it . . . You know it: The two occurrences of “it” render the Greek pronoun *au-to'*, which is in the neuter gender and refers to the Greek word for **spirit** (*pneu'ma*), which is also in the neuter gender.—See study note on Joh 14:16.

14:18 bereaved: Or “as orphans.” At Jas 1:27, the Greek word for “orphan,” *or-pha-nos'*, is used in the literal sense of someone being without parents. Here it has the figurative meaning of someone left without the support and protection of a friend, caretaker, or master. Jesus is promising his disciples that he will not leave them abandoned, helpless, or unprotected.

14:22 Judas, not Iscariot: Referring to the apostle Judas, also called Thaddaeus.—See study note on Mt 10:3.

14:23 dwelling: Or “abode.”—See study note on Joh 14:2.

25 “I have spoken these things to you while I am still with you. 26 But the helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name, that one will teach you all things and bring back to your minds all the things I told you.^a 27 I leave you peace; I give you my peace.^b I do not give it to you the way that the world gives it. Do not let your hearts be troubled nor let them shrink out of fear. 28 You heard that I said to you, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I am.^c 29 So now I have told you before it occurs, so that you may believe when it does occur.^d 30 I will not speak with you much more, for the ruler of the world^e is coming, and he has no hold on me.^f 31 But for the world to know that I love the Father, I am doing just as the Father has commanded me to do.^g Get up, let us go from here.

CHAP. 14

- a Mt 10:19, 20
Lu 24:49
Joh 2:19–22
Joh 15:26
Joh 16:13
1Jo 2:27
- b Joh 16:33
Eph 2:14
Php 4:6, 7
Col 3:15
2Th 3:16
- c Joh 20:17
1Co 11:3
1Co 15:28
Php 2:5, 6
- d Joh 13:19
Joh 16:4
- e Lu 4:6
Joh 12:31
Joh 16:11
1Jo 5:19
- f Joh 16:33
- g Joh 10:18
Joh 12:49
Joh 15:10
Php 2:8
1Jo 5:3

Illustration of the True Vine

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the cultivator. 2 He takes away every branch in me not bearing fruit, and he cleans every one bearing fruit, so that it may bear more fruit.^h 3 You are already clean because of the word that I have

CHAP. 15

- h 2Pe 1:8

STUDY NOTES

14:26 helper: Or “comforter; encourager; advocate.”—See study note on Joh 14:16.

that one: The Greek demonstrative pronoun *e-kei'nos* is in the masculine gender and refers to **the helper**, which is also in the masculine gender in Greek.—See study notes on Joh 14:16; 16:13.

14:28 for the Father is greater than

I am: On numerous occasions, Jesus acknowledged his Father’s greatness, authority, and superior position. (Mt 4:9, 10; 20:23; Lu 22:41, 42; Joh 5:19; 8:42; 13:16) Even after Jesus’ ascension to heaven, his apostles described the Father as having a separate and superior position in relation to Jesus. (1Co 11:3; 15:20, 24–28; 1Pe 1:3; 1Jo 2:1; 4:9, 10) The Greek word here rendered “greater” (*meizon*) is the comparative form of the word for “great” (*me'gas*), and it is used in many contexts where one person or thing is said to be superior to another.—Mt 18:1; 23:17; Mr 9:34; 12:31; Lu 22:24; Joh 13:16; 1Co 13:13.

14:30 the ruler of the world: A similar expression occurs at Joh 12:31 and 16:11 and refers to Satan the Devil. In this context, the term “world” (Greek, *ko'smos*) refers to human society that is alienated from God and whose behavior is out of harmony with his will. God did not produce this unrighteous world; it is “lying in the power of the wicked one.” (1Jo 5:19) Satan and his “wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places” act as the invisible “world rulers [form of the Greek word *ko-smo-kra'tor*] of this darkness.”—Eph 6:11, 12.

he has no hold on me: Or “he has no power over me.” Lit., “in me he has nothing.” Jesus had no imperfection or wrong desire that Satan could take advantage of so as to turn him away from serving God. The Greek expression rendered “has no hold on me” may reflect a Hebrew idiom used in legal contexts with the meaning “he has no claim on me.” By contrast, the Devil was able to enter into Judas and get a hold on him.—Joh 13:27.

15:1 I am the true vine: Jesus’ metaphor resembles word pictures found in the Hebrew Scriptures. In Isaiah’s prophecy, “the house of Israel” is called “the vineyard of Jehovah of armies.” (Isa 5:1–7) Jehovah also referred to unfaithful Israel as “the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine” and as “a degenerate vine.” (Jer 2:21; Ho 10:1, 2) But unlike that disloyal nation, Jesus is “the true vine,” and his Father, **the cultivator**. After likening his disciples to “branches” of the vine, he urged them to remain in union with him. Just as branches of a literal vine must remain attached to the trunk in order to remain alive and fruitful, the disciples need to remain in union with Jesus to be spiritually alive and productive. The illustration also shows that just as a cultivator expects a vine to produce fruit, Jehovah expects those in union with Christ to produce spiritual fruitage. This illustration emphasizes the unity that exists not only between Jesus’ true followers and Jesus but also between the disciples and Jesus’ Father.—Joh 15:2–8.

CHAP. 15

- a Joh 13:10
Joh 17:17
- b Joh 6:56
1Co 12:27
Eph 4:16
- c Joh 15:16
- d Mt 3:10
Heb 6:4-8
- e Mt 7:7
Joh 14:13
Joh 16:23
- f Mt 5:16
Joh 13:35
Php 1:9
Php 1:11
- g Joh 3:35
- h Joh 14:15
- i Joh 8:29
- j Joh 16:24
Joh 17:13
- k Mr 12:31
Joh 13:34
1Th 4:9
1Pe 4:8
- l Joh 10:11
Ro 5:7, 8
Eph 5:1, 2
1Jo 3:16
- m Mt 12:50
Joh 14:23
- n Joh 14:13

spoken to you.^a **4** Remain in union with me, and I will remain in union with you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it remains in the vine, neither can you unless you remain in union with me.^b **5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever remains in union with me and I in union with him, this one bears much fruit;^c for apart from me you can do* nothing at all. **6** If anyone does not remain in union with me, he is thrown out like a branch and dries up. And men gather those branches and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.^d **7** If you remain in union with me and my sayings remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will take place for you.^e **8** My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples.^f **9** Just as the Father has loved me,^g so I have loved you; remain in my love. **10** If you observe my commandments, you will remain in my love,^h just as I have observed the commandments of the Father and remain in his love.ⁱ

Command to Show Christlike Love

11 “These things I have spoken to you, so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be made full.^j **12** This is my commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you.^k **13** No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his life in behalf of his friends.^l **14** You are my friends if you do what I am commanding you.^m **15** I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master does. But I have called you friends, because I have made known to you all the things I have heard from my Father. **16** You did not choose me, but I chose you, and I appointed you to go and keep bearing fruit and that your fruit should remain, so that no matter what you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.ⁿ

FOOTNOTES

15:5 * Or “produce.”

STUDY NOTES

15:2 cleans: Or “prunes.” The Greek word here rendered “cleans” is a verb form of the Greek word rendered “clean” at Joh 15:3.

15:13 life: Or “soul.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the

context. Here it refers to a person’s life. —See  Glossary, “Soul.”

15:15 I no longer call you slaves: The Greek term for “a slave,” *dou’los*, is generally used with reference to individuals owned by fellow men. (Mt 8:9; 10:24, 25; 13:27) It is also used figuratively to refer to devoted servants of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ, whether human (Ac 2:18; 4:29; Ro 1:1; Ga 1:10) or angelic (Re 19:10, where the word *syn’dou-los* [fellow slave] appears). In another figurative usage, the term applies to people in

slavery to sin (Joh 8:34; Ro 6:16-20) or to corruption (2Pe 2:19). When Jesus sacrificed his perfect life, he used the value of that blood to buy the lives of all those who follow him. As a result, Christians do not belong to themselves but are “Christ’s slaves.” (Eph 6:6; 1Co 6:19, 20; 7:23; Ga 3:13) Although Jesus called the apostles his friends, by redeeming them from sin, they became his slaves. At times, he used this expression to refer to his followers. —Joh 15:20.

The World Hates Jesus' Disciples

CHAP. 15

17 “These things I command you, that you love one another.^a
18 If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you.^b **19** If you were part of the world, the world would be fond of what is its own. Now because you are no part of the world,^c but I have chosen you out of the world, for this reason the world hates you.^d **20** Keep in mind the word I said to you: A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;^e if they have observed my word, they will also observe yours. **21** But they will do all these things against you on account of my name, because they do not know the One who sent me.^f **22** If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin.^g But now they have no excuse for their sin.^h **23** Whoever hates me also hates my Father.ⁱ **24** If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would have no sin;^j but now they have both seen me and hated me as well as my Father. **25** But this happened in order to fulfill the word written in their Law: “They hated me without cause.”^k **26** When the helper comes that I will send you from the Father, the spirit of the truth,^l which comes from the Father, that one will bear witness about me;^m **27** and you, in turn, are to bear witness,ⁿ because you have been with me from the beginning.

a Joh 13:34
1Jo 3:23
b Mt 10:22
Joh 17:14
1Jo 3:13
c Jas 4:4
d Lu 6:22
Joh 17:14
1Pe 4:4
e Mt 5:11
Mt 10:22
Mt 24:9
2Ti 3:12
1Pe 2:21
f Joh 16:2, 3
g Joh 9:41
Jas 4:17
h Mt 11:21
i Joh 5:23
1Jo 2:23
j Mt 11:23
Joh 7:31
Joh 11:47
k Ps 35:19
Ps 69:4
Lu 23:22
l Lu 24:49
Joh 14:26
m 1Jo 5:6
n Lu 24:48
Ac 1:8
Ac 2:22
Ac 5:32

STUDY NOTES

15:19 world: In this context, the Greek word *kosmos* refers to the world of mankind apart from God's servants, the unrighteous human society alienated from God. John is the only Gospel writer to quote Jesus as saying that his followers are **no part of the world** or do not belong to the world. The same thought is expressed two more times in Jesus' last prayer with his faithful apostles.—Joh 17: 14, 16.

15:21 on account of my name: In the Bible, the term “name” at times stands for the person who bears the name, his reputation, and all that he represents. (See study note on Mt 6:9.) In the case of Jesus' name, it also stands for the authority and position that his Father has given him. (Mt 28:18; Php 2:9, 10; Heb 1:3, 4) Jesus here explains why people of the world would do things **against** his follow-

ers: **because they do not know the One who sent** him. Knowing God would help them to understand and acknowledge what Jesus' name stands for. (Ac 4:12) This would include Jesus' position as God's appointed Ruler, the King of kings, to whom all people should bow in submission in order to gain life.—Joh 17:3; Re 19:11-16; compare Ps 2:7-12.

15:25 in their Law: Here referring to the entire Hebrew Scriptures. The quote that follows is taken from Ps 35:19; 69:4. “Law” is used in the same sense at Joh 10:34; 12:34.

15:26; 16:7 helper: See study note on Joh 14:16.

15:26 that one: The Greek demonstrative pronoun *e-ke'nos* is in the masculine gender and refers to **the helper**, which is also in the masculine gender.—See study notes on Joh 14:16; 16:13.

15:27 from the beginning: Or “from when I began,” that is, from when Jesus began his ministry.

16:2 expel you from the synagogue: Or “excommunicate you; ban you from the synagogue.” The Greek adjective *a-po-sy-na'go-gos* (lit., “away from the synagogue”) is used only three times, here and at Joh 9:22 and 12:42. An expelled person would be shunned and scorned as a social outcast. Such cutting off of fellowship from other Jews would have severe economic consequences for the family. The synagogues, which were used primarily for education, were apparently sometimes used as places for local courts that had the power to inflict the penalties of scourging and excommunication. (See study note on Mt 10:17.) Jesus' foretelling that his followers would be expelled from the synagogues warned them of the possible consequences of following him. Although Jesus had earlier said that

CHAP. 16

Jesus' Disciples May Face Death

16 “I have said these things to you so that you may not be stumbled. **2** Men will expel you from the synagogue.^a In fact, the hour is coming when everyone who kills you^b will think he has offered a sacred service to God. **3** But they will do these things because they have not come to know either the Father or me.^c **4** Nevertheless, I have told you these things so that when the hour for them to happen arrives, you will remember that I told them to you.^d

a Lu 6:22
Joh 9:22
b Mt 24:9
Ac 8:1
Ac 12:1, 2
Ac 26:11
c Joh 8:19
Joh 15:20, 21
Ro 10:2
1Co 2:8
d Joh 13:19
Joh 14:29
e Joh 7:33
Joh 13:3
f Joh 16:22
g Joh 14:16
Joh 14:26
Joh 15:26
Ac 2:32, 33
h Joh 15:22
i Joh 5:37, 38
j Joh 12:31
Joh 14:30
k Mr 4:33
l Joh 14:16, 17
Joh 16:7

Jesus Will Send the Holy Spirit

“I did not tell you these things at first, because I was with you. **5** But now I am going to the One who sent me; yet not one of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ **6** But because I have told you these things, grief has filled your hearts.^f **7** Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth, it is for your benefit that I am going away. For if I do not go away, the helper^g will not come to you; but if I do go, I will send him to you. **8** And when that one comes, he will give the world convincing evidence concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgment: **9** first concerning sin,^h because they are not exercising faith in me;ⁱ **10** then concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; **11** then concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.^j

12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you are not able to bear them now.^k **13** However, when that one comes, the spirit of the truth,^l he will guide you into all the truth, for he

STUDY NOTES

the world would hate his followers, this was the first time he directly said that some of them would be killed.

a sacred service: The Greek word used here is *la-trei'a* and refers to an act of worship. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, this noun appears solely with reference to serving God. (Ro 9:4; 12:1; Heb 9:1, 6)—For a discussion of the related Greek verb *la-treu'o*, see study note on Lu 1:74.

16:8 that one: Both “that one” and “he” in this verse refer back to “the helper,” mentioned in the preceding verse. (See study note on Joh 16:13.) Jesus

used a figure of speech called personification when he spoke of the holy spirit, an impersonal force, as a helper. He said that this helper would “teach,” “bear witness,” “give evidence,” “guide,” “speak,” “hear,” and “receive.” (Joh 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15) Personification describes something impersonal or inanimate as if it were alive. In this context, the spirit would **give the world convincing evidence concerning sin**, in that the world’s failure to exercise faith in God’s Son would be exposed. The spirit would also give the world convincing evidence concerning **righteousness**, in that Jesus’ ascension to heaven proved that he was righteous. The spirit would demonstrate why Satan, “the ruler of this

world,” merits adverse **judgment**. (Joh 16:9-11) The Greek word used here for “to give . . . convincing evidence” is *e-leg'kho*, which is also rendered “to reprove.”—1Ti 5:20; Tit 1:9.

16:13 that one: Both “that one” and “he” in verses 13 and 14 refer back to “the helper” mentioned at Joh 16:7. Jesus used “the helper” (which is in the masculine gender in Greek) as a personification of the holy spirit, an impersonal force, which is in the neuter gender in Greek.—See study note on Joh 14:16.

will not speak of his own initiative, but what he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things to come.^a **14** That one will glorify me,^b because he will receive from what is mine and will declare it to you.^c **15** All the things that the Father has are mine.^d That is why I said he receives from what is mine and declares it to you. **16** In a little while you will see me no longer,^e and again, in a little while you will see me.”

CHAP. 16

- a Ac 11:28
Ac 21:10, 11
1Ti 4:1
b 1Jo 4:2
c Joh 15:26
1Jo 2:27
d Joh 17:10
e Joh 7:33
Joh 14:19
f Lu 5:35
g Mt 28:8
Lu 24:39-41
Joh 20:19, 20
h Lu 24:51, 52
i Php 4:6

Disciples' Sorrow Will Turn Into Joy

17 At that some of his disciples said to one another: “What does he mean by saying to us, ‘In a little while you will not see me, and again, in a little while you will see me,’ and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?” **18** So they were saying: “What does he mean by saying, ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.” **19** Jesus knew they wanted to question him, so he said to them: “Are you asking one another this because I said: ‘In a little while you will not see me, and again, in a little while you will see me’? **20** Most truly I say to you, you will weep and wail,^f but the world will rejoice; you will be grieved, but your grief will be turned into joy.^g **21** When a woman is giving birth, she has grief because her hour has come, but when she has given birth to the child, she remembers the tribulation no more because of the joy that a man has been born into the world. **22** So you also, now you have grief; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice,^h and no one will take away your joy. **23** In that day you will ask me no question at all. Most truly I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything,ⁱ he will

STUDY NOTES

16:20 the world: In this context, the Greek word *ko'smos* refers to the world of mankind apart from God's servants, the unrighteous human society alienated from God.—Compare study note on Joh 15:19.

16:21 born into the world: Here Jesus used the birth of a human as an illustration to show how tribulation and grief can be “turned into joy.” (Joh 16:20) A woman giving birth experiences the pain of childbirth, but the joy of bringing a new life into the world will overshadow the pain and make her forget it. In this context, the term “world” (Greek, *ko'smos*) refers to the organized, human society, or sphere of human life and circumstan-

es, into which the child is born. In the Bible, the term “world” sometimes has this meaning.—1Co 14:10; 1Ti 6:7; see study note on Lu 9:25.

16:23 anything: In addition to the subjects mentioned in Jesus' model prayer (Mt 6:9-13), the Scriptures mention a wide range of circumstances that affect God's servants and that are appropriate subjects for prayer. Personal prayers, then, may embrace virtually every facet of life.—Php 4:6; 1Pe 5:7; 1Jo 5:14.

16:25 comparisons: Or “figures of speech; figurative language.”—See study note on Joh 10:6.

16:27 has affection for you: The Greek verb *phi-le'o* is translated “have affection for,” “like,” “be fond of,” and “kiss.”

(Mt 23:6; Joh 12:25; Mr 14:44) This Greek term may describe a very close bond, such as a relationship between genuine friends. When Jesus “gave way to tears” as he approached Lazarus' tomb, on-lookers said: “See, what affection he had for [form of the Greek verb *phi-le'o*] him!” (Joh 11:35, 36) This Greek term can also describe the close bond that may exist between a parent and a child. (Mt 10:37) As shown here at Joh 16:27, this Greek word describes the strong, warm, personal attachment that Jehovah has for his Son's followers, as well as the warm feelings that the disciples had for God's Son. At Joh 5:20, this same Greek word is used to describe the Father's close attachment to the Son.

CHAP. 16

- a Joh 14:13
Joh 15:7, 16
1Jo 5:14
- b Joh 14:21
- c Joh 17:7, 8
- d Joh 13:3
Heb 9:24
- e Zec 13:7
Mt 26:31
Mr 14:27
- f Joh 8:29
- g Joh 14:27
Eph 2:14
- h 1Th 3:4
- i Joh 14:30
Ac 14:22
Ro 8:35, 37
1Jo 4:4
1Jo 5:4
Re 3:21

give it to you in my name.^a **24** Until now you have not asked for a single thing in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

Jesus Conquered the World

25 “I have spoken these things to you in comparisons. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in comparisons, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. **26** In that day you will make request of the Father in my name; in saying this, I do not mean that I will make request for you. **27** For the Father himself has affection for you, because you have had affection for me^b and have believed that I came as God’s representative.^c **28** I came as the Father’s representative and have come into the world. Now I am leaving the world and am going to the Father.”^d

29 His disciples said: “See! Now you are speaking plainly and are not using comparisons. **30** Now we know that you know all things and you do not need to have anyone question you. By this we believe that you came from God.” **31** Jesus answered them: “Do you believe now? **32** Look! The hour is coming, indeed, it has come, when each one of you will be scattered to his own house and you will leave me alone.^e But I am not alone, because the Father is with me.^f **33** I have said these things to you so that by means of me you may have peace.^g In the world you will have tribulation,^h but take courage! I have conquered the world.”ⁱ

STUDY NOTES

16:33 by means of me: Or “in union with me.” In this context, the Greek preposition (*en*) can denote both agency (“by means of”) and close association and unity (“in union with”).—See study note on Joh 10:38.

I have conquered the world: In this context, the Greek word *ko’smos* (“world”) refers to unrighteous human society alienated from God. The term “world” is used in a similar sense at Joh 12:31; 15:19; 2Pe 2:5; 3:6; and 1Jo 2:15-17; 5:19. On the whole, the way people of this “world” behave and the attitudes they display are out of harmony with God’s will as expressed in the Scriptures. (1Jo 2:16) On this last night of his earthly life, Jesus could rightly say: “I have con-

quered the world.” He triumphed over the world by not becoming like it, by not permitting the thinking and actions of unrighteous human society to influence him in any way. By his faith, loyalty, and integrity, Jesus proved that “the ruler of the world,” Satan, had “no hold” on him. (See study note on Joh 14:30.) Jesus stated in the prayer recorded in John chapter 17 that neither he nor his disciples were part of this world. (Joh 17:15, 16) And when on trial before Pilate, Jesus told that Roman governor: “My Kingdom is no part of this world.” (Joh 18:36) More than 60 years after Jesus’ trial, John was inspired to write: “This is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith.”—1Jo 5:4, 5.

Jesus Prays in Behalf of His Disciples

17 Jesus spoke these things, and raising his eyes to heaven, he said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your son so that your son may glorify you,^a **2** just as you have given him authority over all flesh,^b so that he may give everlasting life^c to all those whom you have given to him.^d **3** This means everlasting life,^e their coming to know you, the only true God,^f and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.^g **4** I have glorified you on the earth,^h having finished the work you have given me to do.ⁱ **5** So now, Father, glorify me at your side with the glory that I had alongside you before the world was.^j

6 “I have made your name manifest* to the men whom you gave me out of the world.^k They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have observed your word. **7** Now they have come to know that all the things you gave me are from you; **8** because I have given them the sayings that you gave me,^l and they have accepted them and have certainly come to know that

CHAP. 17
 a Joh 12:23
 Joh 13:31, 32
 b Php 2:9, 10
 c Joh 4:14
 Joh 6:27
 d Joh 6:37
 e Lu 10:25-28
 f Ac 17:26, 27
 1Jo 5:20
 g Eph 4:11
 Eph 4:13
 2Pe 3:18
 h Joh 13:31
 i Joh 4:34
 j Joh 1:1
 Joh 8:58
 Col 1:15
 k Ps 22:22
 Joh 17:25, 26
 Ac 15:14
 Heb 2:12
 l Joh 6:68
 Joh 8:28
 Joh 12:49
 Joh 14:10

FOOTNOTES

17:6 *Or “known.”

STUDY NOTES

17:2 all flesh: Or “all mankind; all people.” This expression is also found at Lu 3:6, which is a quote from Isa 40:5, where a Hebrew term with the same meaning is used.—Compare study note on Joh 1:14.

17:3 their coming to know you: Or “their taking in knowledge of you; their continuing to know you.” The Greek verb *gi-no’sko* basically means “to know,” and here the verb is used in the present tense to express continuous action. It may denote a process of “taking in knowledge about someone; getting to know someone; becoming better acquainted with someone.” It may also include the thought of making an ongoing effort to get better acquainted with someone who is already known. In this context, it refers to a deepening personal relationship with God brought about by ever-increasing knowledge of God and Christ and a growing trust in them. Clearly, this necessitates more than knowing who a person is or knowing his name. It would also involve knowing what that person likes and

dislikes and knowing his values and standards.—1Jo 2:3; 4:8.

17:5 world: The Greek word *ko’smos* here apparently refers to the world of mankind.—Compare study note on Joh 17:24.

17:6 I have made your name manifest: Jesus’ followers already knew and used God’s name. They saw and read it in the Hebrew Scripture scrolls available in their synagogues. They also saw and read it in the *Septuagint*—a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, which was used in teaching. (See  App. A5 and C.) In the Bible, the term “name” at times also stands for the person himself, his reputation, and all that he declares himself to be. (See study note on Mt 6:9; compare Re 3:4, fn.) Jesus made known God’s name not just by using it but by revealing the Person behind the name—His purposes, activities, and qualities. As the one who had been “at the Father’s side,” Jesus could explain the Father in a way that no one else could. (Joh 1:18; Mt 11:27) God’s “name” thus took on greater meaning to Jesus’ early followers.

world: In this context, the Greek word *ko’smos* apparently refers to the world of mankind alienated from God and separate

from the true followers of Christ, his congregation.—See study note on Joh 15:19.

observed: Or “obeyed; kept.” As used in this context, the Greek word *te-re’o* has also been defined “to persist in obedience; to pay attention to.”

17:9 the world: In this context, the Greek word *ko’smos* refers to the world of mankind apart from God’s servants, the unrighteous human society alienated from God.—Compare study note on Joh 15:19.

17:11 Holy Father: In the Bible, this expression occurs only here and is used as a form of address with reference to Jehovah. It is never used in reference to a human.—Compare Mt 23:9.

your own name, which you have given me: The name Jesus corresponds to the Hebrew name *Jeshua* (or, in fuller form, *Jehoshua*), meaning “Jehovah Is Salvation.” Accordingly, twice in this chapter Jesus emphasizes that he made the name Jehovah known. (Joh 17:6, 26) In the Bible, the term “name” may also stand for the person himself, his reputation, his qualities, and all that he declares himself to be. (See study notes on Mt 6:9; Joh 17:6.) So besides bearing a name

CHAP. 17

- a Joh 16:27
 b Joh 16:30
 Heb 3:1
 c Joh 16:15
 d Joh 13:1
 e 1Pe 1:5
 Jude 24
 f Joh 10:30
 Joh 17:21-23
 g Joh 6:39
 Joh 10:28
 h Joh 18:9
 i Mr 14:21
 Joh 13:10, 11
 j Ps 41:9
 Ps 109:8
 Ac 1:20
 k Joh 15:11
 l 1Jo 3:13
 m Joh 15:18, 19
 Jas 4:4
 n Mt 6:13
 2Th 3:3
 1Jo 5:18
 o Col 1:13
 p Joh 18:36

I came as your representative,^a and they have believed that you sent me.^b **9** I make request concerning them; I make request, not concerning the world, but concerning those whom you have given me, because they are yours; **10** and all my things are yours and yours are mine,^c and I have been glorified among them.

11 “I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world,^d and I am coming to you. Holy Father, watch over them^e on account of your own name, which you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one.^f **12** When I was with them, I used to watch over them^g on account of your own name, which you have given me; and I have protected them, and not one of them is destroyed^h except the son of destruction,ⁱ so that the scripture might be fulfilled.^j **13** But now I am coming to you, and I am saying these things in the world, so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.^k **14** I have given your word to them, but the world has hated them,^l because they are no part of the world,^m just as I am no part of the world.

15 “I do not request that you take them out of the world, but that you watch over them because of the wicked one.ⁿ **16** They are no part of the world,^o just as I am no part of the world.^p

 STUDY NOTES

that incorporates the divine name, there were apparently other ways that the name Jehovah has been given to Jesus. For example, Jesus reflected perfectly the personality of his Father. (Joh 14:9) Also, Jesus came in his Father’s name and performed powerful works in that name.—Joh 5:43; 10:25.

one: Or “at unity.” Jesus prayed that just as he and his Father are “one,” demonstrating cooperation and unity of thought, so his true followers would be “one” in working together for the same purpose. The thoughts expressed in this prayer echo Jesus’ words recorded at Joh 10:30. There he states that he and the Father “are one” in connection with their dealings with his disciples, his “sheep,” who are given to him by the Father. (Joh 10:25-30; 17:2, 9) The Greek word here rendered “one” is in the neuter gender (denoting “one thing”), not in the masculine gender (denoting “one person”).—See study note on Joh 10:30.

17:12 the son of destruction: In this context, the expression refers to Judas Iscariot, whose deliberate betrayal of God’s Son made Judas subject to eternal destruction, one who was unworthy of a resurrection. The same expression is used at 2Th 2:3 with reference to “the man of lawlessness.” In the original Bible languages, the term “son(s) of” is sometimes used in a figurative sense about someone who pursues a certain course of conduct or who manifests a certain characteristic. Examples are such expressions as “sons of the Most High,” “sons of light and sons of day,” “sons of the Kingdom,” “sons of the wicked one,” “son of the Devil,” and “sons of disobedience.” (Lu 6:35; 1Th 5:5; Mt 13:38; Ac 13:10; Eph 2:2) In a similar way, the expression “son of” can be used to refer to the judgment or outcome that results from following a certain course or displaying a certain characteristic. At 2Sa 12:5, the expression rendered “deserves to die” is literally “is a son of death.” At Mt 23:15, the literal expression “a son of Gehenna” is used about

someone who is deserving of eternal destruction, which was apparently what Jesus meant when he called Judas Iscariot “the son of destruction.”—See study note on Mt 23:15 and  Glossary, “Gehenna.”

17:14 world: In this context, the Greek word *ko’smos* refers to the world of mankind apart from God’s servants, the unrighteous human society alienated from God. John is the only Gospel writer to quote Jesus as saying that his followers are **no part of the world**, or do not belong to the world. The same thought is expressed two more times during Jesus’ last night with his faithful apostles.—Joh 15:19; 17:16.

17 Sanctify them by means of the truth;^a your word is truth.^b

18 Just as you sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world.^c **19** And I am sanctifying myself in their behalf, so that they also may be sanctified by means of truth.

20 “I make request, not concerning these only, but also concerning those putting faith in me through their word, **21** so that they may all be one,^d just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in union with you,^e that they also may be in union with us, so that the world may believe that you sent me. **22** I have given them the glory that you have given me, in order that they may be one just as we are one.^f **23** I in union with them and you in union with me, in order that they may be perfected into one,^g so that the world may know that you sent me and that you loved them just as you loved me. **24** Father, I want those whom you have given me to be with me where I am,^h in order that they may look upon my glory that you have given me, because you loved me before the founding of the world.ⁱ **25** Righteous Father, the world has, indeed, not come to know you,^j but I know you,^k and these have come to know that you sent me. **26** I have made your name known to them and will make it known,^l so that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in union with them.”^m

CHAP. 17

- a Joh 15:3
Eph 5:25, 26
1Th 5:23
2Th 2:13
1Pe 1:22
- b Ps 12:6
Ps 119:151
Ps 119:160
- c Joh 20:21
- d Ro 12:5
1Co 1:10
Ga 3:28
- e Joh 10:38
Joh 14:10
- f Joh 14:20
Joh 17:11
1Jo 3:24
- g Ro 15:5, 6
Eph 4:3
Php 1:27
Col 3:14
- h Lu 22:28-30
1Th 4:17
- i Joh 17:5
- j Joh 8:55
Joh 15:21
- k Mt 11:27
- l Mt 6:9
Joh 17:6
- m Joh 15:9

STUDY NOTES

17:17 Sanctify them: Or “Make them holy; Set them apart,” that is, for sacred service to God. When Jesus’ followers obey **the truth** of God’s Word, they become sanctified, or purified. (1Pe 1:22) They will thus stand out as “no part of the world,” which does not adhere to God’s truth.—Joh 17:16.

your word is truth: Jehovah’s Word presents things as they really are, revealing his attributes, purposes, and commands, as well as the true state of affairs among mankind. In harmony with Jesus’ prayer, God’s Word of truth shows what is required for a person to be sanctified, or set apart, by Jehovah for His service, and then to remain in a sanctified state.

17:19 sanctifying myself: Or “setting myself apart; keeping myself holy.” Jesus was holy when born as a human (Lu 1:35), and he maintained that sanctification, or holiness, throughout his earthly life (Ac 4:27; Heb 7:26). Jesus’ blameless

life course, including his ransom sacrifice, made it possible for his followers to **be sanctified**, or made holy, set apart for God’s service. Therefore, Jesus could say in prayer to his Father that he was sanctifying himself **in their behalf**. Jesus’ followers are **sanctified by means of truth** if they follow his footsteps closely and live by the truths he taught and the truths found in God’s Word, the Bible. (Joh 17:17; 2Ti 2:20, 21; Heb 12:14) Even so, they are not sanctified through their own merit, but sanctification comes to them through Jesus Christ.—Ro 3:23-26; Heb 10:10.

17:21 one: Or “at unity.” Jesus prayed that his true followers would be “one,” unitedly working together for the same purpose, just as he and his Father are “one,” demonstrating cooperation and unity of thought. (Joh 17:22) At 1Co 3:6-9, Paul describes this type of unity among Christian ministers as they work with one another and with God.—See 1Co 3:8 and study notes on Joh 10:30; 17:11.

17:23 be perfected into one: Or “be completely unified.” In this verse, Jesus connects perfect unity with being **loved** by the Father. This is in harmony with Col 3:14, which says: “Love . . . is a perfect bond of union.” This perfect unity is relative. It does not mean that all differences of personality, such as individual abilities, habits, and conscience, are eliminated. It does mean that Jesus’ followers are unified in action, belief, and teaching.—Ro 15:5, 6; 1Co 1:10; Eph 4:3; Php 1:27.

17:24 founding of the world: The Greek word for “founding” is rendered “to conceive” at Heb 11:11, where it is used with “offspring.” Here used in the expression “founding of the world,” it apparently refers to the birth of children to Adam and Eve. Jesus associates “the founding of the world” with Abel, apparently the first redeemable human and the first to have his name “written in the scroll of life from the founding of the world.” (Lu 11:50, 51; Re 17:8) These words of Jesus in

CHAP. 18

Judas Betrays Jesus

- a 2Sa 15:23
 b Mt 26:36
 Mr 14:32
 Lu 22:39
 c Mt 10:2, 4
 d Mt 26:47
 Mr 14:43
 e Mt 2:23
 f Lu 22:47
 g Joh 7:46
 h Joh 6:39
 Joh 17:12

18 After he said these things, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kid'ron Valley^a to where there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it.^b **2** Now Judas, his betrayer,^c also knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. **3** So Judas brought the detachment of soldiers and officers of the chief priests and of the Pharisees and came there with torches and lamps and weapons.^d **4** Then Jesus, knowing all the things that were going to happen to him, stepped forward and said to them: "Whom are you looking for?" **5** They answered him: "Jesus the Naz-a-rene'.^e" He said to them: "I am he." Now Judas, his betrayer, was also standing with them.^f

6 However, when Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.^g **7** So he asked them again: "Whom are you looking for?" They said: "Jesus the Naz-a-rene'." **8** Jesus answered: "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." **9** This was to fulfill what he had said: "Of those whom you have given me, I have not lost a single one."^h

 STUDY NOTES

prayer to his Father also confirm that long ago—before Adam and Eve conceived offspring—God **loved** his only-begotten Son.

17:26 I have made your name known: At the end of his prayer, Jesus repeats the thought he expressed at Joh 17:6. (See study note on Joh 17:6.) At Joh 17:26, though, a different Greek verb, *gno-rí'zo* ("to make known"), is used. However, it conveys a similar thought to the verb used at Joh 17:6 (*pha-ne-ro'ó*, "to make manifest; to reveal"), which could also be rendered "make known." (See fn. on Joh 17:6.) In the Bible, making known one's name may involve revealing the name itself as well as what the name stands for—the person's reputation and all that he declares himself to be. (See study note on Mt 6:9; compare Re 3:4; fn.) Jesus made known God's name not just by using it but by revealing the Person behind the name—his purposes, activities, and qualities. Here Jesus adds **and will make it known**, which could also be rendered "and will continue to make it known." God's name

would thus continue to take on greater meaning to his followers.

18:1 the Kidron Valley: Or "the winter torrent of Kidron." The Kidron Valley, mentioned only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures, separates Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. It runs from N to S along the eastern side of the city. The Kidron Valley was usually waterless, even in winter, except in the case of an especially heavy rain. The Greek word *kheí'mar-ros*, here rendered "valley," literally means "a winter torrent," that is, a stream of water that flows abundantly because of the heavy rains during the winter season. This Greek word is used more than 80 times in the *Septuagint* to render the Hebrew word *na'chal*, the corresponding expression for "valley," used when the Kidron Valley is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. (2Sa 15:23; 1Ki 2:37) These Hebrew and Greek words for "valley" can both refer to a torrent or a stream. (De 10:7; Job 6:15; Isa 66:12; Eze 47:5) More frequently, however, these words refer to the valley cut by a winter torrent and through which a stream runs during the winter rains. (Nu

34:5; Jos 13:9; 17:9; 1Sa 17:40; 1Ki 15:13; 2Ch 33:14; Ne 2:15; Ca 6:11) Both words are often rendered "wadi."—See  Glossary, "Wadi."

See  Gallery, image 123, Kidron Valley.

18:3 the detachment of soldiers: The Greek term *speí'ra* used here indicates that Roman soldiers are referred to. Of the four Gospel writers, John is the only one to mention that Roman soldiers were present when Jesus was arrested.—Joh 18:12.

Peter Uses a Sword

10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.^a The name of the slave was Malchus. **11** Jesus, however, said to Peter: “Put the sword into its sheath.^b Should I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?”^c

Jesus Taken to Annas

12 Then the soldiers and the military commander and the officers of the Jews seized* Jesus and bound him. **13** They led him first to An’nas, for he was the father-in-law of Ca’ia-phas,^d who was high priest that year.^e **14** Ca’ia-phas was, in fact, the one who had advised the Jews that it was to their benefit for one man to die in behalf of the people.^f

Peter’s First Denial

15 Now Simon Peter, as well as another disciple, was following Jesus.^g That disciple was known to the high priest, and he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, **16** but Peter was standing outside at the door.* So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper and brought Peter in. **17** The servant girl who was the doorkeeper then said to Peter: “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said: “I am not.”^h **18** Now the slaves and the officers were standing around a charcoal

CHAP. 18

- a Mt 26:51
Mr 14:47
Lu 22:50
b Mt 26:52
Lu 22:51
Joh 18:36
c Mt 20:22
Mt 26:39
Mt 26:42
Mr 10:38
Mr 14:36
Lu 22:41, 42
d Lu 3:2
Ac 4:5, 6
e Mt 26:57
Joh 18:24
f Isa 53:8
Joh 11:49, 50
g Mt 26:58
Mr 14:54
Lu 22:54
h Mt 26:69, 70
Mr 14:66-68
Lu 22:55-57
Joh 18:25

FOOTNOTES

18:12 *Or “arrested.” **18:16** *Or “entrance.”

STUDY NOTES

18:10 struck the slave of the high priest: This incident is recorded by all four Gospel writers, and their accounts are complementary. (Mt 26:51; Mr 14:47; Lu 22:50) Only Luke, “the beloved physician” (Col 4:14), mentions that Jesus “touched the ear and healed him.” (Lu 22:51) John is the only Gospel writer to mention that **Simon Peter** wielded the sword and that **Malchus** was **the name of the slave** whose ear was cut off. John was evidently the disciple “known to the high priest” as well as to his household (Joh 18:15, 16), so it is natural that his Gospel would mention the injured man by

name. John’s familiarity with the high priest’s household is further shown at Joh 18:26, where John explains that the slave who accused Peter of being a disciple of Jesus was “a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off.”

18:11 drink the cup: In the Bible, “cup” is often used figuratively of God’s will, or “assigned portion,” for a person. (Ps 11:6; 16:5; 23:5) To “drink the cup” here means to submit to God’s will. In Jesus’ case, “the cup” involved suffering and death under the false charge of blasphemy, as well as his resurrection to immortal life in heaven.—See study notes on Mt 20:22; 26:39.

18:12 military commander: The Greek term *khi-li’ar-khos* (chiliarch) literally means “ruler of a thousand,” that is, soldiers. It refers to a Roman military

commander called a tribune. There were six tribunes in each Roman legion. The legion, however, was not divided into six different commands; rather, each tribune commanded the whole legion for one sixth of the time. Such a military commander had great authority, including the power to nominate and assign centurions. The Greek word could also refer to high-ranking military officers in general. A Roman military commander accompanied the soldiers who arrested Jesus.

the Jews: Apparently referring to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

18:13 They led him first to Annas: Only John states specifically that Jesus was led to Annas, who had been appointed high priest about 6 or 7 C.E. by Quirinius, the Roman governor of Syria.

CHAP. 18

- a Mt 26:55
Lu 4:15
Lu 19:47
Joh 7:14, 26
- b Isa 50:6
Joh 19:3
- c Mt 26:57
- d Mt 26:71-74
Mr 14:69, 70
Lu 22:58
- e Joh 18:10
- f Mt 26:74
Mr 14:71, 72
Lu 22:60
Joh 13:38

fire they had made, because it was cold and they were warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Jesus Before Annas

19 So the chief priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. **20** Jesus answered him: “I have spoken to the world publicly. I always taught in a synagogue and in the temple,^a where all the Jews come together, and I said nothing in secret. **21** Why do you question me? Question those who have heard what I told them. See! These know what I said.” **22** After he said these things, one of the officers who was standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face^b and said: “Is that the way you answer the chief priest?” **23** Jesus answered him: “If I said something wrong, bear witness* about the wrong; but if what I said was right, why do you hit me?” **24** Then An’nas sent him away bound to Ca’ia-phas the high priest.^c

Peter’s Second and Third Denials

25 Now Simon Peter was standing there warming himself. Then they said to him: “You are not also one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said: “I am not.”^d **26** One of the slaves of the high priest, who was a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off,^e said: “I saw you in the garden with him, did I not?” **27** However, Peter denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.^f

FOOTNOTES

18:23 * Or “testify.”

STUDY NOTES

Annas served until about 15 C.E. Even after he was deposed by the Romans and no longer held the official title of high priest, Annas seems to have continued to exercise great power and influence as high priest emeritus and the predominant voice of the Jewish hierarchy. Five of his sons held the office of high priest, and his son-in-law **Caiaphas** served as high priest from about 18 C.E. to about 36 C.E., which included **that year**, that is, 33 C.E., the memorable year in which Jesus was executed.—See study note on Lu 3:2.

18:15 another disciple: Apparently referring to the apostle John. This would fit John’s characteristic style of not referring to himself by name in his Gospel. (See study notes on Joh 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7; 21:20.) Furthermore, John and Peter are linked in the postresurrection account at Joh 20:2-8. The Bible does not explain how John, a disciple from Galilee, might have become **known to the high priest**, but his familiarity with the household of the high priest enabled John to get past the doorkeeper into the courtyard and also to gain entrance for Peter.—Joh 18:16.

18:18 charcoal: A black, brittle, porous form of carbon, usually the residue of partially burned wood. In ancient times, charcoal was made by covering a pile of wood with earth and burning it slowly for

several days with only enough air to burn off the gases. This left behind a relatively pure form of carbon. It was a time-consuming process requiring careful supervision, but charcoal was a favored fuel when intense, sustained heat without smoke was desired. Charcoal in an open fire or in a brazier was used for warmth. (Isa 47:14; Jer 36:22) Its even heat and the absence of flames and smoke made it ideal for cooking.—Joh 21:9.

18:19 the chief priest: That is, Annas.—See study notes on Joh 18:13; Ac 4:6.

18:24 to Caiaphas the high priest: See  App. B12 for the possible location of Caiaphas’ house.

18:27 a rooster crowed: See study note on Mr 14:72.

Jesus Before Pilate

CHAP. 18

28 Then they led Jesus from Ca'ia-phas to the governor's residence.^a It was now early in the morning. But they themselves did not enter into the governor's residence, so that they would not get defiled^b but could eat the Passover. **29** So Pilate came outside to them and said: "What accusation do you bring against this man?" **30** They answered him: "If this man were not a wrongdoer,* we would not have handed him over to you." **31** So Pilate said to them: "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law."^c The Jews said to him: "It is not lawful for us to kill anyone."^d **32** This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to indicate what sort of death he was about to die.^e

a Mt 27:2
Mr 15:1
Lu 23:1
b Ac 10:28
c Joh 19:6
d Joh 19:10
e Mt 20:18, 19
Joh 3:14
Joh 12:32
f Mt 2:2
Mt 27:11
Joh 1:49
Joh 12:13
g 1Ti 6:13
h Isa 9:6
Da 2:44
Da 7:14

33 So Pilate entered the governor's residence again and called Jesus and said to him: "Are you the King of the Jews?"^f **34** Jesus answered: "Are you asking this of your own originality, or did others tell you about me?" **35** Pilate replied: "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What did you do?" **36** Jesus answered:^g "My Kingdom is no part of this world.^h If my Kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not

FOOTNOTES

18:30 *Or "criminal."

STUDY NOTES

18:28 **governor's residence:** See study note on Mt 27:27.

early in the morning: That is, the morning of Nisan 14, the day of Jesus' trial and death. The Passover began the evening before, and as shown in the other Gospel accounts, Jesus and the apostles had eaten the Passover meal the preceding night. (Mt 26:18-20; Mr 14:14-17; Lu 22:15) Therefore, in this verse, the reference to eating **the Passover** must refer to the meal on Nisan 15, the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. In Jesus' time, the Passover (Nisan 14) and the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15-21) that followed were sometimes referred to collectively as "Passover."—Lu 22:1.

18:31 See  Gallery, image 124, Oldest Known Fragment of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

18:33 **Are you the King of the Jews?:**

See study note on Mt 27:11.

18:36 **My Kingdom is no part of this**

world: Jesus did not give a direct answer to Pilate's question, "What did you do?" (Joh 18:35) Instead, he kept the focus on Pilate's first question, "Are you the King of the Jews?" (Joh 18:33) In his short reply, Jesus three times mentioned the Kingdom in which he was to be installed as King. By saying that his Kingdom is "no part of this world," Jesus made clear that the Kingdom is not from a human source. This harmonizes with earlier statements referring to "the Kingdom of the heavens" or "the Kingdom of God." (Mt 3:2; Mr 1:15) Jesus had also said that his followers were "no part of the world," that is, the unrighteous human society alienated from God and his servants. (Joh 17:14, 16) By his words to Peter earlier that evening, Jesus showed that his followers were not to fight to defend him as supporters of a human king would have done.—Mt 26:51, 52; Joh 18:11.

18:37 **You yourself are saying that I am**

a king: With this reply, Jesus confirms that he is a king. (Mt 27:11; compare study notes on Mt 26:25, 64.) But Jesus' kingship differs from what Pilate imagines, since Jesus' Kingdom is "no part of this world" and thus no threat to Rome.—Joh 18:33-36.

bear witness to: As used in the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek words rendered "to bear witness" (*mar-ty-re'o*) and "witness" (*mar-ty-ri'a*; *mar'tys*) are broad in meaning. These related terms are used in the basic sense of testifying to facts from firsthand or personal knowledge, but they may also include the idea of "declaring; confirming; speaking well of." Not only did Jesus testify to and proclaim truths of which he was convinced but he also lived in such a way that he upheld the truth of his Father's prophetic word and promises. (2Co 1:20) God's purpose in connection with the Kingdom and its Messianic Ruler had been foretold in detail. Jesus' entire earthly life course, culminat-

CHAP. 18

- a Mt 26:52, 53
Joh 18:11
- b Mt 27:11
Mr 15:2
Lu 23:3
- c Joh 1:14
Joh 1:17
Joh 14:6
- d Joh 8:31, 32
- e Mt 27:24
Lu 23:4
Joh 15:25
- f Mt 27:15
Mr 15:6
- g Nu 35:31
Lu 23:18, 19
Ac 3:14

CHAP. 19

- h Isa 50:6
Mt 20:18, 19
Mt 27:26
Mr 15:15
Lu 18:33
- i Mt 27:27-29
Mr 15:16, 17
Lu 23:11
- j Isa 53:3

be handed over to the Jews.^a But as it is, my Kingdom is not from this source.” **37** So Pilate said to him: “Well, then, are you a king?” Jesus answered: “You yourself are saying that I am a king.^b For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.^c Every-one who is on the side of the truth listens to my voice.”^d **38** Pilate said to him: “What is truth?”

After saying this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them: “I find no fault in him.^e **39** Moreover, you have a custom that I should release a man to you at the Passover.^f So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?” **40** Again they shouted: “Not this man, but Bar-ab’bas!” Now Bar-ab’bas was a robber.^g

Jesus Scourged and Mocked

19 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged him.^h **2** And the soldiers braided a crown of thorns and put it on his head and clothed him with a purple robe,ⁱ **3** and they kept coming up to him and saying: “Greetings, you King of the Jews!” They also kept slapping him in the face.^j **4** Pilate went outside again

STUDY NOTES

ing in his sacrificial death, fulfilled all prophecies about him, including the shadows, or patterns, contained in the Law covenant. (Col 2:16, 17; Heb 10:1) So by word and deed, it may be said that Jesus ‘bore witness to the truth.’

the truth: Jesus was referring, not to truth in general, but to the truth regarding God’s purposes. A key element of God’s purpose is that Jesus, the “son of David,” serves as High Priest and as Ruler of God’s Kingdom. (Mt 1:1) Jesus explained that a primary reason for his coming into the world of mankind, his life on earth, and his ministry was to declare the truth about that Kingdom. The angels declared a similar message prior to and at the time of Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem of Judea, the city where David was born.—Lu 1:32, 33; 2:10-14.

18:38 What is truth?: Pilate’s question apparently refers to truth in general, not specifically to “the truth” that Jesus had just spoken about. (Joh 18:37) Had this been a sincere question, Jesus would no doubt have answered it. But Pilate likely

asks the question rhetorically in skeptical or cynical disbelief, as if to say, “Truth? What is that? There is no such thing!” In fact, Pilate does not even wait for an answer but leaves and goes outside to the Jews.

18:39 you have a custom that I should release a man: This custom to release a prisoner is also mentioned at Mt 27:15 and Mr 15:6. It was apparently of Jewish origin because Pilate said to the Jews: “You have a custom.” Although there is no basis or precedent for this custom in the Hebrew Scriptures, it seems that by Jesus’ day, the Jews had developed this tradition. The practice would not have seemed strange to the Romans, since there is evidence that they released prisoners to please the crowds.

19:1 scourged him: The punishment of scourging usually preceded execution on a stake. After giving in to the Jews’ insistent cry for Jesus’ execution and for the release of Barabbas, **Pilate then took Jesus** and “scourged him.” (Mt 20:19; 27:26) The most terrible instrument for scourging was known as a flagellum. It

consisted of a handle into which several cords or leather thongs were fixed. These thongs were likely weighted with jagged pieces of bone or metal to make the blows more painful.

19:2 crown: See study note on Mr 15:17.

clothed him with a purple robe: See study note on Mr 15:17.

19:3 Greetings: See study note on Mt 27:29.

and said to them: “See! I bring him outside to you in order for you to know that I find no fault in him.”^a **5** So Jesus came outside, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them: “Look! The man!” **6** However, when the chief priests and the officers saw him, they shouted: “To the stake with him! To the stake with him!”^{*b} Pilate said to them: “Take him yourselves and execute him,[#] for I do not find any fault in him.”^c **7** The Jews answered him: “We have a law, and according to the law he ought to die,^d because he made himself God’s son.”^e

Pilate Again Questions Jesus

8 When Pilate heard what they were saying, he became even more fearful, **9** and he entered the governor’s residence again and said to Jesus: “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer.^f **10** So Pilate said to him: “Are you refusing to speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and I have authority to execute you?”^{*} **11** Jesus answered him: “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been granted to you from above.^g This is why the man who handed me over to you has greater sin.”

CHAP. 19

- a Lu 23:4
Lu 23:15
Joh 18:38
- b Mt 27:22
Mr 15:13
Lu 23:21
- c Joh 18:31
Ac 3:13
- d Le 24:16
- e Mt 26:63-65
Joh 5:18
Joh 10:36
- f Isa 53:7
Mt 27:12
Mt 27:14
- g Joh 7:30
Joh 10:18
Ro 13:1

FOOTNOTES

19:6 * Or “Execute him on the stake! Execute him on the stake!” # Or “execute him on the stake.” **19:10** * Or “execute you on the stake?”

STUDY NOTES

19:5 Look! The man! Though battered and wounded, Jesus displayed a quiet dignity and calm that even Pilate acknowledged; his words seemed to mingle respect with pity. The *Vulgate* rendering of Pilate’s words, *ecce homo*, has been the theme for many artists. Those who were familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures and who heard Pilate’s words may have called to mind the prophetic description of the Messiah found at Zec 6:12: “Here is [or, “Look!”] the man whose name is Sprout.”

19:7 We have a law: Seeing that their charges of political wrongdoing failed to produce results, the Jews exposed their real motive by bringing against Jesus the religious charge of blasphemy. This is the same accusation they used hours earlier

at the Sanhedrin, but it is a new charge for Pilate to consider.

19:11 from above: Or “from heaven.” The Greek word *a’no-then* is rendered “from above” here and at Jas 1:17; 3:15, 17. The same term is used at Joh 3:3, 7, where it can be rendered both “again (anew)” and “from above.”—See study note on Joh 3:3.

the man: Rather than Judas Iscariot or any specific individual, it seems likely that Jesus had in mind all those who shared in the sin of killing him. That included Judas, “the chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin,” and even “the crowds” that were persuaded to ask for the release of Barabbas.—Mt 26:59-65; 27:1, 2, 20-22; Joh 18:30, 35.

19:12 friend of Caesar: This title of honor was often bestowed on provincial governors in the Roman Empire. In this context, the Jewish leaders apparently used it in a general way, implying that Pilate was laying himself open to the charge of condoning high treason. The **Caesar** of that time was Tiberius, an emperor with a reputation for executing any whom he

considered disloyal—even high-ranking officials. For example, Lucius Aelius Sejanus was the commander of the Praetorian Guard and was officially designated “a friend of Caesar.” He could be considered second in command after Tiberius. Pilate was a favored acquaintance of the highly influential Sejanus. As long as he was in power, Sejanus protected and supported Pilate. In 31 C.E., however, Tiberius turned against Sejanus, accusing him of sedition and ordering that he and many of his supporters be executed. This event occurred shortly before Jesus appeared in front of Pilate. Therefore, Pilate’s life could have been threatened if the Sadducees complained to the emperor, especially since their charge would be that Pilate was “not a friend of Caesar.” Pilate had already irritated the Jews, so he did not want to risk any further friction, much less an accusation of disloyalty. It seems, therefore, that Pilate allowed his fear of a jealous emperor to influence him when he pronounced the death sentence on Jesus, a man he knew to be innocent.

CHAP. 19

- a Lu 23:2
Ac 17:6, 7
- b Mr 15:42
Joh 19:31
- c Da 9:26
Mt 27:26, 31
Mr 15:15
Lu 23:24, 25
- d Heb 13:12

12 For this reason Pilate kept trying to find a way to release him, but the Jews shouted: “If you release this man, you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king speaks against* Caesar.”^a **13** Then Pilate, after hearing these words, brought Jesus outside, and he sat down on a judgment seat in a place called the Stone Pavement, but in Hebrew, *Gab’ba-tha*. **14** Now it was the day of Preparation^b of the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews: “See! Your king!” **15** However, they shouted: “Take him away! Take him away! To the stake with him!”* Pilate said to them: “Shall I execute your king?” The chief priests answered: “We have no king but Caesar.” **16** Then he handed him over to them to be executed on the stake.^c

Jesus Nailed to a Stake at Golgotha

So they took charge of Jesus. **17** Bearing the torture stake for himself, he went out to the so-called Skull Place,^d which is

FOOTNOTES

19:12 * Or “opposes.” **19:15** * Or “Execute him on the stake!”

STUDY NOTES

19:12 **Caesar:** See study note on Mt 22:17.

19:13 **judgment seat:** See study note on Mt 27:19.

the Stone Pavement: The site was called, in Hebrew, *Gabbatha*, a word of uncertain derivation and possibly meaning “hill,” “height,” or “open space.” The Greek name for it, *Li-tho’stro-ton* (Stone Pavement), may indicate a plain stone pavement or a decorative one; some scholars feel that it may have been an ornamental mosaic work. The location of this site may have been an open area in front of the palace of Herod the Great, though some scholars favor other locations. The exact location of this pavement is uncertain.

Hebrew: See study note on Joh 5:2.

19:14 **the day of Preparation:** A name applied to the day preceding the weekly Sabbath, during which the Jews prepared for the Sabbath. (See study note on Mr 15:42.) John’s Gospel includes the words **of the Passover**. The time period referred to in this context is the morning of

Nisan 14, the day of Jesus’ trial and death. The Passover day had begun the evening before, and as shown in the other Gospel accounts, Jesus and the apostles had eaten the Passover meal that night. (Mt 26:18-20; Mr 14:14-17; Lu 22:15) Christ perfectly carried out the regulations of the Law, including the requirement to celebrate the Passover on Nisan 14. (Ex 12:6; Le 23:5) This day in the year 33 C.E. could be viewed as the **Preparation of the Passover** in the sense that it was the preparation for the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread that was to begin the next day. Because these days were close in the calendar, the entire festival was sometimes referred to by the term “Passover.” (Lu 22:1) The day after Nisan 14 was always a sabbath, regardless of the day of the week on which it fell. (Le 23:5-7) In 33 C.E., Nisan 15 fell on the regular Sabbath, making the day “a great,” or double, Sabbath.—See study note on Joh 19:31.

about the sixth hour: That is, about 12:00 noon.—For an explanation of a seeming discrepancy between this account and the one recorded by Mark, who said that Jesus was nailed to the stake at “the third hour,” see study note on Mr 15:25.

19:17 **torture stake:** See study note on Mt 27:32.

Bearing the torture stake for himself: According to John’s account, Jesus carried his own torture stake. However, the other Gospel accounts (Mt 27:32; Mr 15:21; Lu 23:26) say that Simon of Cyrene was compelled into service to carry the stake to the place of execution. John’s account is sometimes condensed, and often he does not repeat what was mentioned in the other Gospels. So John did not add the detail that Simon was compelled to carry the stake.

Skull Place: The Greek expression *Kra-ni’ou To’pon* renders the Hebrew name *Golgotha*. (See study note on *Golgotha* in this verse. For a discussion of the term **Hebrew**, as used in the Christian Greek Scriptures, see study note on Joh 5:2.) The term “Calvary” is used at Lu 23:33 in some English Bible translations. It comes from the Latin word *calvaria* (skull) used in the *Vulgate*.

called *Golgotha* in Hebrew.^a **18** There they nailed him to the stake^b alongside two other men, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle.^c **19** Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the torture stake. It was written: “Jesus the Naz-a-rene’ the King of the Jews.”^d **20** Many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was nailed to the stake was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. **21** However, the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate: “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that he said, ‘I am King of the Jews.’” **22** Pilate answered: “What I have written, I have written.”

23 Now when the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the stake, they took his outer garments and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier, and they also took the inner garment. But the inner garment was without a seam, being woven from top to bottom. **24** So they said to one another: “Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots over it to decide whose it will be.”^e This was to fulfill the scripture: “They divided my garments among themselves, and they cast lots for my clothing.”^f So the soldiers actually did these things.

CHAP. 19

a Mt 27:32, 33
Mr 15:22

b Joh 3:14
Ac 5:30
Ga 3:13

c Isa 53:9
Mt 27:38
Mr 15:27
Lu 23:33

d Mt 27:37
Mr 15:26
Lu 23:38

e Mt 27:35
Mr 15:24
Lu 23:34

f Ps 22:18

STUDY NOTES

19:17 Golgotha: From a Hebrew word meaning “skull.” (Compare Jg 9:53; 2Ki 9:35; 1Ch 10:10, where the Hebrew word *gul-go’leth* is rendered “skull.”) In Jesus’ day, the site was outside the city walls of Jerusalem. Although the exact location is uncertain, the vicinity of the traditional site where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands is thought by some to be a reasonable possibility. (See  App. B12.) The Bible record does not state that Golgotha was on a hill, though it does mention that some observed the execution from a distance.—Mr 15:40; Lu 23:49.

19:18 See  Gallery, image 84, Nail in a Heel Bone.

19:19 torture stake: Or “execution stake.”—See  Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

19:20 Hebrew: See study note on Joh 5:2.

Latin: This is the only specific mention of the Latin language in the inspired text of the Bible. Latin was the language of the Roman authorities of Israel in Jesus’ day. It appeared on official inscriptions, but it

was not the common language of the people. The multilingual environment apparently explains why the charge that Pilate posted above Jesus Christ’s head at his execution, as mentioned at Joh 19:19, was written in official Latin, as well as in Hebrew and Greek (Koine). There are several words and expressions in the Christian Greek Scriptures that are derived from Latin.—See  Glossary, “Latin”; “Introduction to Mark.”

19:23 took his outer garments and divided them: See study note on Mt 27:35.

19:25 his mother’s sister: See study note on Mr 15:40.

Clopas: In the Bible, this name is mentioned only here. It is understood by many scholars that Clopas was the same person as Alphaeus mentioned at Mt 10:3; Mr 3:18; Lu 6:15; and Ac 1:13. As other examples in the Bible show, it was not uncommon for an individual to have two names that were used interchangeably.—Compare Mt 9:9; 10:2, 3; Mr 2:14.

19:26 the disciple whom he loved: That is, the one whom Jesus especially loved. This is the second of five occurrences

mentioning a certain disciple “whom he [or, “Jesus”] loved” or “for whom Jesus had affection.” (Joh 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20) It is generally believed that the disciple referred to is the apostle John.—See study note on Joh 13:23.

19:27 he said to the disciple: “See! Your mother!”: Jesus’ love and concern moved him to entrust the care of his mother, Mary, (apparently a widow by now) to the beloved apostle John. (See study note on Joh 13:23.) No doubt, Jesus was concerned not just with Mary’s physical and material needs but especially with her spiritual welfare. The apostle John had proved his faith, whereas it is unclear whether Jesus’ fleshly brothers were as yet believers.—Mt 12:46-50; Joh 7:5.

19:29 sour wine: See study note on Mt 27:48.

a hyssop stalk: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *hys’so-pos*, traditionally rendered “hyssop,” appears only twice, here and at Heb 9:19. Scholars have different opinions about what plant is meant at Joh 19:29. Some think that this refers to the same plant commonly referred to as “hyssop” in the Hebrew

CHAP. 19

Jesus Provides for His Mother

- a Lu 2:34, 35
 b Mt 27:55, 56
 Mt 27:61
 Mr 15:40
 Lu 23:49
 c Joh 13:23
 Joh 21:7
 Joh 21:20
 d Ps 22:15
 e Ps 69:21
 Mt 27:48
 Mr 15:36
 Lu 23:36
 f Joh 17:4
 g Isa 53:12
 Mt 27:50
 Mr 15:37
 Lu 23:46
 h Joh 19:14
 i De 21:22, 23
 j Le 23:5-7

25 By the torture stake of Jesus, however, there were standing his mother^a and his mother's sister; Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Mag'da-lene.^b **26** So when Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved^c standing nearby, he said to his mother: "Woman, see! Your son!" **27** Next he said to the disciple: "See! Your mother!" And from that hour on, the disciple took her into his own home.

Death of Jesus

28 After this, when Jesus knew that by now all things had been accomplished, in order to fulfill the scripture he said: "I am thirsty."^d **29** A jar was sitting there full of sour wine. So they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop stalk and held it up to his mouth.^e **30** When he had received the sour wine, Jesus said: "It has been accomplished!"^f and bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.^g

31 Since it was the day of Preparation,^h so that the bodies would not remain on the torture stakesⁱ on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath day was a great one),^j the Jews asked Pilate to

STUDY NOTES

Scriptures, which many identify with marjoram, or *Origanum maru*; *Origanum syriacum*. (Le 14:2-7; Nu 19:6, 18; Ps 51:7) This hyssop was used by the Israelites in Egypt to splash the blood of the Passover victim on the two doorposts and the upper part of the doorway of their houses. (Ex 12:21, 22) Therefore, some have suggested that this plant might have been available when Jesus was executed, since it would have been used in the Passover celebration. Others think that a marjoram stalk is not stiff enough to have supported a wine-soaked sponge or long enough to carry the sponge to Jesus' mouth. Another view is that the hyssop referred to here may have been a bunch of marjoram attached to a reed and held to Jesus' mouth. This would agree with the parallel accounts at Mt 27:48 and Mr 15:36, where it says that the sponge soaked with sour wine was put on "a reed."

See  Gallery, image 125, The Hyssop Mentioned in the Bible.

19:30 he gave up his spirit: Or "he expired; he stopped breathing." The term "spirit" (Greek, *pneu'ma*) may here be understood to refer to "breath" or "life force." This is supported by the use of the Greek verb *ek-pne'o* (lit., "to breathe out") in the parallel accounts at Mr 15:37 and Lu 23:46 (where it is rendered "expired" or, as in the alternative rendering mentioned in the study notes on these verses, "breathed his last"). Some suggest that the use of the Greek term rendered "gave up" means that Jesus voluntarily stopped struggling to stay alive, since all things had **been accomplished**. He willingly "poured out his life even to death."—Isa 53:12; Joh 10:11.

19:31 the day of Preparation: The day preceding the weekly Sabbath. During this day, the Jews got ready for the Sabbath by preparing extra meals and by finishing any work that could not wait until after the Sabbath. In the case mentioned here, the day of Preparation fell on Nisan 14. (Mr 15:42; see  Glossary, "Preparation.") According to the Mosaic Law, dead **bodies** "should not remain all

night on the stake" but, rather, should be buried "on that day."—De 21:22, 23; compare Jos 8:29; 10:26, 27.

that Sabbath day was a great one: Nisan 15, the day after Passover, was always a sabbath, regardless of the day of the week on which it fell. (Le 23:5-7) When this special Sabbath coincided with the regular Sabbath (the seventh day of the Jewish week, which runs from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday), it was "a great" Sabbath. Such a sabbath followed the day of Jesus' death, which was on a Friday. From 31 to 33 C.E., the only year in which Nisan 14 fell on a Friday was the year 33 C.E. This fact leads to the conclusion that Jesus died on Nisan 14, 33 C.E.

have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. **32** So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and those of the other man who was on a stake alongside him. **33** But on coming to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. **34** But one of the soldiers jabbed his side with a spear,^a and immediately blood and water came out. **35** And the one who has seen it has given this witness, and his witness is true, and he knows that what he says is true, so that you also may believe.^b **36** In fact, these things took place for the scripture to be fulfilled: “Not a bone of his will be broken.”^c **37** And again, a different scripture says: “They will look to the one whom they pierced.”^d

CHAP. 19

- a Isa 53:5
Zec 12:10
Joh 20:25
b Joh 20:31
Joh 21:24
1Jo 1:1, 2
c Ex 12:46
Nu 9:12
Ps 34:20
d Zec 12:10
Re 1:7
e Joh 7:13
Joh 9:22
f De 21:22, 23
Mt 27:57-60
Mr 15:43-46
g Joh 3:1, 2
Joh 7:50-52
h Lu 23:55, 56
i Joh 20:7
j 2Ch 16:13, 14

Burial of Jesus

38 Now after these things, Joseph of Ar-i-ma-the'a, who was a disciple of Jesus but a secret one because of his fear of the Jews,^e asked Pilate if he could take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body away.^f **39** Nic-o-de'mus,^g the man who had come to him in the night the first time, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about a hundred pounds.^h **40** So they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices,ⁱ according to the burial custom of the Jews.^j **41** Incidentally,

STUDY NOTES

19:31 to have the legs broken: In Latin, this practice was called *crurifragium*. A brutal form of punishment, it was likely done in this case to hasten the death of those executed on stakes. A person hanging on a stake had difficulty breathing. With his legs broken, he would not be able to raise his body and relieve the pressure on his lungs, so he would suffocate.

19:34 See  Gallery, image 126, Roman Spears.

19:36 Not a bone of his will be broken: This is a quotation from Ps 34:20. At the institution of the Passover, Jehovah commanded regarding the lamb (or goat) slaughtered on that night: “You must not break any of its bones.” (Ex 12:46; Nu 9:12) Paul called Jesus “our Passover lamb,” and true to the pattern as well as the prophecy at Ps 34:20, none of Jesus’ bones were broken. (1Co 5:7; see study note on Joh 1:29.) This took place as fore-

told, even though it was apparently customary for Roman soldiers to break the legs of those who were executed on the stake, likely to hasten death. (See study note on Joh 19:31.) The soldiers did break the legs of the two criminals alongside Jesus, but when they found that Jesus had already died, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of them “jabbed his side with a spear.”—Joh 19:33, 34.

19:38 Joseph: See study note on Mr 15:43.

Arimathea: See study note on Mt 27:57.

the Jews: Apparently referring to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

19:39 Nicodemus: Only John mentions that Nicodemus joined Joseph of Arimathea in preparing Jesus’ body for burial.—See study note on Joh 3:1.

a mixture: Some manuscripts read “a roll,” but the main text reading has strong

support in early authoritative manuscripts.

myrrh: See  Glossary.

aloes: A name applied to a type of tree containing a fragrant, or aromatic, substance used as a perfume in the Biblical period. (Ps 45:8; Pr 7:17; Ca 4:14) The aloes brought by Nicodemus were likely the same as the aloeswood product that was referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures. In connection with preparing a dead body for burial, aloes were used in the form of a powder together with the myrrh, possibly to overpower the smell of decay. Most commentators consider the aloe tree of the Bible to be the *Aquilaria agallocha*, sometimes called the eaglewood tree and now found principally in India and neighboring regions. The tree may reach a height of 30 m (c. 100 ft). The inner core of the trunk and the branches is impregnated with resin and a fragrant oil, from which comes the highly prized per-

CHAP. 19

^a Isa 53:9
^b Joh 19:14

CHAP. 20

^c Mt 28:1
 Mr 16:1, 2
^d Lu 24:1-3
^e Joh 13:23
 Joh 19:26
 Joh 21:24
^f Joh 19:41, 42
^g Joh 19:40
^h Ps 16:10
 Mt 16:21
 Ac 2:27

there was a garden at the place where he was executed,* and in the garden was a new tomb^a in which no one had ever yet been laid. **42** Because it was the day of Preparation^b of the Jews and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

The Empty Tomb

20 On the first day of the week, Mary Mag'da-lene came to the tomb early,^c while it was still dark, and she saw that the stone had already been taken away from the tomb.^d **2** So she came running to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, for whom Jesus had affection,^e and she said to them: "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb,^f and we do not know where they have laid him."

3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out for the tomb. **4** The two of them began running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and reached the tomb first. **5** Stooping forward, he saw the linen cloths lying there,^g but he did not go in. **6** Then Simon Peter also came, following him, and he went into the tomb. And he saw the linen cloths lying there. **7** The cloth that had been on his head was not lying with the other cloth bands but was rolled up in a place by itself. **8** Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed. **9** For they did not yet understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead.^h **10** So the disciples went back to their homes.

FOOTNOTES

19:41 *Or "executed on the stake."

STUDY NOTES

fume. Apparently attaining its most aromatic state when in decay, the wood is sometimes buried in the ground to hasten the decaying process. It was ground into a fine powder and then sold as "aloes." Some scholars feel that the term "aloes" in this text refers to the plant of the lily family that now bears the botanical name *Aloe vera*, which is used, not for its aroma, but for health-related purposes.

pounds: The Greek term *li'tra* (singular) is usually equated with the Roman pound (Latin, *libra*) that weighed 327 g (11.5 oz). Thus the mixture mentioned here weighed about 33 kg (72 lb).—See  App. B14.

19:41 tomb: See study note on Mt 27:60.

See  Gallery, image 85, Tomb Chamber.

20:1 the first day of the week: See study note on Mt 28:1.

tomb: Or "memorial tomb."—See  Glossary, "Memorial tomb."

20:2 the other disciple, for whom Jesus had affection: That is, the one for whom Jesus had special affection. This is the third of five occurrences mentioning a certain disciple "whom Jesus [or, "he"] loved" or "for whom Jesus had affection." (Joh 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20) It is generally believed that the disciple referred to is the apostle John. (See study notes on Joh 13:23; 18:15.) In the four other occurrences, the Greek word *a-ga-pa'o* is used. This verse uses a synonym, the Greek word *phi-le'o*, often rendered "have affec-

tion for" in this translation.—Mt 10:37; Joh 11:3, 36; 16:27; Joh 21:15-17; 1Co 16:22; Tit 3:15; Re 3:19; see study notes on Joh 5:20; 16:27; 21:15.

20:9 the scripture: Probably referring to Ps 16:10 or Isa 53:10. Certain prophecies about the Messiah were not yet understood, even by Jesus' disciples. This was particularly true about those prophecies dealing with the Messiah's rejection, suffering, death, and resurrection.—Isa 53:3, 5, 12; Mt 16:21-23; 17:22, 23; Lu 24:21; Joh 12:34.

Two Angels and Jesus Appear to Mary Magdalene

11 Mary, however, kept standing outside near the tomb, weeping. While she was weeping, she stooped forward to look into the tomb, **12** and she saw two angels^a in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and one at the feet. **13** And they said to her: “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them: “They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have laid him.” **14** After saying this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.^b **15** Jesus said to her: “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” She, thinking it was the gardener, said to him: “Sir, if you have carried him off, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” **16** Jesus said to her: “Mary!” On turning around, she said to him in Hebrew: “*Rab-bo’ni!*” (which means “Teacher!”) **17** Jesus said to her: “Stop clinging to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers^c and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father^d and your Father and to my God^e and your God.’” **18** Mary Mag’da-lene came and brought the news to the disciples: “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them what he had said to her.^f

CHAP. 20

- a Mr 16:5
- b Lu 24:15, 16
Lu 24:30, 31
Joh 21:4
- c Mt 28:10
- d Joh 14:28
Joh 16:28
- e 1Co 11:3
Eph 1:17
Col 1:3
- f Lu 24:9, 10

Jesus Appears to His Disciples Behind Locked Doors

19 When it was late that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them:

STUDY NOTES

20:16 Hebrew: See study note on Joh 5:2.

Rabboni: A Semitic word meaning “My Teacher.” Some think that originally “*Rabboni*” was a more respectful title or that it conveyed more warmth than the form “Rabbi.” However, here and at Joh 1:38, John simply translated both titles as **Teacher**. Perhaps the first person suffix (“-i” meaning “my”) added in the title “*Rabboni*” had lost its special significance by the time John wrote his Gospel.

20:17 Stop clinging to me: The Greek verb *ha’pto-mai* can mean either “to touch” or “to cling to; to hang on to.” Some translations render Jesus’ words:

“Do not touch me.” However, Jesus was not objecting to Mary Magdalene’s merely touching him, since he did not object when other women who saw him after he was resurrected “took hold of his feet.” (Mt 28:9) It appears that Mary Magdalene feared that Jesus was about to ascend to heaven. Moved by her strong desire to be with her Lord, she was holding fast to Jesus, not letting him go. To assure her that he was not yet leaving, Jesus instructed Mary to stop clinging to him and, instead, to go to his disciples and declare the news of his resurrection.

my God and your God: This conversation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene on Nisan 16, 33 C.E., shows that the resurrected Jesus viewed the Father as his

God, just as the Father was God to Mary Magdalene. Two days earlier, when on the torture stake, Jesus had cried out: “My God, my God,” fulfilling the prophecy found at Ps 22:1 and acknowledging his Father as his God. (Mt 27:46; Mr 15:34; Lu 23:46) In the book of Revelation, Jesus also speaks of his Father as “my God.” (Re 3:2, 12) These passages confirm that the resurrected, glorified Jesus Christ worships the heavenly Father as his God, just as Jesus’ disciples do.

20:19 the Jews: Apparently referring to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

20:24 the Twin: See study note on Joh 11:16.

CHAP. 20

- a Lu 24:36
 b Lu 24:39, 40
 Joh 19:34
 c Joh 16:22
 d Lu 24:36
 e Isa 61:1
 Joh 5:36
 f Mt 28:19, 20
 Joh 17:18
 g Ac 2:2
 Ac 2:4
 h Joh 11:16
 i Mt 10:2, 3
 j Joh 19:34
 k Joh 14:5
 l Joh 20:19
 1Co 15:3, 5
 m Joh 20:17, 31
 n 2Co 5:7

“May you have peace.”^a **20** After saying this, he showed them his hands and his side.^b Then the disciples rejoiced at seeing the Lord.^c **21** Jesus said to them again: “May you have peace.^d Just as the Father has sent me,^e I also am sending you.”^f **22** After saying this he blew on them and said to them: “Receive holy spirit.^g **23** If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you retain those of anyone, they are retained.”

Thomas Doubts but Is Later Convinced

24 But Thomas,^h one of the Twelve,ⁱ who was called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. **25** So the other disciples were telling him: “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them: “Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and stick my finger into the print* of the nails and stick my hand into his side,^j I will never believe it.”^k

26 Well, eight days later his disciples were again indoors, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and he stood in their midst and said: “May you have peace.”^l **27** Next he said to Thomas: “Put your finger here, and see my hands, and take your hand and stick it into my side, and stop doubting* but believe.” **28** In answer Thomas said to him: “My Lord and my God!”^m **29** Jesus said to him: “Because you have seen me, have you believed? Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.”ⁿ

FOOTNOTES

20:25 * Or “mark.” **20:27** * Lit., “do not be unbelieving.”

STUDY NOTES

20:28 My Lord and my God! Lit., “The Lord of me and the God [*ho the-os'*] of me!” Some scholars view this expression as an exclamation of astonishment spoken to Jesus but actually directed to God, his Father. Others claim that the original Greek requires that the words be viewed as being directed to Jesus. Even if this is so, the intent of the expression “my Lord and my God” is best understood in the context of the rest of the inspired Scriptures. Since the record shows that Jesus had previously sent his disciples the message, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father and to my God and your God,” there is no reason to

believe that Thomas thought that Jesus was the almighty God. (See study note on Joh 20:17.) Thomas had heard Jesus pray to his “Father,” calling him “the only true God.” (Joh 17:1-3) So Thomas may have addressed Jesus as “my God” for the following reasons: He viewed Jesus as being “a god” though not the almighty God. (See study note on Joh 1:1.) Or he may have addressed Jesus in a manner similar to the way that servants of God addressed angelic messengers of Jehovah, as recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. Thomas would have been familiar with accounts in which individuals, or at times the Bible writer of the account, responded to or spoke of an angelic messenger as though he were Jehovah God. (Compare Ge 16:7-11, 13; 18:1-5, 22-33; 32:24-30; Jg 6:11-15; 13:20-22.) Therefore, Thomas may have called Jesus “my God” in this sense, acknowledging Jesus as the

representative and spokesman of the true God.

Some argue that the use of the Greek definite article before the words for “lord” and “god” indicates that these words refer to the almighty God. However, in this context the use of the article may simply reflect Greek grammar. Cases where a nominative noun with the definite article is used as vocative in Greek can be illustrated by a literal translation of such scriptures as Lu 12:32 (lit., “the little flock”) and Col 3:18-4:1 (lit., “the wives”; “the husbands”; “the children”; “the fathers”; “the slaves”; “the masters”). In a similar way, a literal translation of 1Pe 3:7 would read: “The husbands.” So the use of the article here may not be of significance in determining what Thomas had in mind when he made his statement.

Purpose of “This Scroll”

30 To be sure, Jesus also performed many other signs before the disciples, which are not written down in this scroll.^a

31 But these have been written down so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and because of believing, you may have life by means of his name.^b

Jesus Again Appears to His Disciples

21 After this Jesus manifested himself* again to the disciples, at the Sea of Ti-be’ri-as. He made the manifestation in this way. **2** There were together Simon Peter, Thomas (who was called the Twin),^c Na-than’a-el^d from Ca’na of Gal’i-lee, the sons of Zeb’e-dee,^e and two others of his disciples. **3** Simon Peter said to them: “I am going fishing.” They said to him: “We are coming with you.” They went out and got aboard the boat, but during that night they caught nothing.^f

4 However, just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.^g

5 Then Jesus said to them: “Children, you do not have anything to eat, do you?” They answered: “No!” **6** He said to them: “Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” So they cast it, but they were not able to haul it in because of the

CHAP. 20

a Joh 21:25
b Joh 3:15
Joh 5:24
1Pe 1:8, 9
1Jo 5:13

CHAP. 21

c Joh 11:16
Joh 20:24
d Joh 1:45
e Mt 4:21
f Lu 5:4, 5
g Lu 24:15, 16
Joh 20:11
Joh 20:14

FOOTNOTES

21:1 *Or “appeared.”

STUDY NOTES

21:3 See  Gallery, image 24, First-Century Fishing Boat.

See  Gallery, image 25, Remains of a Galilean Fishing Boat.

21:5 Children: Or “Young children.” The Greek word *pai-di-on* (diminutive of *pais*, “child”) is an endearing form of address that may indicate a fatherly interest. Here it is used as an affectionate expression of friendship.

anything to eat: Or “any fish.” The Greek word *pro-spha’gi-on* occurs only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. In non-Biblical texts, it describes something that can be eaten with bread. In this context, used in a question addressed to a group of fishermen, it obviously refers to fish.

21:7 the disciple whom Jesus loved:

That is, the one whom Jesus especially loved. This is the fourth of five occurrences mentioning a certain disciple “whom Jesus [or “he”] loved” or “for whom Jesus had affection.” (Joh 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20) It is generally believed that this disciple was the apostle John, the son of Zebedee and brother of James.—Mt 4:21; Mr 1:19; Lu 5:10; Joh 21:2; the reasons for this identification are given in the study notes on Joh 13:23; 21:20.

naked: Or “lightly clad.” The Greek word *gy-mnos*’ can have the meaning “lightly clad; in the undergarment only.”—Jas 2:15, ftn.; see study note on Mt 25:36.

21:8 about 300 feet: About 90 m.

Lit., “about 200 cubits.” The Greek word *pe’khys* (rendered “cubit(s)” at Mt 6:27; Lu 12:25; Re 21:17) refers to a short measure that is roughly the distance from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. The

Israelites commonly used a cubit of about 44.5 cm (17.5 in.).—See  Glossary, “Cubit,” and  App. B14.

21:9 See  Gallery, image 22, Fish of the Sea of Galilee.

CHAP. 21

^a Lu 5:4
Lu 5:6

^b Joh 13:23
Joh 19:26
Joh 20:2

^c Ac 10:40, 41

^d Joh 20:19
Joh 20:26

large number of fish.^a **7** Then the disciple whom Jesus loved^b said to Peter: “It is the Lord!” Now Simon Peter, on hearing that it was the Lord, put on* his outer garment, for he was naked, and plunged into the sea. **8** But the other disciples came in the small boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not a long way from land, only about 300 feet away.

9 When they came ashore, they saw there a charcoal fire with fish lying on it and bread. **10** Jesus said to them: “Bring some of the fish you just now caught.” **11** So Simon Peter went on board and hauled the net ashore full of big fish, 153 of them. And though there were so many, the net did not burst. **12** Jesus said to them: “Come, have your breakfast.”^c Not one of the disciples had the courage to ask him: “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. **13** Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish. **14** This was now the third time^d that Jesus appeared to the disciples after being raised up from the dead.

Peter Affirms His Love for Jesus

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter: “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

FOOTNOTES

21:7 *Or “wrapped around himself; girded about himself.”

STUDY NOTES

21:15 **Jesus said to Simon Peter:** This conversation between Jesus and Peter took place shortly after Peter had denied Jesus three times. Jesus asked three probing questions about Peter’s feelings for him, to the point that “Peter became grieved.” (Joh 21:17) John’s account recorded at Joh 21:15-17 uses two different Greek verbs: *a-ga-pa’o*, rendered **love**, and *phi-le’o*, rendered **have affection**. Twice Jesus asked Peter: “Do you love me?” Both times Peter earnestly affirmed that he had “affection” for Jesus. Finally, Jesus asked: “Do you have affection for me?” Again Peter asserted that he did. Each time Peter affirmed his love, Jesus emphasized that this love and affection should motivate Peter to **feed** and “shepherd” Jesus’ disciples spiritually, here referred to as his **lambs**, or “little sheep.”

(Joh 21:16, 17; 1Pe 5:1-3) Jesus allowed Peter to confirm his love three times and then entrusted him with the responsibility to care for the sheep. In this way, Jesus dispelled any doubts that he had forgiven Peter for denying him three times.

John: According to some ancient manuscripts, the father of the apostle Peter is here called John. In other ancient manuscripts, he is called Jona. At Mt 16:17, Jesus addresses Peter as “Simon son of Jonah.” (See study note on Mt 16:17.) According to some scholars, the Greek forms of the names John and Jona(h) may be different spellings of the same Hebrew name.

do you love me more than these?: Grammatically, the phrase “more than these” can be understood in more than one way. Some scholars prefer such a meaning as “do you love me more than you love these other disciples?” or “do you love me more than these disciples love me?” However, the likely meaning is “do you love me more than these things?” that is, the fish they caught or the things

connected with the fishing business. So the overall idea of the verse seems to be: ‘Do you love me more than material things or pursuits? If so, feed my lambs.’ The question would be appropriate in view of Peter’s past. Although Peter was one of Jesus’ first disciples (Joh 1:35-42), he did not immediately follow Jesus full-time. Rather, he returned to his fishing. Some months later, Jesus called Peter away from that substantial business to become a ‘fisher of men.’ (Mt 4:18-20; Lu 5:1-11) Shortly after Jesus’ death, Peter announced that he was going fishing, and other apostles joined him. (Joh 21:2, 3) So it seems likely that Jesus is here driving home to Peter the need for making a decisive choice: Would he put first in his life a career in the fishing business, represented by the fish piled before them, or would he give priority to the work of spiritually feeding Jesus’ lambs, or followers?—Joh 21:4-8.

He replied to him: “Yes, Lord, you know I have affection for you.” He said to him: “Feed my lambs.”^a **16** Again he said to him a second time: “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He replied: “Yes, Lord, you know I have affection for you.” He said to him: “Shepherd my little sheep.”^b **17** He said to him a third time: “Simon son of John, do you have affection for me?” Peter became grieved that he asked him the third time: “Do you have affection for me?” So he said to him: “Lord, you are aware of all things; you know that I have affection for you.” Jesus said to him: “Feed my little sheep.”^c **18** Most truly I say to you, when you were younger, you used to clothe yourself and walk about where you wanted. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and another man will clothe you and carry you where you do not wish.”^d **19** He said this to indicate by what sort of death he would glorify God. After he said this, he said to him: “Continue following me.”^e

CHAP. 21

- a Lu 22:32
Ac 20:28
1Pe 5:2, 3
- b Ac 1:15
Heb 13:20
1Pe 2:25
- c Joh 10:14, 15
d 2Pe 1:13, 14
- e Mt 16:24
Mt 19:28
Joh 12:26
Re 14:4

STUDY NOTES

21:16 love . . . have affection: See study note on Joh 21:15.

little sheep: The Greek word *pro-ba'ti-on*, here and in verse 17 rendered “little sheep,” is the diminutive form of the Greek word for “sheep.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, diminutives are often used to indicate affection and familiarity. —See  Glossary, “Diminutive.”

21:17 a third time: Peter had denied his Lord three times; Jesus now gave him the opportunity to affirm his feelings three times. As Peter did so, Jesus told him to show that love and affection by putting sacred service ahead of all else. Along with other responsible brothers, Peter would feed, strengthen, and shepherd Christ’s flock of faithful followers. These ones were anointed but still needed to be fed spiritually.—Lu 22:32.

21:20 the disciple whom Jesus loved: That is, the one whom Jesus especially loved. This is the last of five occurrences mentioning a certain disciple “whom Jesus [or “he”] loved” or “for whom Jesus had affection.” (Joh 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20) It is generally believed that this disciple was the apostle John, the son of Zebedee and brother of James. (Mt 4:21; Mr 1:19; Lu 5:10; Joh 21:2) As the context

of Joh 21:20-24 shows, “the disciple whom Jesus loved” was also “the disciple who . . . wrote these things,” that is, the writer of the Gospel of John.—See “Introduction to John” and study notes on **John**; Joh 1:6; 13:23.

the one who . . . leaned back on his chest: See study note on Joh 13:23.

21:22 until I come: These words may have given the other apostles the impression that the apostle John would outlive them. In fact, he served faithfully for almost another 70 years and was likely the last apostle to die. Also, the expression “until I come” may have reminded Jesus’ disciples of his reference to “the Son of man coming in his Kingdom.” (Mt 16:28) In a sense, John did remain until Jesus came. Near the end of John’s life, while in exile on the isle of Patmos, he received the Revelation with all its amazing prophetic signs of events that were to occur during “the Lord’s day” when Jesus would come in Kingdom power. John was so deeply moved by these spectacular visions that when Jesus said: “Yes; I am coming quickly,” John exclaimed: “Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.”—Re 1:1, 9, 10; 22:20.

21:25 many other things that Jesus did: Using hyperbole, John wrote that **the world itself** would not have room for all **the scrolls** (the book style then used)

needed to record every detail about Jesus’ life and ministry. The Greek term John used for “world” (*ko’smos*) could have been understood in the broad sense of the whole human society (with its then existing libraries), though it was sometimes used in secular Greek writings to refer to the whole universe, that is, the greatest space conceivable. (Compare study note on Ac 17:24.) John’s point was that much more could have been written, but there is enough in John’s “scroll” and the other inspired Scriptures to prove beyond doubt that “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” (Joh 20:30, 31) John’s relatively brief written record reveals a beautiful portrait of God’s Son.

CHAP. 21

Future of Jesus' Beloved Disciple

a Joh 13:23
Joh 20:2

b Joh 13:23
Joh 19:26
Joh 20:2
Joh 21:7

c Joh 19:35
Re 1:9

d Joh 20:30, 31

20 Peter turned around and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved^a following, the one who at the evening meal had also leaned back on his chest and said: “Lord, who is the one betraying you?” **21** So when he caught sight of him, Peter said to Jesus: “Lord, what about this man?” **22** Jesus said to him: “If it is my will for him to remain until I come, of what concern is that to you? You continue following me.” **23** So the saying went out among the brothers that this disciple would not die. However, Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but he said: “If it is my will for him to remain until I come, of what concern is that to you?”

Final Remarks

24 This is the disciple^b who gives this witness about these things and who wrote these things, and we know that his witness is true.^c

25 There are also, in fact, many other things that Jesus did, which if ever they were written in full detail, I suppose the world itself could not contain the scrolls written.^d

ACTS

OF APOSTLES



- Acts of Apostles describes the founding of the Christian congregation as a result of the operation of the holy spirit. Luke picks up the account where his Gospel left off. In Acts, Luke records important events of the period from 33 to about 61 C.E., covering approximately 28 years. The greater part of the material in the first 12 chapters reports the activities of Peter, and the remaining 16 chapters, the activities of Paul.
- Luke addressed his Gospel and the Acts of Apostles to Theophilus. (Lu 1:3, 4; Ac 1:1) Theophilus was apparently a Christian, for he had already been “taught orally” about Jesus Christ and his ministry.—Lu 1:4; see study note on Lu 1:3.
- The account of Acts reveals that it was first in Antioch of Syria that the disciples were “by divine providence called Christians.”—Ac 11:26.
- Luke apparently became a believer sometime after 33 C.E. He was not one of the apostles, but he was associated with those who were. In three instances, the apostle Paul mentions Luke by name. For some years he was the constant companion of Paul, who called him “the beloved physician.”—Col 4:14; 2Ti 4:11; Phm 24.
- The book of Acts mentions about 100 individuals by name. It makes reference to about 100 geographical places (including regions, provinces, cities, and islands) around or near the Mediterranean Sea. Archaeological findings support the accuracy of Luke’s account. For example, excavations at Ephesus have unearthed the temple of Artemis as well as the ancient theater where the Ephesians rioted against the apostle Paul. (Ac 19:27-41) Inscriptions have been discovered that confirm the correctness of Luke’s use of the Greek title rendered “city rulers” as applying to the officials of Thessalonica. (Ac 17:6, 8) Two Maltese inscriptions, one in Latin and one in Greek, show that Luke was also correct in referring to Publius by the Greek term rendered “the principal man” of Malta. (Ac 28:7) Similarly, an inscription was found that made it evident that Luke accurately identified Gallio as the “proconsul of Achaia.”—Ac 18:12.
- Like the Gospel accounts, the book of Acts confirms the authenticity and inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Peter cited two prophecies written by King David that found fulfillment in the traitor Judas. (Ac 1:16, 20; Ps 69:25; 109:8) And Peter told the astonished Pentecost crowd that they were witnessing the fulfillment of a prophecy of Joel. (Ac 2:16-21; Joe 2:28-32) Events recorded in Acts also show how Philip, James, and Paul based their teaching on the Hebrew Scriptures.—Ac 8:28-35; 15:15-18; 26:22; 28:23, 25-27.

Writer: Luke

Place Written: Rome

Writing Completed: c. 61 C.E.

Time Covered: 33–c. 61 C.E.

STUDY NOTES

Acts of Apostles: The Greek title *Pra'xeis A-po-sto'lon* is found in some manuscripts going back to the second century C.E.,

though there is no evidence that this book originally had a title. The book is a continuation of the Gospel written by Luke. (See study note on Ac 1:1.) It covers primarily the activities of Peter and Paul, not those of all the apostles. The book provides a reliable and comprehensive history of the spectacular beginning and rapid development of the Christian congregation, first among the Jews, next among the Samar-

itans, and then among the Gentiles. (See study note on Mt 16:19.) The book also provides a historical background for the inspired letters of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

See  Gallery, map 5, Acts of Apostles—Some Major Events.

OVERVIEW OF ACTS

1:1-8

Preparations for a Worldwide Witnessing Work

Address to Theophilus (1:1, 2)

Jesus shows himself during 40 days and speaks about God's Kingdom (1:3)

Jesus instructs the apostles to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the promised holy spirit (1:4, 5)

Jesus answers the apostles' question about when the kingdom will be restored to Israel (1:6, 7)

Jesus commissions the apostles to be witnesses of him to the ends of the earth (1:8)

1:9-2:13

From Jesus' Ascension to the Outpouring of Holy Spirit at Pentecost 33 C.E.

Jesus ascends to heaven, and the promise is made that he will come in the same manner (1:9-11)

The apostles gather to pray, together with Jesus' mother and brothers (1:12-14)

Matthias chosen to replace Judas as one of the Twelve (1:15-26)

Holy spirit poured out on the disciples, who start to speak foreign languages (2:1-4)

Jews from all parts of the Roman Empire hear about the magnificent things of God (2:5-13)

2:14-3:26

Witnessing in Jerusalem

Peter quotes Joel's prophecy about the outpouring of holy spirit and Jehovah's illustrious day (2:14-21)

Peter's speech provides Scriptural evidence that Jesus was resurrected and was made both Lord and Christ (2:22-36)

Crowds respond to Peter's speech; about 3,000 get baptized (2:37-41)

The disciples enjoy the apostles' teaching and the fellowship with one another (2:42-47)

Peter heals a lame beggar at the temple gate called Beautiful (3:1-10)

Peter speaks at Solomon's Colonnade (3:11-18)

Peter admonishes the people to repent and turn around (3:19-26)

4:1-5:42

Witnessing Despite Opposition

Peter and John arrested; believers now number about 5,000 men (4:1-4)

Peter's defense before the Sanhedrin (4:5-22)

The disciples pray for boldness to keep speaking God's word (4:23-31)

The disciples share possessions (4:32-37)

Ananias and Sapphira put Jehovah's spirit to the test (5:1-11)

The apostles perform many signs (5:12-16)

The apostles are imprisoned but are set free by an angel from Jehovah (5:17-21a)

The apostles again brought before the Sanhedrin (5:21b-32)

Gamaliel's advice about not to "be found fighters against God" (5:33-40)

The apostles preach in the temple and from house to house (5:41, 42)

6:1-7:1

Ministry of the Word Not to Be Neglected

Complaints regarding the distribution of food to widows (6:1)

The Twelve choose seven men to oversee the food distribution for widows (6:2-7)

Stephen, one of the seven, accused of blasphemy and brought before the Sanhedrin (6:8-7:1)

7:2-60

Stephen Defends His Faith Before the Sanhedrin

Reviews the era of the patriarchs (7:2-16)

Reviews Moses' early life and leadership and Israel's idolatry (7:17-43)

Points out that God does not live in man-made temples (7:44-50)

Accuses his opposers of resisting the holy spirit (7:51-53)

Sees Jesus and Jehovah in a vision; stoned to death by opposers (7:54-60)

8:1-9:43

The Witnessing Spreads to Samaria and Beyond; Saul's Conversion

Persecution breaks out in Jerusalem; the local congregation is dispersed (8:1-4)

Philip's fruitful ministry in Samaria (8:5-13)

Peter and John sent to Samaria; the Samaritans receive holy spirit (8:14-17)

The former magician Simon tries to buy the free gift of holy spirit (8:18-24)

Philip sent to preach to an Ethiopian eunuch (8:25-40)

Saul travels to Damascus to persecute the disciples (9:1, 2)

In a light from heaven, Jesus reveals himself to Saul (9:3-9)

The disciple Ananias sent to help Saul (9:10-19a)

In Damascus, Saul preaches about Jesus (9:19b-25)

Saul visits Jerusalem and speaks boldly in Jesus' name (9:26-30)

The congregation throughout the whole of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enters a period of peace (9:31)

Peter ministers in the cities of the coastal plain; heals Aeneas in Lydda (9:32-35)

Peter resurrects generous Dorcas in Joppa (9:36-43)

10:1-12:25

The Witnessing Reaches Uncircumcised Gentiles in Caesarea and Antioch of Syria

Army officer Cornelius sees a vision and sends for Peter (10:1-8)

Peter's vision of cleansed animals (10:9-16)

Peter visits Cornelius, and Cornelius tells about his vision (10:17-33)

Peter proclaims the good news to Gentiles; "God is not partial" (10:34-43)

Gentiles receive holy spirit and get baptized (10:44-48)

Peter reports to the apostles in Jerusalem (11:1-18)

Barnabas and Saul preach to Greeks in Syrian Antioch, where the disciples are first called Christians (11:19-26)

The Christian prophet Agabus foretells a famine; relief sent to the brothers in Judea (11:27-30)

King Herod kills James and imprisons Peter (12:1-5)

An angel of Jehovah sets Peter free from prison (12:6-19)

Herod struck by an angel of Jehovah (12:20-25)

13:1-14:28

Paul's First Missionary Tour

Barnabas and Saul sent out as missionaries (13:1-3)

Ministry on Cyprus; proconsul Sergius Paulus and sorcerer Elymas (13:4-12)

Paul's speech in Antioch in Pisidia (13:13-41)

Prophetic command to turn to the nations (13:42-52)

Increase and opposition in Iconium (14:1-7)

People of Lystra think that Paul and Barnabas are gods (14:8-18)

Paul survives stoning in Lystra (14:19, 20)

Paul and Barnabas strengthen the congregations (14:21-23)

Paul and Barnabas travel back to Antioch of Syria (14:24-28)

15:1-35

The Jerusalem Meeting Regarding Circumcision

The dispute in Antioch regarding circumcision brought to Jerusalem (15:1-5)

The apostles and elders in Jerusalem meet; testimonies from Peter, Paul, and Barnabas (15:6-12)

James' proposal based on the Scriptures (15:13-21)

Letter from the governing body in Jerusalem (15:22-29)

The congregations encouraged by the letter (15:30-35)

15:36-18:22

Paul's Second Missionary Tour

Paul and Barnabas go separate ways (15:36-41)

Paul selects Timothy as a traveling companion (16:1-5)

Vision of the Macedonian man; the witnessing spreads to Europe (16:6-10)

Lydia's conversion in Philippi (16:11-15)

Paul and Silas imprisoned in Philippi (16:16-24)

The jailer and his household baptized (16:25-34)

Paul requests an official apology (16:35-40)

Paul and Silas in Thessalonica (17:1-9)

Paul and Silas in Berea (17:10-15)

Paul in Athens (17:16-22a)

Paul's speech at the Areopagus (17:22b-31)

Different reactions to Paul's speech; some become believers (17:32-34)

Paul's ministry in Corinth (18:1-17)

Paul returns to Antioch of Syria via Ephesus (18:18-22)

18:23-21:17

Paul's Third Missionary Tour

Paul departs for Galatia and Phrygia (18:23)

Eloquent Apollos gets help from Priscilla and Aquila; travels to Achaia (18:24-28)

Paul arrives in Ephesus; some disciples rebaptized, now in Jesus' name (19:1-7)

Paul's teaching activities in Ephesus (19:8-10)

Jehovah's word prevails despite demonism in Ephesus (19:11-20)

Riot in Ephesus; crowd rushes into the theater (19:21-34)

The city recorder of Ephesus quiets the crowd (19:35-41)

Paul in Macedonia and Greece (20:1-6)

Eutychus resurrected in Troas (20:7-12)

Paul leaves Troas for Miletus (20:13-16)

Paul encourages Ephesian elders to pay attention to themselves and to God's flock (20:17-38)

En route to Jerusalem (21:1-14)

Arrival in Jerusalem (21:15-17)

21:18-23:35

Paul's Imprisonment in Jerusalem

Paul follows the elders' counsel (21:18-26)

Riot in the temple; Romans arrest Paul (21:27-36)

Paul allowed to address the crowd (21:37-40)

Paul's defense before the crowd; he describes his own conversion (22:1-21)

Paul takes advantage of his Roman citizenship (22:22-29)
 Sanhedrin assembled (22:30)
 Paul speaks before the Sanhedrin (23:1-10)
 Paul strengthened by the Lord (23:11)
 Conspiracy to kill Paul (23:12-22)
 Roman soldiers transfer Paul to Caesarea (23:23-35)

24:1–26:32

Paul's Imprisonment in Caesarea

Accusations presented against Paul (24:1-9)
 Paul's defense before Felix (24:10-21)
 Paul's case put on hold for two years (24:22-27)
 Paul's trial before Festus; "I appeal to Caesar!" (25:1-12)
 Festus consults with King Agrippa (25:13-22)
 Paul's defense before Agrippa (25:23–26:11)
 In his speech before Agrippa, Paul describes his own conversion (26:12-23)
 Festus' and Agrippa's responses (26:24-32)

27:1–28:16

Paul's Journey to Rome

Paul leaves Caesarea for Rome on a ship from Adramyttium (27:1-12)
 Storm strikes the ship (27:13-38)
 Shipwreck (27:39-44)
 Ashore on Malta; Paul survives a snakebite (28:1-6)
 Paul cures Publius' father and others (28:7-10)
 On to Rome via Syracuse, Rhegium, and Puteoli (28:11-16)

28:17-31

Paul in Rome

Paul speaks to Jewish leaders in Rome (28:17-29)
 Paul preaches with boldness for two years (28:30, 31)

ACTS OF APOSTLES

Address to Theophilus

CHAP. 1

1 The first account, O The-oph'i-lus, I composed about all the things Jesus started to do and to teach^a **2** until the day that he was taken up,^b after he had given instructions through holy spirit to the apostles he had chosen.^c **3** After he had suffered, he showed himself alive to them by many convincing proofs.^d He was seen by them throughout 40 days, and he was speaking about the Kingdom of God.^e **4** While he was meeting with them, he ordered them: "Do not leave Jerusalem,^f but keep waiting for what the Father has promised,^g about which you heard from me; **5** for John, indeed, baptized with water, but you will be baptized with holy spirit^h not many days after this."

- a Lu 1:3
Lu 3:23
b Lu 24:51
Eph 4:10
1Ti 3:16
c Lu 6:13
Joh 15:16
d Mt 28:9
Joh 20:19
1Co 15:4-7
e Lu 24:27
f Lu 24:49
g Joh 14:16, 17
Ac 2:33
h Joe 2:28
Mt 3:11
Mr 1:8

STUDY NOTES

1:1 The first account: Luke here refers to his Gospel account of Jesus' life. In his Gospel account, Luke focused on "all the things Jesus started to do and to teach." In the book of Acts, Luke picks up where he left off and records what Jesus' followers said and did. The accounts are similar in style and wording, and both are addressed to **Theophilus**. Whether Theophilus was a disciple of Christ is not stated explicitly. (See study note on Lu 1:3.) Luke begins the book of Acts by summarizing many of the events recorded at the end of his Gospel, clearly indicating that this second account is a continuation of the first. In this summary, however, Luke uses somewhat different wording and provides extra details.—Compare Lu 24:49 with Ac 1:1-12.

Theophilus: Both Luke's Gospel and Acts of Apostles are addressed to this man. At Lu 1:3, his name is preceded by the title "most excellent."—For more information on the use of this expression and the background of Theophilus, see study note on Lu 1:3.

1:3 the Kingdom of God: The overriding theme of the entire Bible, Jehovah's Kingdom, dominates the book of Acts. (Ac 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:31) The book emphasizes that the apostles bore "thor-

ough witness" concerning that Kingdom and fully accomplished their ministry.—Ac 2:40; 5:42; 8:25; 10:42; 20:21, 24; 23:11; 26:22; 28:23.

1:7 times or seasons: Two aspects of time are mentioned here. The plural form of the Greek word *khro'nos*, rendered **times**, may refer to an unspecified period of time, long or short. The Greek word *kai-ros*' (sometimes rendered "appointed time[s]"); the plural form is here rendered **seasons**) is often used with reference to future time periods within God's arrangement or timetable, particularly in relation to Christ's presence and his Kingdom.—Ac 3:19; 1Th 5:1; see study notes on Mr 1:15; Lu 21:24.

in his own jurisdiction: Or "under his own authority." This expression indicates that Jehovah has reserved for himself the right to set "the times or seasons" for the fulfillment of his purposes. He is the Great Timekeeper. Before Jesus died, Jesus said that even the Son did not then know the "day and hour" when the end would come but "only the Father" knew.—Mt 24:36; Mr 13:32.

1:8 the holy spirit: Or "the holy active force." In the book of Acts, the expression "holy spirit" occurs 41 times, and there are at least 15 other occurrences of the term "spirit" (Greek, *pneuma*)

that refer to God's holy spirit. (For examples, see Ac 2:4, 17, 18; 5:9; 11:28; 21:4; see also  Glossary, "Spirit.") Thus, this Bible book makes it clear again and again that the international preaching and teaching work to be performed by Jesus' followers could be accomplished only with the aid of God's active force.—Compare study note on Mr 1:12.

witnesses of me: As faithful Jews, Jesus' early disciples were already witnesses of Jehovah, and they testified that Jehovah is the only true God. (Isa 43:10-12; 44:8) Now, though, the disciples were to be witnesses of both Jehovah *and* Jesus. They were to make known Jesus' vital role in sanctifying Jehovah's name by means of His Messianic Kingdom, a new feature of Jehovah's purpose. With the exception of John's Gospel, Acts uses the Greek terms for "witness" (*mar'tys*), "to bear witness" (*mar-ty-re'o*), "to bear thorough witness" (*di-a-mar-ty'ro-mai*), and related words more times than any other Bible book. (See study note on Joh 1:7.) The idea of being a witness and bearing thorough witness about God's purposes—including his Kingdom and Jesus' vital role—is a theme that runs through the book of Acts. (Ac 2:32, 40; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; 8:25; 10:39; 13:31; 18:5; 20:21, 24; 22:20; 23:11; 26:16; 28:23) Some first-century Christians bore witness to, or confirmed, historical

CHAP. 1

- a Lu 19:11
Lu 24:21
- b Da 2:20, 21
Mt 24:36
- c Ac 4:33
- d Isa 43:10
Lu 24:48
Joh 15:26, 27
- e Ac 5:27, 28
- f Ac 8:14
- g Mt 28:19, 20
Col 1:23
- h Lu 24:51
Lu 6:62
Joh 20:17
- i Mt 28:2, 3

Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth; Jesus Ascends to Heaven

6 So when they had assembled, they asked him: “Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?”^a **7** He said to them: “It does not belong to you to know the times or seasons that the Father has placed in his own jurisdiction.^b **8** But you will receive power when the holy spirit comes upon you,^c and you will be witnesses^d of me in Jerusalem,^e in all Ju-de’a and Sa-mar’i-a,^f and to the most distant part of the earth.”^g **9** After he had said these things, while they were looking on, he was lifted up and a cloud caught him up from their sight.^h **10** And as they were gazing into the sky while he was on his way, suddenly two men in white* garmentsⁱ stood beside them **11** and said: “Men of Gal’i-lee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus who was taken up from you into the sky will come in the same manner as you have seen him going into the sky.”

FOOTNOTES

1:10 *Or “bright.”

STUDY NOTES

facts about Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection from their firsthand knowledge. (Ac 1:21, 22; 10:40, 41) Those who later put faith in Jesus bore witness by proclaiming the significance of his life, death, and resurrection.—Ac 22:15; see study note on Joh 18:37.

to the most distant part of the earth:

Or “to the ends (extremity) of the earth.” The same Greek expression is used at Ac 13:47 in a prophecy quoted from Isa 49:6, where the Greek *Septuagint* also uses the term. Jesus’ statement at Ac 1:8 may echo that prophecy, which foretold that Jehovah’s servant would be “a light of nations” so that salvation would reach “the ends of the earth.” This harmonizes with Jesus’ previous statement that his followers would perform “works greater” than his. (See study note on Joh 14:12.) The statement is also in line with Jesus’ description of the worldwide scope of the Christian preaching work.—See study notes on Mt 24:14; 26:13; 28:19.

1:10 men in white garments: This is a reference to angels. (Compare Lu 24:4, 23.) In the book of Acts, the term “angel” (Greek, *ag’ge-los*) is found 21 times, the first occurrence at Ac 5:19.

1:11 the sky: The Greek word *ou-ra-nos’* that occurs three times in this verse can refer to the physical heavens, that is, the sky, or to the spiritual heavens.

will come in the same manner: The Greek word for “come” (*er’kho-mai*) is used frequently in the Scriptures in a variety of ways. In some contexts, it refers to Jesus’ coming as Judge to pronounce and execute judgment during the great tribulation. (Mt 24:30; Mr 13:26; Lu 21:27) However, this Greek word is used regarding Jesus on other occasions. (Mt 16:28–17:2; Mt 21:5, 9; 23:39; Lu 19:38) Therefore, the context determines in what sense the term “come” is used here. The angels said that Jesus would “come,” or return, in the same “manner” (Greek, *tro’pos*) as he departed. The term *tro’pos* does not refer to the same form, shape, or body but to the same way. As the context shows, Jesus’ manner of departure was not observed by the world in general. Only the apostles were aware that Jesus

left the vicinity of the earth to return to his Father in heaven. Jesus had indicated that his return as King of “the Kingdom of God” would not be in a way that was obvious to all—only his disciples would know it had taken place. (Lu 17:20; see study note.) The “coming” mentioned at Re 1:7 is different. On that occasion, “every eye will see him.” (Re 1:7) So in the context of Ac 1:11, the term “come” apparently refers to Jesus’ invisible coming in Kingdom power at the beginning of his presence.—Mt 24:3.

Disciples Gather to Pray

CHAP. 1

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem^a from a mountain called the Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem, only a sabbath day's journey away. **13** When they arrived, they went up into the upper room where they were staying. There were Peter as well as John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Barthol'o-mew and Matthew, James the son of Al-phae'us, and Simon the zealous one, and Judas the son of James.^b **14** With one purpose all of these were persisting in prayer, together with some women^c and Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brothers.^d

- a Lu 24:52
- b Mt 10:2-4
Mr 3:16-19
- c Lu 23:49
- d Mt 12:46
Mt 13:55
Joh 2:12
Joh 7:5
1Co 9:5
Ga 1:19

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

15 During those days Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers (the number of people was altogether about 120) and said: **16** "Men, brothers, it was necessary for the scripture to be fulfilled that the holy spirit spoke prophetically through David

STUDY NOTES

1:12 a sabbath day's journey: That is, the distance an Israelite was allowed to travel on the Sabbath. The term is here connected with the distance between the Mount of Olives and the city of Jerusalem. The Law restricted travel on the Sabbath but did not specify the distance that could be covered. (Ex 16:29) Over time, rabbinic sources defined the distance a Jew could travel on that day as being about 2,000 cubits (890 m; 2,920 ft). That interpretation was based on Nu 35:5: "You should measure outside the city 2,000 cubits" and on the statement found at Jos 3:3, 4 that instructed the Israelites to keep a distance of about 2,000 cubits from "the ark of the covenant." Rabbis reasoned that an Israelite was permitted to travel at least that far on the Sabbath to worship at the tabernacle. (Nu 28:9, 10) Possibly because of reckoning from two different starting points, Josephus gives the distance between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives one time as five furlongs (925 m; 3,034 ft) and another time as six furlongs (1,110 m; 3,640 ft). Either way, the distance is approximately the same as the distance that the rabbis had defined as a sabbath day's journey, and it harmonizes with Luke's comment in this verse.

See  Gallery, image 67, Bethphage, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem.

1:13 the zealous one: A designation distinguishing the apostle Simon from the apostle Simon Peter. (Lu 6:14, 15) The Greek word used here and at Lu 6:15, *ze-lo-tes'*, means "zealot; enthusiast." The accounts at Mt 10:4 and Mr 3:18 use the designation "the Cananaean," a term thought to be of Hebrew or Aramaic origin that likewise means "Zealot; Enthusiast." While it is possible that Simon once belonged to the Zealots, a Jewish party opposed to the Romans, he may have been given this designation because of his zeal and enthusiasm.

See  Gallery, image 90, Upper Room.

1:14 his brothers: That is, Jesus' half brothers. The four Gospels, Acts of Apostles, and two of Paul's letters mention "the Lord's brothers," "the brother of the Lord," "his brothers," and "his sisters," naming four of the "brothers"—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. (1Co 9:5; Ga 1:19; Mt 12:46; 13:55, 56; Mr 3:31; Lu 8:19; Joh 2:12) These siblings were all born after the miraculous birth of Jesus. Most Bible scholars accept the evidence that Jesus had at least four brothers and two sisters and that all were offspring of

Joseph and Mary by natural means.—See study note on Mt 13:55.

1:15 the brothers: At times, a male Christian believer is distinguished as "a brother" and a female as "a sister." (1Co 7:14, 15) At other times, as in this context, the Bible uses the term "brothers" to refer to both males and females. (Ac 1:13, 14) Generally, the term "brothers" was the accepted greeting to mixed groups and was not restricted to males. (Ro 1:13; 1Th 1:4) The term "brothers" is used in this sense in most of the inspired Christian letters. In the preceding verse (Ac 1:14), the plural form of the Greek word *a-del-phos'* is used with regard to Jesus' half brothers, the younger sons of Joseph and Mary.—See study notes on Mt 13:55; Ac 1:14.

number of people: Lit., "crowd of names." In this context, the Greek word for "name" (*o'no-ma*) refers to a person. It is used in the same way at Re 3:4, fn.

1:16 Men, brothers: Unlike the preceding verse, here the term "brothers" is used together with the Greek word for "men; males" (*a-ner*). In the context of determining who should replace Judas Iscariot as an apostle, this combination may indicate that only male members of the congregation were being addressed.

CHAP. 1

- a Ps 41:9
Ps 55:12
Joh 13:18
- b Lu 22:47
Joh 18:3
- c Mt 10:2, 4
Lu 6:12-16
Joh 6:70, 71
- d Zec 11:12
Mt 26:14, 15
- e Mt 27:5-8
- f Ps 69:25
- g Ps 109:8
- h Mt 3:13
- i Lu 24:51
Ac 1:9
- j Mt 28:5, 6
Mr 16:6

about Judas,^a who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.^b **17** For he had been numbered among us^c and he obtained a share in this ministry. **18** (This very man, therefore, purchased a field with the wages for unrighteousness,^d and falling headfirst,* his body burst open[#] and all his insides spilled out.^e **19** This became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their language *A-ke'l'da-ma*, that is, “Field of Blood.”) **20** For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his dwelling become desolate, and let there be no inhabitant in it’^f and, ‘His office of oversight let someone else take.’^g **21** It is therefore necessary that of the men who accompanied us during all the time in which the Lord Jesus carried on his activities among us, **22** starting with his baptism by John^h until the day he was taken up from us,ⁱ one of these men should become a witness with us of his resurrection.”^j

23 So they proposed two, Joseph called Bar’sab-bas, who was also called Justus, and Mat-thi’as. **24** Then they prayed and

FOOTNOTES

1:18 *Or possibly, “swelling up.” [#]Or “he burst open in the middle.”

STUDY NOTES

1:18 falling headfirst, his body burst

open: Matthew’s account of Judas’ death says that Judas “hanged himself,” showing *how* he committed suicide. (Mt 27:5) But here Luke’s account describes the *result*. A comparison of the two accounts indicates that Judas hanged himself near a cliff. At some point, the rope or the tree limb broke, so that he plunged down and his body burst open on the rocks below. The steep and rocky topography around Jerusalem allows for drawing such a conclusion.

1:20 His office of oversight: Or “His assignment as an overseer.” The Greek word used here, *e-pi-sko-pe'*, is related to the Greek noun for “overseer,” *e-pi'sko-pos*, and the verb *e-pi-sko-pe'o*, rendered “carefully watch” at Heb 12:15. Peter quoted Ps 109:8 to support his recommendation that the place left vacant by the unfaithful apostle Judas be filled. In that passage, the Hebrew text uses the word *pequd-dah'*, which can be rendered with such terms as “office of oversight;

oversight; overseers.” (Nu 4:16; Isa 60:17) At Ps 109:8 in the *Septuagint* (108:8, LXX), this Hebrew word is rendered by the same Greek word that Luke used here at Ac 1:20. From this inspired statement by Peter, it is clear that the apostles had an office, or assignment, as overseers. They had been directly appointed by Jesus. (Mr 3:14) So on the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., the Christian congregation, which grew from about 120 members to about 3,000 in one day, started out with 12 overseers. (Ac 1:15; 2:41) Thereafter, others were appointed as overseers to help take care of the growing congregation. However, the apostles’ oversight remained special, since Jehovah apparently purposed to have the 12 apostles form the future “12 foundation stones” of New Jerusalem.—Re 21:14; see study note on Ac 20:28.

1:21 carried on his activities among us:

Lit., “went in and went out among us,” which reflects a Semitic idiom that refers to carrying on activities of life in association with other people. It could also be rendered “lived among us.”—Compare De 28:6, 19; Ps 121:8, ftm.

1:23 Matthias: The Greek name

Math-thi'as is probably a shortened form of *Mat-ta-thi'as*, derived from the Hebrew

name rendered “Mattithiah” (1Ch 15:18), meaning “Gift of Jehovah.” According to Peter’s words (Ac 1:21, 22), Matthias was a follower of Christ throughout Jesus’ three-and-a-half-year ministry. He was closely associated with the apostles and was quite likely one of the 70 disciples whom Jesus sent out to preach. (Lu 10:1) After his selection, Matthias was “counted along with the 11 apostles” (Ac 1:26), and when the book of Acts immediately thereafter speaks of “the apostles” or “the Twelve,” Matthias was included.—Ac 2:37, 43; 4:33, 36; 5:12, 29; 6:2, 6; 8:1, 14.

said: “You, O Jehovah, who know the hearts of all,^a designate which one of these two men you have chosen **25** to take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas deviated to go to his own place.”^b **26** So they cast lots over them,^c and the lot fell to Mat-thi’as, and he was counted along with the 11 apostles.

CHAP. 1

- a 1Sa 16:7
1Ch 28:9
Jer 11:20
- b Joh 6:70
Joh 13:2
- c Pr 16:33

CHAP. 2

- d Le 23:16
De 16:9-11
- e Ac 4:31
- f Mr 1:8
Joh 14:16
Joh 14:26
Joh 15:26
Heb 2:3, 4
- g Ac 10:45, 46
1Co 12:8, 10
- h Ex 23:17

Holy Spirit Poured Out at Pentecost

2 Now while the day of the Festival of Pentecost^d was in progress, they were all together at the same place. **2** Suddenly there was a noise from heaven, just like that of a rushing, stiff breeze, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.^e **3** And tongues as if of fire became visible to them and were distributed, and one came to rest on each one of them, **4** and they all became filled with holy spirit^f and started to speak in different languages, just as the spirit enabled them to speak.^g **5** At that time devout Jews from every nation under heaven were staying in Jerusalem.^h **6** So when this sound occurred, a crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. **7** Indeed, they were utter-

STUDY NOTES

1:24 Jehovah: Available Greek manuscripts use the term “Lord” (Greek, *Ky’ri-os*) here. However, as explained in **App. C**, there are good reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced by the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.

who know the hearts of all: The Hebrew Scriptures frequently identify Jehovah God as the one with the ability to read hearts. (De 8:2; 1Sa 16:7; 1Ki 8:39; 1Ch 28:9; Ps 44:21; Jer 11:20; 17:10) It would have been natural in this context, then, for those Hebrew-speaking Jews to use the divine name when praying to God. The Greek word rendered “who know the hearts,” *kar-di-o-gno’stes* (lit., “knower of hearts”), occurs only here and at Ac 15:8, where it reads, “God, who knows the heart.”—See **App. C3** introduction; Ac 1:24.

1:26 cast lots: When making decisions on a variety of issues, God’s servants in pre-Christian times cast lots to deter-

mine Jehovah’s will. (Le 16:8; Nu 33:54; 1Ch 25:8; Pr 16:33; 18:18; see **Glossary**, “Lots.”) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, there is only this one mention of lots being used by Jesus’ followers. Lots were cast to help the disciples decide which one of the two men proposed as candidates should replace Judas Iscariot. The disciples knew that they needed Jehovah’s direction. Each of the 12 apostles had been appointed directly by Jesus only after he spent a whole night in prayer to his Father. (Lu 6:12, 13) It is noteworthy, therefore, that *before* “the lot fell to Matthias,” the disciples reviewed several Scriptures and prayed specifically for Jehovah to “designate” his choice. (Ac 1:20, 23, 24) After Pentecost 33 C.E., however, there is no record in the Bible that lots were used to select overseers and their assistants or to decide matters of importance. This method was not needed once the holy spirit became active on the Christian congregation. (Ac 6:2-6; 13:2; 20:28; 2Ti 3:16, 17) Men were selected as overseers, not because they had been chosen by the casting of lots, but because they displayed the fruitage

of the holy spirit in their lives. (1Ti 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9) Other cultures also used lots. (Es 3:7; Joe 3:3; Ob 11) For example, the Roman soldiers cast lots over Jesus’ garments, as foretold at Ps 22:18. Apparently their motive was, not to fulfill Bible prophecy, but to get some personal gain.—Joh 19:24; see study note on Mt 27:35.

counted along with: Or “reckoned along with,” that is, viewed the same as the other 11 apostles. So when Pentecost arrived, there were 12 apostles to serve as the foundation of spiritual Israel. Matthias would have been one of “the Twelve” who later helped settle the problem concerning the Greek-speaking disciples.—Ac 6:1, 2.

2:1 Pentecost: The Greek word *pen-te-ko-ste’* (meaning “50th [Day]”) is used in the Christian Greek Scriptures to denote what is called “the Festival of Harvest” (Ex 23:16) and the “Festival of Weeks” (Ex 34:22) in the Hebrew Scriptures. This festival took place at the end of a seven-week harvest period that included first the barley harvest and then the wheat harvest. The Festival of Pentecost was celebrated on the 50th day

CHAP. 2

- a Mr 14:70
Ac 1:11
- b 2Ki 17:6
- c Da 8:1, 2
- d 1Pe 1:1
- e Ex 12:48
- f Lu 24:9
Ac 1:13

ly amazed and said: “See here, all these who are speaking are Gal-i-le’ans,^a are they not? **8** How is it, then, that each one of us is hearing his own native language? **9** Par’thi-ans, Medes,^b and E’lam-ites,^c the inhabitants of Mes-o-po-ta-mi-a, Ju-de’a and Cap-pa-do’ci-a, Pon’tus and the province of Asia,^d **10** Phryg’i-a and Pam-phyl’i-a, Egypt and the regions of Lib’y-a near Cy-re’-ne, sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,^e **11** Cre’tans, and Arabians—we hear them speaking in our languages about the magnificent things of God.” **12** Yes, they were all astonished and perplexed, saying to one another: “What does this mean?” **13** However, others mocked them and said: “They are full of sweet wine.”

Peter’s Speech

14 But Peter stood up with the Eleven^f and spoke to them in a loud voice: “Men of Ju-de’a and all you inhabitants of Jerusalem, let this be known to you and listen carefully to my words. **15** These people are, in fact, not drunk, as you suppose, for it is the third hour of the day. **16** On the contrary,

STUDY NOTES

counted from Nisan 16, the day when a sheaf of the firstfruits of the barley harvest was offered. (Le 23:15, 16) On the Hebrew calendar, Pentecost falls on Sivan 6. (See  App. B15.) Instructions for this festival are found at Le 23:15-21; Nu 28:26-31; and De 16:9-12. The Festival of Pentecost drew great multitudes of Jews and proselytes from distant lands to Jerusalem. The festival was intended to promote hospitality and kindness to people, regardless of their position or background—whether they were free, slaves, poor, fatherless, widows, Levites, or foreign residents. (De 16:10, 11) This made Pentecost 33 C.E. in Jerusalem an ideal occasion for the birth of the Christian congregation with its mission to bear witness to all people “about the magnificent things of God.” (Ac 1:8; 2:11) The Jews traditionally hold that Pentecost corresponded to the time of the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai when Israel was set apart as God’s chosen nation. It was early in the third month (Sivan) that the Israelites gathered at Mount Sinai and received the Law. (Ex 19:1) Just as Moses as mediator was used to introduce Israel to

the Law covenant, so Jesus Christ as Mediator of spiritual Israel now brought that new nation into the new covenant.

2:4 languages: Or “tongues.” In the Bible, the Greek word *glos’sa* can refer to the “tongue” as an organ of speech. (Mr 7:33; Lu 1:64; 16:24) But it can also be used figuratively to refer to a language or to a people speaking a certain language. (Re 5:9; 7:9; 13:7; ftns.) This Greek word is found at Ac 2:3, describing “tongues as if of fire” that became visible. So the outpouring of holy spirit was made evident by these “tongues” resting on each one of the disciples and by their speaking in different tongues, or languages.

2:5 See  Gallery, image 127, Theodotus Inscription to Greek-Speaking Jews.

2:8 his own native language: Lit., “our own language in which we were born.” The Greek word here rendered “language” is *di-a’le-ktos*. (See study note on Ac 2:4.) Many who heard the disciples may have spoken an international tongue, perhaps Greek. Being “devout Jews,” they may also have been able to understand the Hebrew services at the temple in Jerusalem. (Ac 2:5) But hearing the good news in the

language they had known from childhood caught their attention.

2:9 province of Asia: See  Glossary, “Asia.”

See  Gallery, map 6, Pentecost 33 C.E. and the Spreading of the Good News.

2:10 proselytes: See study note on Mt 23:15.

2:13 sweet wine: Or “new wine.” The Greek word *gleu’kos*, which occurs only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures, refers to sweet new wine that is in the process of fermentation.

2:15 the third hour of the day: That is, about 9:00 a.m. In the first century C.E., the Jews used the count of 12 hours to the day, starting with sunrise at about 6:00 a.m. (Joh 11:9) Therefore, the third hour would be about 9:00 a.m., the sixth hour about noon, and the ninth hour about 3:00 p.m. Since people did not have precise timepieces, only the approximate time of an event was usually given.—Joh 1:39; 4:6; 19:14; Ac 10:3, 9.

this is what was said through the prophet Joel: **17** “And in the last days,” God says, “I will pour out some of my spirit on every sort of flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy and your young men will see visions and your old men will dream dreams,^a **18** and even on my male slaves and on my female slaves I will pour out some of my spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.^b **19** And I will give wonders in heaven above and signs on earth below—blood and fire and clouds of smoke. **20** The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and illustrious day of Jehovah comes. **21** And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.”^c

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus the Naz-a-rene^c was a man publicly shown to you by God through powerful

CHAP. 2

- a Joe 2:28
b 1Co 12:8, 10
c Joe 2:28-32
Ro 10:13

 STUDY NOTES

2:17 in the last days: In this quote from Joel’s prophecy, Peter under inspiration uses the phrase “in the last days” rather than the expression “after that,” which is used in the original Hebrew and in the *Septuagint*. (Joe 2:28 [3:1, LXX]) Joel’s prophecy was fulfilled when holy spirit was poured out at Pentecost. Therefore, Peter’s use of the term “the last days” indicates that this special time period had begun and that it would precede “the great and illustrious day of Jehovah.” This “day of Jehovah” would apparently bring “the last days” to their conclusion. (Ac 2:20) Peter was speaking to natural Jews and Jewish proselytes, so his inspired words must have had an initial fulfillment involving them. His statement apparently indicated that the Jews were living in “the last days” of the system of things that had its center of worship in Jerusalem. Earlier, Jesus himself foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. (Lu 19:41-44; 21:5, 6) That destruction took place in 70 C.E.

my spirit: The Greek word *pneúma* here refers to God’s holy spirit, or active force. At Joe 2:28, quoted here, the corresponding Hebrew word *ru’ach* is used. Both the Hebrew and the Greek words convey the basic idea of that which is invisible to human sight and gives evidence of force in motion.—See  Glossary, “Spirit.”

every sort of flesh: Or “all sorts (kinds) of people.” Lit., “all flesh.” The Greek word *sarx* (often rendered “flesh”) is here used of living humans, so “all flesh” would generally refer to all mankind. (See study note on Joh 17:2.) But in this context, the Greek phrase “all flesh” has a more restricted use. God did not pour out his spirit on all humans on earth or even on all humans in Israel, so it does not refer to all humans without exception. Rather, the phrase here refers to all sorts of humans without distinction. God poured out holy spirit on ‘sons and daughters, young men and old men, male slaves and female slaves,’ that is, all sorts of people. (Ac 2:17, 18) A similar use of the Greek word for “all” (*pas*) is found at 1Ti 2:3, 4, according to which it is God’s will that “all sorts of people should be saved.”—See study note on Joh 12:32.

prophecy: The Greek term *pro·phe·teu’o* literally means “to speak out.” In the Scriptures, it is used of making known messages from a divine source. While it often includes the thought of foretelling the future, the basic meaning of the word is not that of prediction. The Greek word can also refer to identifying a matter by divine revelation. (See study notes on Mt 26:68; Mr 14:65; Lu 22:64.) In this context, holy spirit impelled some to prophesy. By declaring “the magnificent things” that Jehovah had done and would still do, they would serve as spokesmen

for the Most High. (Ac 2:11) The Hebrew word for “to prophesy” carries a similar idea. For example, at Ex 7:1, Aaron is referred to as Moses’ “prophet” in the sense that he became Moses’ spokesman, or mouthpiece, rather than in the sense of foretelling future events.

old men: Or “older men; elders.” Here the Greek term *pre·sby·te·ros* likely refers to men of advanced physical age in contrast with the “young men” mentioned earlier in the verse. In other contexts, the same term is used to refer to men holding a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation.—Ac 4:5; 11:30; 14:23; 15:2; 20:17; see study note on Mt 16:21.

2:19 wonders: Or “portents.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *te’ras* is consistently used in combination with *se·mei’o·n* (“sign”), both terms being used in the plural form. (Mt 24:24; Joh 4:48; Ac 7:36; 14:3; 15:12; 2Co 12:12) Basically, *te’ras* refers to anything that causes awe or wonderment. When the term clearly refers to something portending what will happen in the future, the alternate rendering “portent” is used in a study note.

2:20 Jehovah: In this quote from Joe 2:31, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

CHAP. 2

- a Lu 24:18, 19
Joh 5:36
Joh 14:10
Heb 2:4
- b Joh 19:10, 11
Ac 4:27, 28
1Pe 1:20
- c Lu 23:33
Ac 5:30
Ac 7:52
- d Ac 3:15
Ro 4:24
1Co 6:14
Col 2:12
Heb 13:20
- e Joh 10:17, 18
- f Ac 13:35

works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst,^a just as you yourselves know. **23** This man, who was handed over by the determined will and foreknowledge of God,^b you fastened to a stake by the hand of lawless men, and you did away with him.^c **24** But God resurrected him^d by releasing him from the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held fast by it.^e **25** For David says about him: ‘I keep Jehovah constantly in front of me,^{*} for he is at my right hand that I may never be shaken. **26** On this account my heart became cheerful and my tongue rejoiced greatly. And I will reside in hope; **27** because you will not leave me in the Grave, nor will you allow your loyal one to see corruption.’^f

FOOTNOTES

2:25 * Or “before my eyes.”

STUDY NOTES

- 2:21 Jehovah:** In this quote from Joe 2:32, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.
- 2:22 the Nazarene:** See study note on Mr 10:47.
- wonders:** Or “portents.” The miracles that God caused Jesus to perform served as credentials that he was sent by God. These miraculous cures and resurrections also showed, or portended, what Jesus would do on a greater scale in the future.—See study note on Ac 2:19.
- 2:23 will:** Or “counsel.” The Greek word *bou-le'* is rendered “counsel [or, “direction; guidance,” ftn.]” at Lu 7:30 and “purpose” at Heb 6:17.—See study note on Ac 20:27.
- 2:24 the pangs of death:** Although the Bible clearly states that there is no consciousness or feeling of pain in death (Ps 146:4; Ec 9:5, 10), here “death” is said to cause “pangs” or “pain.” This wording was likely used because death is presented as a bitter and distressing experience. (1Sa 15:32, ftn.; Ps 55:4; Ec 7:26) That is so not only in the pain usually preceding it (Ps 73:4, 5) but also in the loss of all activity and freedom that its paralyzing grip brings (Ps 6:5; 88:10). It is apparent-

ly in this sense that Jesus’ resurrection released him from “the pangs of death,” freeing him from its distressing and restraining grip. While the Greek word (*o-din'*), here translated “pangs,” is elsewhere used to mean the pains of childbirth (1Th 5:3), it may also refer to pain, calamity, or distress in a general sense (Mt 24:8). The expression “pangs of death” is found in the *Septuagint* at 2Sa 22:6 and Ps 18:4 (17:5, LXX), where the Hebrew Masoretic text reads “ropes of the Grave” and “ropes of death.” Interestingly, in ancient Hebrew manuscripts, which were written without vowels, the term for “rope” (*che'vel*) has the same consonantal spelling as the Hebrew term for “pang.” This may explain the rendering found in the *Septuagint*. In either case, the expressions “pangs of death” and “ropes of death” convey the same overall idea, namely, the bitter and distressing experience of death.

- 2:25 Jehovah:** In this quote from Ps 16:8, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.
- 2:26 I:** Lit., “my flesh.” Peter introduces this quote from Ps 16 by saying: “David says about him,” that is, about the Messiah, Jesus. (Ac 2:25) In this verse (Ac 2:26) and at Ps 16:9, the Greek and Hebrew texts use the term “flesh,” which may denote a person’s body or the person himself. Even though Jesus knew that he would be put to death as the ransom

sacrifice, he resided **in hope**. Jesus knew that his Father would resurrect him, that his sacrifice would successfully serve as a ransom for mankind, and that his flesh, or body, would not see corruption, or decay.—Ac 2:27, 31.

- 2:27 me:** Or “my soul.” In this quote from Ps 16:10, the Greek word *psy-khe'* is used to render the Hebrew word *ne'phesh*, both traditionally rendered “soul.” The psalmist used “soul” to refer to himself. On the day of Pentecost when declaring Christ’s resurrection to the Jews, Peter applied this psalm of David to Jesus.—Ac 2:24, 25; see  Glossary, “Soul,” and  App. A2.

the Grave: Or “Hades.” The Greek term *hai'des*, perhaps meaning “the unseen place,” occurs ten times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (See Mt 11:23; 16:18; Lu 10:15; 16:23; Ac 2:27, 31; Re 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14.) This verse quotes Ps 16:10, which uses the corresponding Hebrew term “Sheol,” also rendered “the Grave.” The *Septuagint* generally uses the Greek “Hades” as the equivalent of the Hebrew “Sheol.” In the Scriptures, both terms refer to the common grave of mankind; other original-language terms denote an individual grave. Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J7, 8, 11, 12, 14-18, 22 in  App. C4) use the term “Sheol” here.—See  App. A2.

28 You have made life’s ways known to me; you will fill me with great joy in your presence.’^a

29 “Men, brothers, it is permissible to speak with freeness of speech to you about the family head David, that he died and was buried,^b and his tomb is with us to this day. **30** Because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath that he would seat one of his offspring on his throne,^c **31** he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he forsaken in the Grave nor did his flesh see corruption.^d **32** God resurrected this Jesus, and of this we are all witnesses.^e **33** Therefore, because he was exalted to* the right hand of God^f and received the promised holy spirit from the Father,^g he has poured out what you see and hear. **34** For David did not ascend to the heavens, but he himself says, ‘Jehovah said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand **35** until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.”’^h **36** Therefore, let all the house of Israel know for a certainty that God made him both Lordⁱ and Christ, this Jesus whom you executed on a stake.”^j

CHAP. 2

- a Ps 16:8-11
- b 1Ki 2:10
- c 2Sa 7:12, 13
Ps 89:3, 4
Ps 132:11
- d Ps 16:10
- e Lu 24:46-48
Ac 1:8
Ac 3:15
- f Ro 8:34
Php 2:9-11
1Pe 3:22
- g Joh 14:26
- h Ps 110:1
Lu 20:42, 43
1Co 15:25
Heb 10:12, 13
- i Mt 28:18
Joh 3:35
Ac 5:31
- j Joh 19:6

FOOTNOTES
2:33 *Or possibly, “by.”

STUDY NOTES

2:28 in your presence: Lit., “with (before) your face.” In this quote from Ps 16:11, the Greek text renders the Hebrew text literally. The Hebrew expression “with one’s face” is an idiom meaning “in someone’s presence.”

2:30 God: Available Greek manuscripts here use the word *The-os*, “God.” It is worth noting that some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J⁷, B, ¹⁰ in App. C4) here use the Tetragrammaton.

one of his offspring: David received the promise that one of his descendants would become the Messianic “offspring” promised at Ge 3:15. (2Sa 7:12, 13; Ps 89:3, 4; 132:11) This promise was fulfilled in Jesus in that both his mother and his adoptive father descended from King David. The Greek phrase rendered “offspring” reflects a Hebrew idiom that literally reads “fruitage of his loins.” In the human body, the loins contain the reproductive organs. (Ge 35:11, fn.; 1Ki 8:19, fn.) A person’s

offspring is also referred to as “the fruit of the womb [or, “body”],” and there are other similar expressions in which “fruit” refers to the product of human reproduction.—Ge 30:2, fn.; De 7:13, fn.; Ps 127:3; La 2:20, fn.; Lu 1:42.

2:31 the Grave: Or “Hades,” that is, the common grave of mankind.—See study note on Ac 2:27 and Glossary, “Grave.”

nor did his flesh see corruption: Or “nor did his body experience decay.” Jehovah did not allow the physical body of Jesus to decay into dust as did the bodies of Moses and David, men who foreshadowed Christ. (De 34:5, 6; Ac 2:27; 13:35, 36) In order for Jesus to be “the last Adam” (1Co 15:45) and to be “a corresponding ransom” for all mankind (1Ti 2:5, 6; Mt 20:28), his fleshly body had to be a real human body. It had to be perfect, for it was to be presented to Jehovah God as the purchase price to buy back what Adam had lost. (Heb 9:14; 1Pe 1:18, 19) No imperfect descendant of Adam could provide the needed ransom price. (Ps 49:7-9) For this reason, Jesus was not conceived in the normal manner. Instead, as he said to his Father, apparently when presenting himself for baptism:

“You [Jehovah] prepared a body for me,” that is, Jesus’ perfect human body that would be given in sacrifice. (Heb 10:5) When the disciples went to Jesus’ tomb, they discovered that Jesus’ body had disappeared, but they found the linen cloths with which his body had been wrapped. Jehovah apparently disposed of the fleshly body of his beloved Son before it began to decay.—Lu 24:3-6; Joh 20:2-9.

2:34 Jehovah: The divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text at Ps 110:1, quoted here. However, as explained in App. A5, most Bible translations do not use God’s name in what is commonly called the New Testament, not even in quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures. It is worth noting, though, that some 17th-century editions of the *King James Version* have the rendering “the LORD” in capital and small capitals here and at three other places where Ps 110:1 is quoted in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (Mt 22:44; Mr 12:36; Lu 20:42) Later editions continued this practice. Since “the LORD” is used in the Hebrew Scriptures of that translation to indicate where the original Hebrew text uses the divine name, writing “the LORD”

CHAP. 2

- a Lu 24:46, 47
Ac 17:30
Ac 26:20
- b Mt 28:19
- c Mt 26:27, 28
Eph 1:7
- d Joe 2:28
- e Joe 2:32
- f De 32:5
Ps 78:8
- g Ac 8:12
Ac 18:8
- h Ac 4:4
Ac 5:14
- i Ac 2:46
- j Ac 1:14
- k Ac 5:12

Crowds Respond to Peter's Speech; Christian Fellowship

37 Now when they heard this, they were stabbed to the heart, and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: “Men, brothers, what should we do?” **38** Peter said to them: “Repent,^a and let each one of you be baptized^b in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins,^c and you will receive the free gift of the holy spirit. **39** For the promise^d is to you and your children, and to all those who are far away, to all those whom Jehovah our God may call to himself.”^e **40** And with many other words he gave a thorough witness and kept exhorting them, saying: “Get saved from this crooked generation.”^f **41** So those who gladly accepted his word were baptized,^g and on that day about 3,000 people were added.^h **42** And they continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles, to associating together, to the taking of meals,ⁱ and to prayers.^j

43 Indeed, fear began to fall upon everyone, and many wonders and signs began to occur through the apostles.^k **44** All

STUDY NOTES

in the Christian Greek Scriptures would indicate that the translators thought that it is Jehovah who is being referred to. It is also noteworthy that the *New King James Version*, first published in 1979, extends this use of “the LORD” to all occurrences of that word when it refers to the divine name in quotes from the Hebrew Scriptures.—See ☞ App. C.

2:36 executed on a stake: Or “fastened on a stake (pole).”—See study note on Mt 20:19 and 📖 Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

2:38 Repent: The Greek word *me-ta-no-e’o* used here could literally be rendered “to change one’s mind,” signifying a change in thinking, attitude, or purpose. Previously, John the Baptist had been “preaching baptism in symbol of repentance for forgiveness of sins.” (See study note on Mr 1:4.) This baptism involved repentance for straying far from obedience to the precepts of the Law of Moses, and this repentance prepared God’s people for what was to come. (Mr 1:2-4) But Peter here pointed out that in harmony with Jesus’ command found at Mt 28:19, God’s people would need to repent and **be bap-**

tized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of . . . sins. Since the Jews had rejected Jesus as the Messiah, repenting and exercising faith in him was a new and vital factor in seeking and receiving God’s forgiveness. They could give public evidence of such faith by being immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ. In that way, they would symbolize their personal dedication to God through Christ.—See study notes on Mt 3:8, 11 and 📖 Glossary, “Repentance.”

2:39 Jehovah: Available Greek manuscripts use the term “Lord” (Greek, *Ky’ri-os*) here. However, as explained in ☞ App. C, there are a number of reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced by the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text. As shown by Ac 2:33-38, **the promise** Peter mentions in this verse refers to what is stated at Joe 2:28-32 about the outpouring of holy spirit. The phrase **to all those whom Jehovah our God may call to himself** therefore seems to echo the words found at the end of Joe 2:32. The Hebrew text of Joe 2:32 uses the divine name three times, specifically stating that Jehovah

is the one who does the calling.—See ☞ App. C3 introduction; Ac 2:39.

2:41 people: Or “souls.” The Greek word *psy-khe’*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to a living person.—See 📖 Glossary, “Soul.”

2:42 to associating together: Or “to sharing with one another.” The basic meaning of the Greek word *koi-no-ni’a* is “sharing; fellowship.” Paul used this word several times in his letters. (1Co 1:9; 10:16; 2Co 6:14; 13:14) The context of this passage shows that this fellowship involves close friendship rather than just casual acquaintance.

the taking of meals: Lit., “the breaking of the bread.”—See study note on Ac 20:7.

2:43 everyone: Or “every soul.” The Greek word *psy-khe’*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to a living person.—See 📖 Glossary, “Soul.”

wonders: Or “portents.”—See study note on Ac 2:19.

those who became believers were together and had everything in common, **45** and they were selling their possessions^a and properties and distributing the proceeds to all, according to what each one needed.^b **46** And day after day they were in constant attendance in the temple with a united purpose, and they took their meals in different homes and shared their food with great rejoicing and sincerity of heart, **47** praising God and finding favor with all the people. At the same time Jehovah continued to add to them daily those being saved.^c

CHAP. 2

- a Mt 19:21
 b Ac 4:32, 34
 c Ac 5:14
 Ac 11:21
 1Co 3:7

CHAP. 3

- d Ac 3:16
 Ac 4:10
 e Mt 8:14, 15
 Mt 9:24, 25
 f Joh 5:8, 9
 Ac 9:34
 Ac 14:8-10
 g Isa 35:6

Peter Heals a Lame Beggar

3 Now Peter and John were going up into the temple for the hour of prayer, the ninth hour, **2** and a man who was lame from birth was being carried. Every day they would put him near the temple door that was called Beautiful, so he could ask for gifts of mercy from those entering the temple. **3** When he caught sight of Peter and John about to go into the temple, he began asking for gifts of mercy. **4** But Peter, together with John, looked straight at him and said: “Look at us.” **5** So he fixed his attention on them, expecting to get something from them. **6** However, Peter said: “Silver and gold I do not possess, but what I do have is what I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Naz-a-rene’, walk!”^d **7** With that he took hold of him by the right hand and raised him up.^e Instantly his feet and his ankles were made firm;^f **8** and leaping to his feet,^g he began walking and went with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. **9** And all the people saw him walking

STUDY NOTES

2:46 in different homes: Or “from house to house.” Here the preposition *ka-ta’*, as used in the Greek phrase *kat’ oi’kon* (lit., “according to house”), can be understood in a distributive sense. Apparently, during this time of need, the disciples met and shared meals at different homes of fellow believers who lived in or around Jerusalem.—See study notes on Ac 5:42; 20:20.

2:47 Jehovah: Available Greek manuscripts use the term “the Lord” (Greek, *ho . . . Ky’ri-os*) here. However, as explained in **3** App. C, there are several reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced by

the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.—See **3** App. C3 introduction; Ac 2:47.

3:1 the hour of prayer: Prayers were apparently offered at the temple in conjunction with the morning and evening sacrifices. (Ex 29:38-42; 30:7, 8) Luke connects “the hour of offering incense” with the time when “the people were praying.” (Lu 1:10) In providing details about the daily sacrifices, Jehovah commanded King David to organize the priests and the Levites to honor, thank, and praise Him, which doubtless included prayer. (1Ch 16:4; 23:30; 2Ch 29:25, 26) Incense and prayers were therefore closely related. (Ps 141:2; Re 5:8; 8:3, 4) At the hour of prayer, people typically assem-

bled in the temple courtyards. Some likely came to be purified by the priests that day, while many others would have come to share in the prayers and worship in general. (Lu 2:22-38) Rabbinic tradition says that the priests determined by lot which one of them who had not previously presented incense on the golden altar should have this once-in-a-lifetime honor. With all the priests and Levites gathered, the chosen priest would solemnly enter the Holy while the priests and the people in the courtyards were praying. As the pleasing aroma of incense ascended, the people continued to pray in deep silence for about half an hour. (Lu 1:9, 10) “The hour of prayer” was then brought to a joyful finale that included a blessing of

CHAP. 3

- a Ac 3:2
 b Joh 10:23
 Ac 5:12
 c Ex 3:6
 d Isa 52:13
 Isa 53:11
 e Php 2:9-11
 f Ac 5:30
 g Mt 27:20, 21
 Lu 23:14, 18
 h Ac 5:31
 Heb 2:10
 i Lu 24:46-48
 Ac 1:8
 Ac 2:32
 j Joh 16:2, 3
 1Ti 1:13
 k 1Co 2:8
 l Ps 118:22
 Isa 50:6
 Isa 53:8
 Da 9:26
 Lu 22:15

and praising God. **10** And they began to recognize him, that this was the man who used to sit waiting for gifts of mercy at the Beautiful Gate of the temple,^a and they were completely astonished and ecstatic about what had happened to him.

Peter Speaks at Solomon's Colonnade

11 While the man was still holding on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at what was called Sol'o-mon's Colonnade,^b completely surprised. **12** When Peter saw this, he said to the people: "Men of Israel, why are you so amazed at this, and why are you staring at us as though by personal power or godly devotion we have made him walk? **13** The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob,^c the God of our forefathers, has glorified his Servant,^d Jesus,^e whom you handed over^f and disowned before Pilate, even though he had decided to release him. **14** Yes, you disowned that holy and righteous one, and you asked for a man who was a murderer to be given to you,^g **15** whereas you killed the Chief Agent of life.^h But God raised him up from the dead, of which fact we are witnesses.ⁱ **16** And through his name, and by our faith in his name, this man whom you see and know has been made strong. The faith that is through him has made this man completely healthy in front of all of you. **17** And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance,^j just as your rulers also did.^k **18** But in this way God has fulfilled the things he announced beforehand through the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer.^l

STUDY NOTES

the people (Nu 6:22-27) and a chorus of Levites singing the psalm designated for that day of the week.

the ninth hour: That is, about 3:00 p.m.—See study note on Ac 2:15.

3:6 the Nazarene: See study note on Mr 10:47.

3:11 See  Gallery, image 121, Solomon's Colonnade.

3:15 Chief Agent: The Greek term used here (*ar-khe-gos*) basically means "chief leader; one who goes first." It is used four times in the Bible, each time referring to Jesus. (Ac 3:15; 5:31; Heb 2:10; 12:2) This Greek word may also apply to one

who leads the way, such as a pathfinder or a pioneer, and prepares it for others to follow. By becoming the Mediator between God and mankind and introducing the way for gaining eternal life, Jesus could rightly be called **the Chief Agent of life**, or a Pioneer of Life. The expression rendered "Chief Agent" indicates that the one going first does so in an official or administrative capacity as a leader or a prince. (A related word is used at Ac 7:27, 35 regarding Moses as a "ruler" in Israel.) As the term is used here, it includes the idea of being the means that God uses to accomplish his purpose. Jesus became "a corresponding ransom" in exchange for many. (1Ti 2:5, 6; Mt 20:28; Ac 4:12) After Jesus was resurrected,

he could as High Priest and Judge administer the value of his ransom. The sacrifice allows humans who exercise faith in it to be free from sin and death. Jesus is, therefore, the one through whom the resurrection of the dead takes place. (Joh 5:28, 29; 6:39, 40) That is how he opens up the way to everlasting life. (Joh 11:25; 14:6; Heb 5:9; 10:19, 20) Although some Bible translators render this expression "Author" or "Originator" of life, the Bible clearly shows that Jesus does not fit that description. Rather, he received his life and his authority from God and is used by God.—Ps 36:9; Joh 6:57; Ac 17:26-28; Col 1:15; Re 3:14.

19 “Repent,^a therefore, and turn around^b so as to get your sins blotted out,^c so that seasons of refreshing may come from Jehovah himself^d **20** and he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus. **21** Heaven must hold this one within itself until the times of restoration of all things of which God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets of old. **22** In fact, Moses said: ‘Jehovah your God will raise up for you from among your brothers a prophet like me.’^e You must listen to whatever he tells you.^f **23** Indeed, anyone who does not listen to that Prophet will be completely destroyed from among the people.’^g **24** And all the prophets from Samuel and those who followed him, as many as have spoken, have also plainly declared these days.^h **25** You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your forefathers,ⁱ saying to Abraham: ‘And by means of your offspring all the families of the earth will be blessed.’^j **26** God, after raising up his Servant, sent him to you first^k to bless you by turning each one of you away from your wicked deeds.”

CHAP. 3

- a Ac 2:38
- b Eze 33:11
Eph 4:22
- c Eze 33:14, 16
1Jo 1:7
- d Isa 1:18
- e De 34:10
Joh 4:19,
25, 29
Joh 6:14
Ac 7:37
- f De 18:15, 18
- g De 18:19
- h Lu 24:27
Ac 10:43
- i Ro 9:4
- j Ge 22:18
Ga 3:8
- k Ac 13:45, 46
Ro 1:16

 STUDY NOTES

3:19 Repent . . . and turn around: The Greek word *me-ta-no-e'o*, “to repent,” literally means “to change one’s mind,” signifying a change in thinking, attitude, or purpose. In this context, repentance involved a person’s wanting to repair or restore his relationship with God. A sinner who genuinely repents deeply regrets his wrong course and is determined not to repeat his sin. (2Co 7:10, 11; see study notes on Mt 3:2, 8.) Moreover, true repentance moves a sinner to “turn around,” abandoning his wrong course and pursuing a course that is pleasing to God. Both in Hebrew and in Greek, the verbs for “to turn around” (Hebrew, *shuv*; Greek, *stre'pho*; *e-pi-stre'pho*) mean “to return; to turn back (around)” in a literal sense. (Ge 18:10; 50:14; Ru 1:6; Ac 15:36) When used in a positive *spiritual* sense, however, this may denote turning to God from a wrong way.—1Ki 8:33; Eze 33:11; see study notes on Ac 15:3; 26:20.

get . . . blotted out: The Greek verb used here has been defined “to cause to disappear by wiping.” In the Bible, it is used in connection with wiping out tears (Re 7:17; 21:4) and erasing names from the

book of life (Re 3:5). In this context, it conveys the idea of “to remove so as to leave no trace.” According to some scholars, the image expressed here is that of erasing handwriting.—Compare Col 2:14, where the same Greek word is rendered “erased,” or “blotted out,” *ftn*.

seasons: Or “appointed times.” The Greek word *kai-ros*’ (here the plural form is rendered “seasons”) may refer to a point of time or a fixed or definite period of time or a “season” marked by certain features. (Mt 13:30; 21:34; Mr 11:13) This Greek term is used of “the appointed time” for Jesus’ ministry to begin (Mr 1:15) and the “appointed time” of his death (Mt 26:18). It is also used with reference to future times or seasons within God’s arrangement or timetable, particularly in relation to Christ’s presence and his Kingdom.—Ac 1:7; 1Th 5:1.

from Jehovah himself: Available Greek manuscripts literally read “from face of the Lord.” (See  App. C.) The context of Ac 3:17-22 indicates that “the Lord” refers, not to Jesus, but to Jehovah God, the one who would “send the Christ.” (Ac 3:20) The Greek word for “Lord” (*Ky'ri-os*) is also used at Ac 3:22 in a quote from De

18:15, where the Tetragrammaton occurs in the original Hebrew text. (See study note on Ac 3:22.) In the Hebrew Scriptures, the phrase “the face of Jehovah” is a combination of the Hebrew word for “face” and the Tetragrammaton.—Ge 3:8; Ex 34:24; Jg 5:5; Ps 34:16; La 4:16; see  App. C3 introduction; Ac 3:19.

3:21 hold this one within itself: Or “receive this one.” This apparently refers to the time during which Jesus would wait at God’s right hand in heaven until the times of restoration would begin.—Ps 110:1, 2; Lu 21:24; Heb 10:12, 13.

the times of restoration: The Greek word for “restoration” (*a-po-ka-ta'sta-sis*), in some Bible translations rendered “restitution,” comes from *a-po'*, meaning “back” or “again,” and *ka-thi'ste-mi*, literally meaning “to set down.” The corresponding verb is translated “restoring” at Ac 1:6. Josephus used the Greek word for “restoration” in referring to the return of the Jews from their exile in Babylon. In papyrus writings, the word is used of the repair of certain buildings, the restoration of estates to rightful owners, and the balancing of accounts. Ac 3:21 does not specify what things would be restored,

CHAP. 4

Peter and John Arrested

- a Lu 22:52
 b Mt 16:6
 Ac 23:8
 c Mt 22:23-28
 Ac 2:32
 Ac 4:33
 Ac 17:18
 Ac 23:6
 d Lu 21:12
 e Ac 2:41
 Ac 6:7
 f Lu 3:2
 Joh 18:13

4 While the two were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple,^a and the Sadducees^b came up to them. **2** These were annoyed because the apostles were teaching the people and were openly declaring the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.^{*c} **3** So they seized* them and took them into custody^d until the next day, for it was already evening. **4** However, many of those who had listened to the speech believed, and the number of the men became about 5,000.^e

Trial Before the Sanhedrin

5 The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, **6** along with An'nas^f the chief priest,

FOOTNOTES

4:2 *Or “the resurrection from the dead in the case of Jesus.” **4:3** *Or “arrested.” Lit., “laid hands on.”

STUDY NOTES

so this **restoration of all things** must be ascertained by a study of God’s message spoken through his **prophets of old**. Restoration is a recurring theme in the writings of the Hebrew prophets. Through them, Jehovah promised a land restored and repopulated, fertile, protected from wild beasts and enemy attacks. He described their restored land as a paradise! (Isa 65:25; Eze 34:25; 36:35) Above all, the temple would be rebuilt, and pure worship would be reestablished. (Isa 2:1-5; Mic 4:1-5) The foretold restoration would include both a spiritual and a physical restoration.

3:22 Jehovah: In this quote from De 18:15, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated YHWH), occurs in the original Hebrew text. It is worth noting that when this quote occurs in an early fragment of the *Septuagint* (in the collection Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266), the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters (יהוה) within the Greek text. This fragment is dated to the first century B.C.E. (See  App. A5.) Also a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 20,

22-24, 28 in  App. C4) use the Tetragrammaton here. So although existing manuscripts of the Christian Greek Scriptures use *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text.—See  App. C.

3:23 anyone: Or “any soul.” The Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to an individual or a person. (See  Glossary, “Soul.”) This is one of several verses in the Christian Greek Scriptures that speak of the “soul” (*psy-khe'*) as mortal and destructible.—See study notes on Mt 2:20; Mr 3:4; Lu 6:9; see also Heb 10:39, ftn.; Jas 5:20, ftn.

3:25 offspring: Lit., “seed.”—See  App. A2.

4:1 the two: Lit., “they,” that is, Peter and John.

the captain of the temple: Also mentioned at Ac 5:24, 26. By the first century C.E., this official position was held by a priest who was second in authority to the high priest. The temple captain was in charge of the priests serving at the temple. He also maintained order in and around the temple by means of what may be called a temple police force made up of Levites. Subordinate captains oversaw the Levites who opened the temple gates in the morning and closed them at night. These guards protected the temple treasury, generally kept the crowds in order, and ensured that no

one entered restricted areas. There were 24 divisions of Levites. Each division served a week at a time in rotation, twice a year, and likely had a captain who answered to the captain of the temple. The temple captains were men of influence. They are mentioned along with the chief priests who conspired to have Jesus put to death. On the night Jesus was betrayed, they came with their forces to arrest him.—Lu 22:4 (see study note), 52.

4:5 elders: See study note on Mt 16:21.

4:6 Annas the chief priest: Annas was appointed high priest about 6 or 7 C.E. by Quirinius, the Roman governor of Syria, and served until about 15 C.E. Even after Annas was deposed by the Romans and no longer held the official title of high priest, he apparently continued to exercise great power and influence as high priest emeritus and was the predominant voice of the Jewish hierarchy. Five of his sons held the office of high priest, and his son-in-law **Caiaphas** served as high priest from about 18 C.E. to about 36 C.E. (See study note on Lu 3:2.) At Joh 18:13, 19, Annas is referred to as “the chief priest.” The same Greek word (*ar-khi-e-reus'*) could be used with regard to both the current high priest and a prominent member of the priesthood, including a deposed high priest.—See  Glossary, “Chief priest.”

Ca'ia-phas,^a John, Alexander, and all who were relatives of the chief priest. **7** They stood Peter and John in their midst and began to question them: “By what power or in whose name did you do this?”^b **8** Then Peter, filled with holy spirit,^c said to them:

“Rulers of the people and elders, **9** if we are being examined today about a good deed to a crippled man,^d and you want to know who made this man well,^e **10** let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Naz-a-rene',^e whom you executed on a stake^f but whom God raised up from the dead,^g by means of him* this man stands here healthy in front of you. **11** This is ‘the stone that was treated by you builders as of no account that has become the chief cornerstone.’^h **12** Furthermore, there is no salvation in anyone else, for there is no other nameⁱ under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved.”^j

13 Now when they saw the outspokenness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and ordinary men,^k they were astonished. And they began to realize that they had been with Jesus.^l **14** As they were looking at the man who had been cured standing with them,^m they had nothing to say in answer to this.ⁿ **15** So they commanded them to go outside the San'he-drin hall, and they began consulting with one another, **16** saying: “What should we do with these men?^o Because, for a fact, a noteworthy sign has occurred through them, one evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem,^p and we cannot deny

CHAP. 4

- a Mt 26:57
Lu 3:2
Joh 11:49-51
- b Mt 21:23
- c Ac 7:55
- d Ac 3:7
- e Ac 3:6
- f Joh 19:6
Ac 2:36
- g Ac 2:24
Ac 5:30
- h Ps 118:22
Isa 28:16
Mt 21:42
1Pe 2:7
- i Mt 1:21
Ac 10:43
Php 2:9, 10
- j Joh 1:12
Joh 14:6
1Ti 2:5, 6
- k Mt 11:25
1Co 1:26, 27
- l Joh 7:14, 15
- m Ac 3:11
- n Lu 21:15
- o Joh 11:47
- p Ac 3:9, 10

FOOTNOTES

4:9 *Or “has saved this man.” **4:10**
*Or possibly, “in this name.”

STUDY NOTES

4:6 Caiaphas: This high priest, appointed by the Romans, was a skillful diplomat who held office longer than any of his immediate predecessors. He was appointed about 18 C.E. and remained in office until about 36 C.E. He was the one who examined Jesus and handed him over to Pilate. (Mt 26:3, 57; Joh 11:49; 18:13, 14, 24, 28) This is the only time he is mentioned by name in the book of Acts. Elsewhere in Acts he is referred to as “the high priest.” —Ac 5:17, 21, 27; 7:1; 9:1.

4:10 the Nazarene: See study note on Mr 10:47.

executed on a stake: Or “fastened on a stake (pole).”—See study note on Mt 20:19 and **L** Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

4:11 the chief cornerstone: See study note on Mt 21:42.

4:13 outspokenness: Or “boldness; fearlessness.” The Greek word *par-re-si'a* has also been rendered “freeness of speech; confidence.” (Ac 28:31; 1Jo 5:14) This noun and the related verb *par-re-si-a'zo-mai*, often rendered “speak boldly (with boldness),” occur several times in the book of Acts and convey an identifying mark of the preaching done by the early Christians.—Ac 4:29, 31; 9:27, 28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26.

uneducated: Or “unlettered.” While the Greek term used here (*a-gram'ma-tos*) can mean illiterate, in this context it likely refers to those not educated in rabbinic schools. It appears that most Jews in the first century could read and write, in part because many schools were held in synagogues. Like Jesus, though, Peter and John had not studied at the rabbinic schools. (Compare Joh 7:15.) The religious elite in Jesus’ day felt that these schools were the only acceptable places for receiving a religious education. The Sadducees and the Pharisees no doubt felt that Peter and John were unqualified to teach or to expound the Law to the people. In addition, both of these disciples came from Galilee—an area where most people were farmers, shepherds, and fishermen. The religious leaders and

CHAP. 4

a Ac 5:40

b Ac 5:29

c Lu 22:2

Ac 5:26

d Ex 20:11

Ne 9:6

Ps 146:6

Re 4:11

e 2Sa 23:1, 2

f Ps 2:1, 2

it. **17** So that this does not spread any further among the people, let us threaten them and tell them not to speak to anyone anymore on the basis of this name.”^a

18 With that they called them and ordered them not to say anything at all or to teach on the basis of the name of Jesus.

19 But in reply Peter and John said to them: “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves.^b **20** But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard.” **21** So after they had threatened them further, they released them, since they did not find any grounds for punishing them and on account of the people,^c because they were all glorifying God over what had happened. **22** For the man on whom this miracle of healing had been done was more than 40 years old.

Prayer for Boldness

23 After being released, they went to their own people and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

24 On hearing this, they raised their voices with one accord to God and said:

“Sovereign Lord, you are the One who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them,^d **25** and who said through holy spirit by the mouth of our forefather David,^e your servant: ‘Why did nations become agitated and peoples meditate on empty things? **26** The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers gathered together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one.’^f **27** For truly both Herod

STUDY NOTES

others from Jerusalem and Judea apparently looked down on people from that region and viewed Peter and John as “uneducated” and “ordinary.” (Joh 7:45-52; Ac 2:7) God did not view them that way. (1Co 1:26-29; 2Co 3:5, 6; Jas 2:5) Before his death, Jesus had educated and trained them and his other disciples extensively. (Mt 10:1-42; Mr 6:7-13; Lu 8:1; 9:1-5; 10:1-42; 11:52) After his resurrection, he continued to teach his disciples by means of holy spirit.—Joh 14:26; 16:13; 1Jo 2:27.

4:15 the Sanhedrin hall: Or “the Sanhedrin.”—See study note on Lu 22:66.

See  Gallery, image 91, The Sanhedrin.

4:22 miracle: Or “sign.” Here the Greek word *se-meí'on*, often rendered “sign,” refers to a miraculous event that gives evidence of divine backing.

4:24 Sovereign Lord: The Greek word *de-spo'tes* has the basic meaning “lord; master; owner.” (1Ti 6:1; Tit 2:9; 1Pe 2:18) When used in direct address to God, as here and at Lu 2:29 and Re 6:10, it is rendered “Sovereign Lord” to denote the excellence of his lordship. Other translations have used such terms as “Lord,” “Master,” “Sovereign,” or “Ruler (Master; Lord) of all.” Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Hebrew term *'Adho-nai'* (Sovereign Lord), but at least one such translation uses the Tetragrammaton here.

4:26 Jehovah: In this quote from Ps 2:2, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

his anointed one: Or “his Christ; his Messiah.” The Greek term used here is *Khri-stos'*, from which the title “Christ” is derived. At Ps 2:2, quoted here, the corresponding Hebrew term, *ma-shi'ach* (anointed one), is used. From this term the title “Messiah” is derived.—See study notes on Lu 2:26; Joh 1:41; Ac 4:27.

and Pontius Pilate^a with men of the nations and with peoples of Israel were gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed,^b **28** to do what your hand and counsel had determined beforehand to occur.^c **29** And now, Jehovah, give attention to their threats, and grant to your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness, **30** while you stretch out your hand for healing and while signs and wonders occur^d through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”^e

31 And when they had made supplication, the place where they were gathered together was shaken, and they were one and all filled with the holy spirit^f and were speaking the word of God with boldness.^g

Disciples Share Possessions

32 Moreover, the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and not even one of them would say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.^h **33** And with great power the apostles continued giving the witness about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,ⁱ and undeserved kindness was upon them all in large measure. **34** In fact, no one was in need among them,^j for all those who owned fields or houses would sell them and bring the value of

CHAP. 4

- a Lu 23:12
- b Ps 45:7
Ac 10:38
- c Isa 53:10
Lu 24:44
Ac 2:23
1Pe 1:20
- d Ac 2:43
Ac 5:12
- e Ac 3:16
- f Ac 2:2, 4
- g 1Th 2:2
- h Ac 2:44, 45
- i Ac 1:21, 22
Ac 4:2
- j Ac 2:44, 45
1Jo 3:17

STUDY NOTES

4:27 whom you anointed: Or “whom you made Christ (Messiah).” The title *Khri-stos*’ (Christ) comes from the Greek verb *khri’o*, which is used here. It literally refers to pouring oil on someone. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, it is used only in a sacred and figurative sense, referring to God’s setting a person aside for a special assignment under His direction. This Greek verb also occurs at Lu 4:18; Ac 10:38; 2Co 1:21; and Heb 1:9. Another Greek word, *a-lei’pho*, refers to the applying of literal oil or ointment to the body, such as when it was used after washing, applied as a medicine, or poured on a body to prepare it for burial.—Mt 6:17; Mr 6:13; 16:1; Lu 7:38, 46; Jas 5:14.

4:29 Jehovah: These words are part of a prayer addressed to the “Sovereign Lord” (Ac 4:24b), a term that is rendered from the Greek word *de-spo’tes* and that is also used to address God in a prayer recorded at Lu 2:29. In this prayer in Acts,

Jesus is called “your holy servant.” (Ac 4:27, 30) The disciples’ prayer includes a quote from Ps 2:1, 2, where the divine name is used. (See study note on Ac 4:26.) In addition, this request that Jehovah **give attention to their threats**, that is, the threats of the Sanhedrin, uses terms that are similar to those used in prayers recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as at 2Ki 19:16, 19 and Isa 37:17, 20, where the divine name is used.—See  App. C3 introduction; Ac 4:29.

4:30 wonders: Or “portents.”—See study note on Ac 2:19.

4:31 had made supplication: Or “had prayed earnestly (pleadingly).” The Greek verb *de’o-mai* refers to the offering of earnest prayer coupled with intense feeling. The related noun *de’e-sis*, rendered “supplication,” has been defined as “humble and earnest entreaty.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the noun is used exclusively in addressing God. Even Jesus “offered up supplications and also

petitions, with strong outcries and tears, to the One who was able to save him out of death.” (Heb 5:7) The use of the plural “supplications” indicates that Jesus implored Jehovah more than once. For example, in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed repeatedly and fervently.—Mt 26:36-44; Lu 22:32.

the word of God: This expression appears many times in the book of Acts. (Ac 6:2, 7; 8:14; 11:1; 13:5, 7, 46; 17:13; 18:11) Here the term “the word of God” refers to the Christian message originating with Jehovah God and featuring the important role of Jesus Christ in the outworking of God’s purpose.

4:32 were of one heart and soul: This expression describes the unity and harmony among the multitude of believers. At Php 1:27, the expression “with one soul” could also be rendered “with one purpose” or “as one man.” In the Hebrew Scriptures, the expression “one heart” is used at 1Ch 12:38, ftm., and at 2Ch 30:12,

CHAP. 4

a Ac 5:1, 2

b Ac 6:1

c Ac 9:27

Ac 11:22-24

Ac 12:25

Ac 13:1

Ac 15:37-39

d Lu 12:33

what was sold, **35** and they would deposit it at the feet of the apostles.^a In turn distribution would be made to each one according to his need.^b **36** So Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Bar'na·bas^c (which means, when translated, “Son of Comfort”), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, **37** owned a piece of land, and he sold it and brought the money and deposited it at the feet of the apostles.^d

CHAP. 5

e Ac 4:34, 35

f Ps 101:7

Eph 4:25

Col 3:9

g Ac 5:9

Ananias and Sapphira

5 However, a man named An-a-ni'as, together with his wife Sap-phi'ra, sold some property. **2** But he secretly held back some of the price, with his wife's knowledge, and he brought just a part of it and deposited it at the feet of the apostles.^e **3** But Peter said: “An-a-ni'as, why has Satan emboldened you to lie^f to the holy spirit^g and secretly hold back some of the price of the field? **4** As long as it remained with you, did it not remain yours? And after it was sold, was it not in your control? Why have you thought up such a deed as this in your heart? You have lied, not to men, but to God.” **5** On hearing these words, An-a-ni'as collapsed and died. And great fear came over all those who heard about it. **6** Then the younger men rose, wrapped him in cloths, carried him out, and buried him.

STUDY NOTES

ftn., to describe unified desire and action. Also, the expressions “heart” and “soul” are often mentioned together to represent the entire inner person. (De 4:29; 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10) The Greek phrase is used here in a similar way and could be rendered “they were completely united in thinking and purpose.” This was in harmony with Jesus' prayer that his followers be united despite their diverse backgrounds.—Joh 17:21.

4:36 Son of: In Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, the phrase “son(s) of” can be used to indicate a prominent quality or characteristic that distinguishes a person or to describe a group of people. For example, at De 3:18, “valiant men,” or courageous warriors, are literally called “sons of ability.” At Job 1:3, the expression rendered “people of the East” is literally “sons of the East.” The expression “a worthless man” at 1Sa 25:17 renders the literal expression “a son of belial,” that is, “a son

of worthlessness.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, those who pursue a certain course of conduct or who manifest a certain characteristic are designated by such expressions as “sons of the Most High,” “sons of light and sons of day,” and “sons of disobedience.”—Lu 6:35; 1Th 5:5; Eph 2:2.

Son of Comfort: Or “Son of Encouragement.” The translation of the surname **Barnabas**, given to one of the disciples named **Joseph**. Since Joseph was a common name among the Jews, the apostles may have given him the name Barnabas for practical reasons. (Compare Ac 1:23.) As explained in the study note on **Son of** in this verse, the expression was sometimes used to indicate a prominent quality or characteristic that distinguishes a person. The surname Son of Comfort apparently highlights Joseph's outstanding ability to encourage and comfort others. Luke reports that Joseph (Barnabas) was sent out to the congregation in Antioch of Syria and began to “encourage” his fellow

believers. (Ac 11:22, 23) The Greek verb here rendered “encourage” (*pa-ra·ka·le'o*) is related to the Greek word for “Comfort” (*pa-ra'kle-sis*) used at Ac 4:36.—See study note on **Son of** in this verse.

5:3 emboldened you: Lit., “filled your heart.” In this context, the Greek expression conveys the meaning “to dare to do something; to embolden.” It may reflect a Hebrew idiom with the same meaning. For example, at Es 7:5, the Hebrew phrase “has filled his heart to” is rendered “has dared to,” and at Ec 8:11, this idiom is rendered “the heart . . . becomes emboldened to do bad.”

See  Gallery, image 128, Early Parchment Manuscript of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

7 Now after an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter said to her: “Tell me, did you two sell the field for so much?” She said: “Yes, for that amount.” 9 So Peter said to her: “Why did you two agree to make a test of the spirit of Jehovah? Look! The feet of those who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” 10 Instantly she collapsed at his feet and died. When the young men came in, they found her dead and they carried her out and buried her alongside her husband. 11 So a great fear came over the whole congregation and over all those hearing about these things.

CHAP. 5

- a Ac 4:29, 30
Ac 6:8
Ac 14:3
Ac 15:12
Ro 15:18, 19
2Co 12:12
- b Joh 10:23
Ac 3:11
- c Ac 2:41
Ac 6:7
- d Mt 9:20, 21

Apostles Perform Many Signs

12 Moreover, through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders continued to occur among the people;^a and they would all meet together in Sol'o-mon's Colonnade.^b 13 True, none of the others had the courage to join them; nevertheless, the people were speaking highly of them. 14 More than that, believers in the Lord kept on being added, great numbers both of men and of women.^c 15 They even brought the sick out into the main streets and laid them there on small beds and mats, so that as Peter would pass by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them.^d 16 Also, crowds of people from the cities around Jerusalem kept coming, carrying sick people and those troubled with unclean spirits, and they were one and all cured.

STUDY NOTES

5:9 the spirit of Jehovah: The expression “the spirit of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s spirit”) occurs several times in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Some examples are found at Jg 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6; 15:14; 1Sa 10:6; 16:13; 2Sa 23:2; 1Ki 18:12; 2Ki 2:16; 2Ch 20:14; Isa 11:2; 40:13; 63:14; Eze 11:5; Mic 2:7; 3:8.) The expression “Jehovah’s spirit” is found at Lu 4:18 as part of a quote from Isa 61:1. There and in other Hebrew Scripture occurrences, the original Hebrew text uses the Tetragrammaton together with the word for “spirit.” The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “the spirit of Jehovah” in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts of Ac 5:9 read “the spirit of Lord,” are explained in  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Ac 5:9.

5:11 congregation: This is the first occurrence of the Greek word *ek-kle-si'a* in the book of Acts. The term comes from two Greek words, *ek*, meaning “out,” and *ka-le'o*, meaning “to call.” It refers to a group of people called together for a particular purpose or activity, so the term well describes the newly established Christian congregation. (See  Glossary.) The word *ek-kle-si'a* is used at Mt 16:18 (see study note), where Jesus foretells the formation of the Christian congregation made up of anointed Christians. They are living stones who are “being built up into a spiritual house.” (1Pe 2:4, 5) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term applies not only to the composite group of anointed Christians but also to all Christians living in a geographic area or to Christians making up a local congregation. In the context of Ac 5:11, the term

refers to the Christian congregation in Jerusalem.—See study note on Ac 7:38.

5:12 wonders: Or “portents.”—See study note on Ac 2:19.

See  Gallery, image 121, Solomon's Colonnade.

5:19 Jehovah's angel: Starting at Ge 16:7, this phrase is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “angel” and the Tetragrammaton. When it occurs at Zec 3:5, 6 in an early copy of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. This fragment, found in a cave in Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert, is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “Jehovah’s angel” in the main text, al-

CHAP. 5

Apostles Imprisoned and Set Free

- a Ac 4:1
 b Lu 21:12
 c Ps 34:7
 Ac 12:7
 Ac 16:26
 Heb 1:7, 14
 d Lu 20:19
 Ac 4:21
 e Ac 4:18

17 But the high priest rose, and all those with him, who were of the sect of the Sadducees,^a and they were filled with jealousy. **18** And they seized* the apostles and put them in the public jail.^b **19** But during the night, Jehovah’s angel opened the doors of the prison,^c brought them out, and said: **20** “Go and take your stand in the temple, and keep on speaking to the people all the sayings about this life.” **21** After hearing this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.

Apostles Again Brought Before the Sanhedrin

Now when the high priest and those with him arrived, they called together the San/he-drin and the entire assembly of elders of the sons of Israel, and they sent out to the jail to have the apostles brought before them. **22** But when the officers got there, they did not find them in the prison. So they returned and made their report, **23** saying: “We found the jail locked and secure, and the guards were standing at the doors, but on opening it up, we found no one inside.” **24** Well, when both the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were perplexed about what would come of this. **25** But someone came and reported to them: “Look! The men you put in prison are in the temple, standing and teaching the people.” **26** Then the captain went off with his officers and brought them in, but without violence, because they were afraid of being stoned by the people.^d

27 So they brought them and stood them before the San/he-drin. Then the high priest questioned them **28** and said: “We strictly ordered you not to keep teaching on the basis of this name,^e and yet look! you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you are determined to bring the blood of this man

FOOTNOTES

5:18 *Or “arrested.” Lit., “laid hands on.”

STUDY NOTES

though available Greek manuscripts of Ac 5:19 read “Lord’s angel,” are explained in  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Ac 5:19.

5:21 **the entire assembly of elders:** Or “the entire council (body) of elders.” The Greek word *ge-rou-si’a* used here is relat-

ed to the term *ge’ron* (lit., “old man”), which is found at Joh 3:4. Both terms are used only once in the Christian Greek Scriptures. Some consider the expression “assembly of elders” to be synonymous with **the Sanhedrin**, the Jewish high court in Jerusalem, which was made up of chief priests, scribes, and elders. (See study note on Lu 22:66.) However, in this context, the two expressions, “the Sanhedrin” and the “assembly of elders,” should apparently be viewed as two entities that were not mutually exclusive. Some mem-

bers of the “assembly of elders” might officially have been members of the Sanhedrin, while others might have played an advisory role to the Sanhedrin.

the sons of Israel: Or “the people of Israel; the Israelites.”—See  Glossary, “Israel.”

5:24 **the captain of the temple:** See study note on Ac 4:1.

upon us.”^a **29** In answer Peter and the other apostles said: “We must obey God as ruler rather than men.”^b **30** The God of our forefathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed, hanging him on a stake.^c **31** God exalted this one as Chief Agent^d and Savior^e to his right hand,^f to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.^g **32** And we are witnesses of these matters,^h and so is the holy spirit,ⁱ which God has given to those obeying him as ruler.”

CHAP. 5

- a Mt 27:25
Ac 3:14, 15
- b Da 3:17, 18
Mt 22:21
Ac 4:19, 20
- c Ac 2:23, 24
- d Ac 3:15
- e Mt 1:21
Heb 2:10
- f Ac 2:32, 33
Php 2:9
- g Isa 53:11
Ac 2:38
Ac 10:43
Ac 13:38, 39
- h Lu 24:46-48
Ac 1:8
- i Joh 15:26
- j Ac 7:54
- k Ac 22:3

Gamaliel’s Advice

33 When they heard this, they were infuriated and wanted to do away with them.^j **34** But a Pharisee named Ga-ma’li-el^k rose in the San’he-drin; he was a Law teacher esteemed by all the people, and he gave the command to put the men outside for a little while. **35** Then he said to them: “Men of Israel, be careful as to what you intend to do about these men. **36** For instance, before these days Theu’das rose up, saying he himself was somebody, and a number of men, about 400, joined his party. But he was done away with, and all those who were follow-

STUDY NOTES

5:30 a stake: Or “a tree.” The Greek word *xy’lon* (lit., “wood”) is here used as a synonym for the Greek word *stau-ros*’ (rendered “torture stake”) and describes the instrument of execution to which Jesus was nailed. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, Luke, Paul, and Peter used the word *xy’lon* in this sense five times altogether. (Ac 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; Ga 3:13; 1Pe 2:24) In the *Septuagint*, *xy’lon* is used at De 21:22, 23 to translate the corresponding Hebrew word *’ets* (meaning “tree; wood; piece of wood”) in the sentence “and you have hung him on a stake.” When Paul quotes this scripture at Ga 3:13, *xy’lon* is used in the sentence: “Accursed is every man hung upon a stake.” This Greek word is also used in the *Septuagint* at Ezr 6:11 (1 Esdras 6:31, LXX) to translate the Aramaic word *’a*, corresponding to the Hebrew term *’ets*. There it is said regarding violators of a Persian king’s decree: “A *timber* will be pulled out of his house and he will be lifted up and fastened to it.” The fact that Bible writers used *xy’lon* as a synonym for *stau-ros*’ provides added evidence that Jesus was executed on an upright stake

without a crossbeam, for that is what *xy’lon* in this special sense means.

5:31 Chief Agent: The Greek term used here (*ar-khe-gos*) basically means “chief leader; one who goes first.” It is used four times in the Bible, all referring to Jesus. (Ac 3:15; 5:31; Heb 2:10; 12:2) Here it is used along with the title “Savior.” —See study note on Ac 3:15.

5:33 they were infuriated: Or “they felt cut.” The Greek expression occurs only here and at Ac 7:54. It literally means “to be sawn through” but is used figuratively in both occurrences to describe a strong emotional response.

5:34 Gamaliel: A Law teacher mentioned twice in Acts, here and at Ac 22:3. He is thought to be Gamaliel the Elder, as he is known in non-Biblical sources. Gamaliel was the grandson, or possibly the son, of Hillel the Elder, who is credited with developing a more liberal school of thought among the Pharisees. Gamaliel was so highly **esteemed** among the people that he is said to be the first to be called by the honorific title “Rabban.” Therefore, he greatly influenced the Jewish society of his time by training many sons of

Pharisees, such as Saul of Tarsus. (Ac 22:3; 23:6; 26:4, 5; Ga 1:13, 14) He often interpreted the Law and traditions in a way that appears to have been comparatively broad-minded. For example, he is said to have enacted laws protecting wives against unprincipled husbands and defending widows against unprincipled children. He is also said to have argued that poor non-Jews should have the same gleaning rights as poor Jews. This tolerant attitude is evident in the way Gamaliel treated Peter and the other apostles. (Ac 5:35-39) Rabbinic records show, however, that Gamaliel placed greater emphasis on rabbinic tradition than on the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, on the whole, his teachings were similar to those of most of his rabbinic forefathers and the religious leaders of his day.—Mt 15:3-9; 2Ti 3:16, 17; see **L** Glossary, “Pharisees”; “Sanhedrin.”

5:40 flogged: Or “beat.” This beating probably refers to the Jewish punishment of “40 strokes less one.”—2Co 11:24; De 25:2, 3.

5:42 from house to house: This expression translates the Greek phrase

CHAP. 5

- a Pr 21:30
 b Ac 26:14
 c Mt 10:17
 Mr 13:9
 d Mt 5:10-12
 Ac 16:25
 Ro 5:3
 2Co 12:10
 Php 1:29
 Heb 10:34
 Jas 1:2
 1Pe 3:14
 1Pe 4:13, 14
 e Ac 20:20
 f Ac 4:31

ing him were dispersed and came to nothing. **37** After him, Judas the Gal-i-le'an rose up in the days of the registration, and he drew followers after himself. That man also perished, and all those who were following him were scattered. **38** So under the present circumstances, I say to you, do not meddle with these men, but let them alone. For if this scheme or this work is from men, it will be overthrown; **39** but if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them.^a Otherwise, you may even be found fighters against God himself."^b **40** At this they took his advice, and they summoned the apostles, flogged them,^c and ordered them to stop speaking on the basis of Jesus' name, and let them go.

Preaching From House to House

41 So they went out from before the San/he-drin, rejoicing^d because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name. **42** And every day in the temple and from house to house^e they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus.^f

STUDY NOTES

kat' oi'kon, literally, "according to house." Several lexicons and commentators state that the Greek preposition *ka-ta'* can be understood in a distributive sense. For example, one lexicon says that the phrase refers to "places viewed serially, distributive use . . . from house to house." (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Third Edition) Another reference says that the preposition *ka-ta'* is "distributive (Acts 2:46; 5:42: . . . house to house/in the [individual] houses." (*Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider) Bible scholar R.C.H. Lenski made the following comment: "Never for a moment did the apostles cease their blessed work. 'Every day' they continued, and this openly 'in the Temple' where the Sanhedrin and the Temple police could see and hear them, and, of course, also *κατ' οἴκων*, which is distributive, 'from house to house,' and not merely adverbial, 'at home.'" (*The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, 1961) These sources support the sense that the disciples' preaching was distributed from one house

to another. A similar use of *ka-ta'* occurs at Lu 8:1, where Jesus is said to have preached "from city to city and from village to village." This method of reaching people by going directly to their homes brought outstanding results.—Ac 6:7; compare Ac 4:16, 17; 5:28.

declaring the good news: The Greek verb *eu-ag-ge-li'zo-mai*, used here, is related to the noun *eu-ag-ge'li-on*, "good news." In the Christian Greek Scriptures, an important aspect of the good news is closely linked with God's Kingdom, the theme of Jesus' preaching and teaching work, and with the salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. In the book of Acts, the Greek verb *eu-ag-ge-li'zo-mai* occurs numerous times, emphasizing the preaching work.—Ac 8:4, 12, 25, 35, 40; 10:36; 11:20; 13:32; 14:7, 15, 21; 15:35; 16:10; 17:18; see study notes on Mt 4:23; 24:14.

See  Gallery, image 129, Preaching From House to House.

Seven Men Chosen to Minister

6 Now in those days when the disciples were increasing, the Greek-speaking Jews began complaining against the Hebrew-speaking Jews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution.^a **2** So the Twelve called the multitude of the disciples together and said: “It is not right for us to leave the word of God to distribute food to tables.^b **3** So, brothers, select for yourselves seven reputable men^c from among you, full of spirit and wisdom,^d that we may appoint them over this necessary matter;^e **4** but we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”^f **5** What they said was pleasing to the whole multitude, and they selected Stephen, a man full of faith and holy spirit,^g as well as Philip,^h Proch’o-rus, Ni-ca’nor, Ti’mon, Par’me-nas, and Nic-o-la’us, a proselyte of Antioch. **6** They brought them to the apostles, and after praying, they laid their hands on them.ⁱ

CHAP. 6

- a Ac 4:34, 35
1Ti 5:3
Jas 1:27
b Ex 18:17, 18
c Ac 16:1, 2
1Ti 3:7
d Ac 6:8, 10
e De 1:13
f Ac 2:42
g Ac 7:55
h Ac 8:5, 26
Ac 21:8
i De 34:9
Ac 8:14, 17
Ac 13:2, 3
1Ti 4:14
1Ti 5:22
2Ti 1:6

STUDY NOTES

6:1 the Greek-speaking Jews: Lit., “the Hellenists.” The Greek word *Hel-le-ni-stes*’ is not found in Greek or Hellenistic Jewish literature, but the context supports the rendering “Greek-speaking Jews,” as is true of many lexicons. At the time, all the Christian disciples in Jerusalem, including those who spoke Greek, were of Jewish descent or were Jewish proselytes. (Ac 10:28, 35, 44-48) The term rendered “Greek-speaking Jews” is used in contrast with a term rendered “Hebrew-speaking Jews” (lit., “Hebrews”; plural form of the Greek word *E-brai’os*). Therefore, “the Hellenists” were Jews who communicated with one another in Greek and who had come to Jerusalem from various parts of the Roman Empire, perhaps including the Decapolis. In contrast, most Hebrew-speaking Jews were probably Judeans and Galileans. These two groups of Jewish Christians likely had somewhat different cultural backgrounds.—See study note on Ac 9:29.

the Hebrew-speaking Jews: Lit., “the Hebrews.” The Greek word *E-brai’os* (singular) refers in general to an Israelite, a Hebrew. (2Co 11:22; Php 3:5) In this context, though, the term refers to Hebrew-speaking Jewish Christians in contrast with Greek-speaking Jewish

Christians.—See study note on **the Greek-speaking Jews** in this verse and study note on Joh 5:2.

in the daily distribution: Or “in the daily service (ministry).” The Greek word *di-a-ko-ni’a*, often rendered “ministry,” is here used for an aspect of the ministry that involves caring materially for needy brothers and sisters inside the congregation.—See study note on Ac 6:2, where the related verb *di-a-ko-ne’o* is rendered “to distribute food”; see also study note on Lu 8:3.

See  Gallery, image 127, Theodotus Inscription to Greek-Speaking Jews.

6:2 right: Lit., “pleasing.” It would not have been pleasing either to God or to the apostles to neglect “the ministry of the word” of God.—Ac 6:4.

to distribute food: Or “to minister; to serve.” The Greek word *di-a-ko-ne’o* here describes an aspect of the ministry that involves caring materially for needy but deserving fellow believers inside the congregation.—See study note on Ac 6:1, where the related noun *di-a-ko-ni’a* is rendered “distribution”; see also study note on Lu 8:3.

6:3 reputable men: Or “men who are well-reported-on; men with a good reputation.” Here the passive form of the

Greek verb *mar-ty-re’o* (“to bear witness”) is used. Qualified men were needed because the work likely involved not only serving food but also handling money, purchasing supplies, and keeping careful records. These men were said to be **full of spirit and wisdom**, showing evidence of being guided by God’s spirit and godly wisdom in their lives. The situation here was a sensitive one. Difficulties and differences already existed in the congregation, so experienced men who showed good judgment, discretion, and understanding were needed. One of these men was Stephen, and his defense before the Sanhedrin indicates that he was well-qualified.—Ac 7:2-53.

6:4 the ministry of the word: The same Greek word for “ministry” (*di-a-ko-ni’a*) is used at Ac 6:1 and 6:4. It is therefore obvious that two kinds of ministry are involved here—the impartial distribution of food supplies for those in need and the supplying of spiritual food from God’s Word. The apostles discerned that it would not be proper for them to devote their time to distributing physical food instead of focusing on their primary ministry, that of providing the congregation with spiritual food by means of prayerful study, research, teaching, and shepherding. They knew that caring for

CHAP. 6

7 Consequently, the word of God continued to spread,^a and the number of the disciples kept multiplying very much^b in Jerusalem; and a large crowd of priests began to be obedient to the faith.^c

^a Ac 12:24
Ac 19:20

^b Ac 2:47

^c Joh 12:42
Ac 15:5

^d Isa 54:17
Lu 21:15
Ac 6:3

Stephen Accused of Blasphemy

8 Now Stephen, full of divine favor and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. 9 But some men of the so-called Synagogue of the Freedmen came forward, along with some Cy-re'ni-ans and Alexandrians, and some from Ci-li'cia and Asia, to dispute with Stephen. 10 But they could not hold their own against the wisdom and the spirit with which he was speaking.^d 11 Then they secretly persuaded men to say: "We have heard him speaking blasphemous things against

STUDY NOTES

the physical needs of the destitute widows in the congregation was a necessary part of a Christian's ministry. Later, Jehovah inspired James to write that those who want to worship God acceptably must "look after orphans and widows in their tribulation." (Jas 1:27) However, the apostles also recognized that their priority was to care for the spiritual needs of all the disciples, including the widows.

6:5 Stephen, . . . Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus:

All seven of these names are Greek, raising the possibility that from among all the qualified men available in the Jerusalem congregation, the apostles selected Greek-speaking Jews or proselytes. However, **Nicolaus** is the only one called a **proselyte of Antioch**, which suggests that he may have been the only non-Jew of the group. The Greek names of the others were common even among natural Jews. Still, the apostles, acting as a governing body, seem to have chosen these particular men out of consideration for the feelings of the Greek-speaking Jews.—Ac 6:1-6.

Antioch: This city, mentioned here for the first time in the Bible, lay some 500 km (300 mi) N of Jerusalem. Antioch became the capital of the Roman province of Syria in 64 B.C.E. By the first century C.E., it was the third-largest city in the Roman Empire, after Rome and Alexandria. While

Antioch of Syria was admired for its beauty and its extensive political, commercial, and cultural influence, the city also acquired a reputation for moral corruption. A sizable population of Jews in Antioch reportedly made many proselytes among the Greek-speaking people there. Nicolaus became such a proselyte and later converted to Christianity. Barnabas and the apostle Paul spent a year teaching in Antioch, and Paul used that city as the base from which he launched his missionary tours. It was first in Antioch that Christ's followers "were by divine providence called Christians." (See study notes on Ac 11:26.) This Antioch is not to be confused with Antioch in Pisidia, mentioned at Ac 13:14.—See study note on Ac 13:14 and  App. B13.

See  Gallery, image 136, Antioch of Syria.

6:6 they laid their hands on them:

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the laying on of hands was done either to a person or to an animal and had a variety of meanings. (Ge 48:14; Le 16:21; 24:14) In connection with humans, it was usually a gesture to indicate that the person was being recognized in a special way or designated for a special purpose. (Nu 8:10) For example, Moses laid his hand on Joshua as a way to acknowledge him as Moses' successor. As a result, Joshua became "full of the spirit of wisdom" and was able to lead Israel properly. (De 34:9) In the account

recorded here at Ac 6:6, the apostles laid their hands on the men whom they appointed to positions of responsibility. The apostles did so **only after praying** about the matter, showing that they wanted God's guidance. Later, the members of a body of congregation elders appointed Timothy to a special position of service by laying their hands on him. (1Ti 4:14) Timothy too was authorized to appoint others by laying his hands on them, but only after he had carefully considered their qualifications.—1Ti 5:22.

6:8 wonders: Or "portents."—See study note on Ac 2:19.

6:9 Synagogue of the Freedmen: During Roman rule, a "freedman" was a person who had been set free from slavery. It has been suggested that those who belonged to this synagogue were Jews who had been taken captive by the Romans and then later were emancipated. Another view is that these were freed slaves who had become Jewish proselytes.

Moses and God.”^a **12** And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, and coming upon him suddenly, they forcibly seized him and led him to the San’he-drin. **13** And they brought forward false witnesses, who said: “This man does not stop speaking things against this holy place and against the Law.^b **14** For instance, we have heard him say that this Jesus the Naz-a-rene’ will throw down this place^c and change the customs that Moses handed down to us.”

15 And as all those sitting in the San’he-drin stared at him, they saw that his face was like an angel’s face.

CHAP. 6

- a Mt 26:59
b Ac 21:27, 28
c Mt 26:61

CHAP. 7

- d Ge 11:31
e Ge 12:1
f Ge 11:32
g Ge 12:4, 5
Heb 11:8

Stephen Defends His Faith Before the Sanhedrin

7 But the high priest said: “Are these things so?” **2** Stephen replied: “Men, brothers and fathers, listen. The God of glory appeared to our forefather Abraham while he was in Mes-o-po-ta’mi-a, before he took up residence in Ha’ran,^d **3** and he said to him: ‘Go out from your land and from your relatives and come into the land that I will show you.’^e **4** Then he went out of the land of the Chal-de’ans and took up residence in Ha’ran. And from there, after his father died,^f God caused him to resettle in this land where you now dwell.^g **5** And yet, he did not give him any inheritance in it, no, not even enough to put

STUDY NOTES

6:12 elders: See study note on Mt 16:21.

6:14 the Nazarene: See study note on Mr 10:47.

6:15 like an angel’s face: Both the Hebrew and the Greek terms rendered “angel” mean “messenger.” (See study note on Joh 1:51.) Since angels bear messages from God, they have reason to be fearless and serene, confident that they have divine backing. Similarly, Stephen’s facial expression was that of a messenger of God. It gave no indication of guilt. Instead, he was serene, and his expression showed that he had confidence in the backing of Jehovah, “the God of glory.”—Ac 7:2.

7:1 the high priest: That is, Caiaphas.
—See study note on Ac 4:6.

7:3 Go out from your land: When speaking to the Sanhedrin, Stephen says that Abraham was given this command when

“the God of glory appeared to our forefather Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia, before he took up residence in Haran.” (Ac 7:2) Abraham (first known as Abram) was originally from the Chaldean city of Ur. As Stephen indicated, that was apparently where Abraham was first told to go out from his land. (Ge 11:28, 29, 31; 15:7; 17:5; Ne 9:7) The account at Ge 11:31–12:3 may give the impression that this command was first given after the death of Abraham’s father, Terah, when Abraham had temporarily settled in Haran. However, in view of that account, taken together with Stephen’s comment here, it is reasonable to conclude that Jehovah gave Abraham this command when he was still in Ur and then repeated the command while Abraham was living in Haran.

7:4 God: Lit., “He,” referring to “the God of glory” in verse 2.

7:5, 6 offspring: Lit., “seed.”—See  App. A2.

7:6 afflict them for 400 years: At Ge 15:13, which is quoted here, God told Abram (Abraham) that his descendants would be enslaved and afflicted for 400 years. This period ended when Jehovah freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt on Nisan 14, 1513 B.C.E., so it must have begun in 1913 B.C.E. Bible chronology indicates that in that year, Abraham’s offspring Isaac—who was about five years old at the time—began to be mocked and mistreated by Ishmael, his half brother. Ishmael was born some 19 years earlier to Sarai’s (Sarah’s) Egyptian servant Hagar. Ishmael may have taunted his younger brother because Isaac was to receive the firstborn’s inheritance even though Ishmael was born first. (Ge 16:1-4; 21:8-10) Paul later described Ishmael’s treatment of Isaac as persecution. (Ga 4:29) Apparently, it was severe enough for Jehovah to approve of Sarah’s demand that Abraham drive Ishmael and his mother away. (Ge 21:11-13) So Isaac was the first of

CHAP. 7

- a Ge 12:7
Ge 13:14, 15
Ge 17:1, 8
- b Ge 15:2
- c Ge 15:13
Ex 12:40
- d Ge 15:14
e Ex 3:12
- f Ge 17:9, 10
- g Ge 21:1-3
- h Ge 21:4
- i Ge 37:9-11
- j Ge 37:28
Ge 45:4
- k Ge 39:2, 3
- l Ge 39:21
- m Ge 41:38-46
Ge 45:8
Ps 105:21, 22
- n Ge 41:54
Ge 42:5
- o Ge 42:2, 6

his foot on; but he promised to give it to him as a possession and after him to his offspring,^a though as yet he had no child.^b **6** Moreover, God told him that his offspring would be foreigners in a land not theirs and that the people would enslave them and afflict* them for 400 years.^c **7** 'And that nation for which they will slave I will judge,'^d God said, 'and after these things they will come out and will offer sacred service to me in this place.'^e

8 "He also gave him a covenant of circumcision,^f and he became the father of Isaac^g and circumcised him on the eighth day,^h and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the 12 family heads. **9** And the family heads became jealous of Josephⁱ and sold him into Egypt.^j But God was with him,^k **10** and he rescued him out of all his tribulations^l and gave him favor and wisdom before Phar'aoh king of Egypt. And he appointed him to govern Egypt and his whole house.^m **11** But a famine came on all of Egypt and Ca'naan, yes, a great tribulation, and our forefathers could not find anything to eat.ⁿ **12** But Jacob heard that there were food supplies* in Egypt, and he sent our forefathers out the first time.^o **13** During the second time, Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and the family of

FOOTNOTES

7:6 *Or "mistreat." **7:12** *Or "there was grain."

STUDY NOTES

Abraham's offspring to experience the foretold affliction. Therefore, this incident, recorded in detail in the divine record, apparently marks the commencement of the prophesied 400-year period of affliction that would not end until the Exodus.

7:7 offer sacred service to me: Or "worship me." The Greek verb *la-treu'o* basically denotes serving but in some contexts may be rendered "to worship." The second part of the verse alludes to Ex 3:12, where the corresponding Hebrew verb can be rendered "serve" or "worship." (Ex 3:12; ftn.) In Scriptural usage, the Greek word *la-treu'o* generally refers to serving God or to service connected with worship of God (Mt 4:10; Lu 1:74; 2:37; 4:8; Ro 1:9; Php 3:3; 2Ti 1:3; Heb 9:14; 12:28; Re 7:15; 22:3), including service at the sanctuary or temple (Heb 8:5;

9:9; 10:2; 13:10). In a few cases, it refers to false worship—rendering service to, or worshipping, created things.—Ac 7:42; Ro 1:25.

7:8 and Isaac became the father of

Jacob: The Greek text does not repeat either of the two preceding verbs "became the father of" and "circumcised." Therefore, either or both of these verbs could be implied in the last part of the verse. Thus, it is also possible to render that part of the verse: "And Isaac did the same with [that is, circumcised] Jacob, and Jacob with the 12 family heads."

family heads: Or "patriarchs." The Greek word *pa-tri-ar'khes* occurs four times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. Here it refers to Jacob's 12 sons (Ge 35:23-26), and it is also used with regard to David (Ac 2:29) and Abraham (Heb 7:4).

Joseph became known to Phar'aoth.^a **14** So Joseph sent a message and called his father Jacob and all his relatives from that place,^b 75 persons in all.^c **15** So Jacob went down into Egypt,^d and he died there,^e and so did our forefathers.^f **16** They were carried to She'chem and were laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver money from the sons of Ha'mor in She'chem.^g

17 "Just as the time was approaching to fulfill the promise that God had announced to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, **18** until there rose a different king over Egypt, one who did not know of Joseph.^h **19** This one dealt cunningly with our race* and wrongfully forced the fathers to abandon[#] their infants so that they would not be kept alive.ⁱ **20** At that time Moses was born, and he was divinely beautiful. And he was nursed* for three months in his father's home.^j **21** But when he was abandoned,^{*k} the daughter of Phar'aoth took him and brought him up as her own son.^l **22** So Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. In fact, he was powerful in his words and deeds.^m

CHAP. 7

- a Ge 45:1, 16
- b Ge 45:9-11
- c Ge 46:27
De 10:22
- d Ge 46:29
De 26:5
- e Ge 49:33
- f Ex 1:6
- g Ge 23:16
Ex 13:19
Jos 24:32
- h Ex 1:7, 8
- i Ex 1:10, 22
- j Ex 2:2
Heb 11:23
- k Ex 2:3
- l Ex 2:5, 10
- m Ex 11:3

FOOTNOTES

7:19 *Or "people." #Or "expose."
7:20 *Or "brought up." **7:21** *Or "exposed."

STUDY NOTES

7:14 persons: Or "souls." The Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered "soul," here refers to a living person.—See  Glossary, "Soul," and  App. A2.

75 persons in all: Stephen may not be quoting a particular verse from the Hebrew Scriptures when he gives the total number of Jacob's family in Egypt as 75. This figure is not found in the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Scriptures. Ge 46:26 says: "All those who descended from Jacob and went into Egypt with him, aside from the wives of Jacob's sons, were 66." Verse 27 continues: "All the people of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were 70." Here the people are counted in two different ways, the first figure apparently including only his natural descendants and the second figure giving the total of those who came into Egypt. The number of Jacob's descendants is also mentioned

at Ex 1:5 and De 10:22, where the figure "70" is given. Stephen apparently gives a third figure that includes more of Jacob's extended family. Some suggest that it includes sons and grandsons of Joseph's sons Manasseh and Ephraim, who are mentioned in the *Septuagint* translation of Ge 46:20. Others suggest that it includes the wives of Jacob's sons, who are specifically excluded from the figure given at Ge 46:26. So the figure "75" may be a grand total. This figure, though, may have a basis in copies of the Hebrew Scriptures circulating in the first century C.E. For years, scholars have known that "75" was the figure given at Ge 46:27 and Ex 1:5 in the Greek *Septuagint*. Additionally, in the 20th century, two Dead Sea Scroll fragments of Ex 1:5 in Hebrew were discovered, and they also use the figure "75." Stephen's figure may be based on one of those ancient texts. Regardless of which idea is correct, Stephen's figure simply reflects a different way of counting the total number of Jacob's descendants.

7:20 divinely beautiful: The Greek expression used here literally means "beautiful to God." This phrase reflects

a Semitic idiom used to refer to what is superlative. In this context, it may convey a dual idea of being "extremely beautiful" and of being "beautiful in the sight of God." (Compare Ex 2:2.) Some scholars suggest that the expression could refer not only to a person's physical attributes but also to the inner qualities that God sees in a person. A similar construction occurs at Jon 3:3 where, according to a literal rendering of the Hebrew text, Nineveh is described as "a city great to God," conveying the idea of "a very large city." —For other examples, see Ge 23:6; ftm.; Ps 36:6; ftn.

7:22 instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians: Stephen's speech before the Sanhedrin includes a number of facts of Jewish history that are not found in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Stephen alone speaks of Moses' Egyptian education. For other details in Stephen's talk that are not included in the Hebrew Scriptures, see study notes on Ac 7:23, 30, 53.

7:23 reached the age of 40: Stephen's speech before the Sanhedrin includes a number of facts concerning Jewish history that are not found in the Hebrew

CHAP. 7

- a Ex 2:11, 12
 b Heb 11:24, 25
 c Ex 2:13
 d Ex 2:14
 e Ex 2:15, 21, 22
 Ex 18:2-4
 f Ex 3:1-4

23 “Now when he reached the age of 40, it came into his heart to make a visit on* his brothers, the sons of Israel.^a **24** When he caught sight of one of them being unjustly treated, he defended him and avenged the one being abused by striking down the Egyptian.^b **25** He thought that his brothers would grasp that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not grasp it. **26** The next day he appeared to them as they were fighting, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying: ‘Men, you are brothers. Why do you mistreat each other?’^c **27** But the one who was mistreating his neighbor pushed him away, saying: ‘Who appointed you ruler and judge over us? **28** You do not want to do away with me the way you did away with the Egyptian yesterday, do you?’^d **29** On hearing this, Moses fled and lived as a foreigner in the land of Mid’i-an, where he became the father of two sons.^e

30 “After 40 years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Si’nai in the flame of a burning thornbush.^f **31** When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight. But as he was approaching to investigate, Jehovah’s voice was

FOOTNOTES

7:23 *Or “to check the conditions of.”

STUDY NOTES

Scriptures. For example, Stephen reveals that Moses was 40 years of age when he fled Egypt. For other details in Stephen’s speech that are not included in the Hebrew Scriptures, see study notes on Ac 7:22, 30, 53.

it came into his heart: Or “the thought came to him; he decided.” This Greek expression reflects a Hebrew idiom.—Compare Isa 65:17; Jer 3:16.

the sons of Israel: Or “people of Israel; the Israelites.”—See  Glossary, “Israel.”

7:30 40 years: The Hebrew Scriptures do not explicitly state how many years Moses stayed in Midian. But here Stephen reveals facts of Jewish history not previously recorded in the Scriptures. He states that Moses was 40 years of age when he fled to Midian (Ex 2:11; Ac 7:23) and that he stayed there until an additional 40 years had passed or were near completion. So the period referred to

here apparently runs from 1553 to 1513 B.C.E. Stephen’s account agrees with the statement that Moses was 80 years old when he spoke to Pharaoh (Ex 7:7) and led the people of Israel out of Egypt. It also harmonizes with the statement that Moses was 120 years old when he died after spending 40 years in the wilderness.—De 34:7; Ac 7:36.

an angel: Stephen is here referring to the account at Ex 3:2, where the original Hebrew text says “Jehovah’s angel.” Most Greek manuscripts read “an angel” here, but a few manuscripts and a few ancient translations into other languages have a reading that can be rendered “an angel of [the] Lord [or, “of Jehovah].” A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J⁷, 8, 10-12, 14-17, 28 in  App. C4) use the Tetragrammaton here and read “Jehovah’s angel.”

7:31 Jehovah’s voice: This part of Stephen’s speech (Ac 7:30-33) refers to the account at Ex 3:2-10. In verse 4, “Jehovah” calls out to Moses by means of His angel, and in verse 6, “Jehovah” tells him what is quoted at Ac 7:32. The phrase “the voice of Jehovah” is often found in

the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “voice” and the Tetragrammaton. (Some examples are Ge 3:8; Ex 15:26; De 5:25; 8:20; 15:5; 18:16; 26:14; 27:10; 28:1, 62; Jos 5:6; 1Sa 12:15; 1Ki 20:36; Ps 106:25; Isa 30:31; Jer 3:25; Da 9:10; Zec 6:15.) It is worth noting that when the expression “voice of Jehovah” occurs at De 26:14; 27:10; 28:1, 62 in a first-century B.C.E. fragment of the *Septuagint* (in the collection Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266), the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters within the Greek text. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “Jehovah’s voice” in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts of Ac 7:31 read “Lord’s voice,” are explained in  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Ac 7:31.

heard: **32** ‘I am the God of your forefathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.’^a Moses started trembling and did not dare to investigate further. **33** Jehovah said to him: ‘Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.’^b **34** I have certainly seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning,^c and I have come down to rescue them. Now come, I will send you off to Egypt.’^d **35** This same Moses whom they had disowned, saying: ‘Who appointed you ruler and judge?’^e is the very one God sent^f as both ruler and deliverer by means of the angel who appeared to him in the thornbush. **36** This man led them out,^g performing wonders and signs in Egypt^h and at the Red Seaⁱ and in the wilderness for 40 years.^j

37 “This is the Moses who said to the sons of Israel: ‘God will raise up for you from among your brothers a prophet like me.’^k

38 This is the one who came to be among the congregation in the wilderness with the angel^l who spoke to him^m on Mount Si’nai and with our forefathers, and he received living sacred pronouncements to give us.ⁿ **39** Our forefathers refused to obey him, but they pushed him aside^o and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt,^p **40** saying to Aaron: ‘Make gods for us to go

^p Ex 16:3.

CHAP. 7

- a Ex 3:6
Mr 12:26
Lu 20:37
- b Ex 3:5
- c Ex 2:23, 24
Ex 3:9
De 26:6, 7
- d Ex 3:7, 8, 10
- e Ex 2:14
Ac 7:27
- f Ex 4:19
- g Ex 12:41
- h Ex 7:3
Ex 8:5
Ex 9:10
Ps 105:27-36
- i Ex 14:21, 22
Ex 15:4, 5
Heb 11:29
- j Ex 16:35
Nu 14:33, 34
- k De 18:15
De 18:18
Ac 3:22
- l Ac 7:53
Ga 3:19
- m Ex 19:3
De 5:27
- n Ex 21:1
De 9:10
Ro 3:1, 2
- o Nu 14:3, 4

 STUDY NOTES

7:33 Jehovah said to him: The context of the original account referred to by Stephen is Ex 3:2-10, where it is clear that Jehovah is the one speaking by means of His angel. Although most of the content of this verse is taken from Ex 3:5, an equivalent of the introductory phrase can be found in the original Hebrew text at Ex 3:7, literally reading: “And Jehovah said.” —See  App. C3 introduction; Ac 7:33.

7:35 deliverer: Or “redeemer; liberator.” The Greek word *ly-tro-tes’* comes from the verb *ly-tro’o-mai*, meaning “to set free; to deliver.” It is also related to the noun *ly’tron*, meaning “ransom.” (See study note on Mt 20:28.) The verb form is used with regard to the deliverance granted through Jesus Christ (Lu 24:21; Tit 2:14, ftn.; 1Pe 1:18, ftn.), who was foretold to be a prophet like Moses (De 18:15; Ac 7:37). Just as Moses was the deliverer of the Israelites from Egypt, so Jesus Christ is the Deliverer of all mankind by means of his ransom sacrifice.

7:36 wonders: Or “portents.”—See study note on Ac 2:19.

for 40 years: These 40 years run from 1513 B.C.E., the time of the Exodus, to 1473 B.C.E. when the Israelites entered the Promised Land. Before and during these 40 years, Moses performed **wonders and signs**. For example, when Moses returned to Egypt, he first performed signs before all the Israelite elders. (Ex 4:30, 31) Then, in the time leading up to the Exodus, Moses was instrumental in performing great wonders and signs before Pharaoh and all the people of Egypt. Later, he played a role when Pharaoh and his army were destroyed in the Red Sea. (Ex 14:21-31; 15:4; De 11:2-4) One of the most remarkable signs associated with Moses was the daily provision of manna in the wilderness. This miracle continued for 40 years until the people began eating some of the produce of the land of Canaan, early in the year 1473 B.C.E.—Ex 16:35; Jos 5:10-12.

7:37 the sons of Israel: Or “the people of Israel; the Israelites.”—See  Glossary, “Israel.”

God: In this quote from De 18:15, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text, which reads “Jehovah your God.” Stephen’s quote is slightly abbreviated; he uses only the word for “God.” Peter quotes the same verse at Ac 3:22, using the whole expression “Jehovah your God.” (See study note on Ac 3:22.) Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here and read “Jehovah your God” (J7, 8, 10-17) or “Jehovah God” (J28). (See  App. C.4.) A few Greek manuscripts also have readings that can be rendered “the Lord God” or, for the same reasons as presented in  App. C, “Jehovah God.” However, the vast majority of Greek manuscripts and ancient translations into other languages simply read “God.”

CHAP. 7

- a Ex 32:1
Ex 32:23
- b Ex 32:4, 6
- c 2Ki 17:16
- d 1Ki 11:7
- e Jer 25:11
Am 5:25-27
- f Ex 25:40
Heb 8:5
- g De 3:28
De 31:3
Jos 3:14
- h Ge 17:1, 8
Ge 48:3, 4
De 32:48, 49
Jos 23:9
Jos 24:18
- i 2Sa 7:2
1Ch 22:7
Ps 132:1-5
- j 1Ki 6:1, 38
1Ch 17:11, 12
- k 2Ch 6:18
Ac 17:24

ahead of us. For we do not know what has happened to this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt.’^a **41** So they made a calf in those days and brought a sacrifice to the idol and began to enjoy themselves in the works of their hands.^b **42** So God turned away from them and handed them over to offer sacred service to the army of heaven,^c just as it is written in the book of the Prophets: ‘It was not to me that you made offerings and sacrifices for 40 years in the wilderness, was it, O house of Israel? **43** But it was the tent of Mo’loch^d and the star of the god Re’phan that you took up, the images that you made to worship them. So I will deport you beyond Babylon.’^e

44 “Our forefathers had the tent of the witness in the wilderness, just as He gave orders when speaking to Moses to make it according to the pattern he had seen.^f **45** And our forefathers received possession of it and brought it in with Joshua into the land possessed by the nations,^g whom God drove out from before our forefathers.^h Here it remained until the days of David. **46** He found favor in the sight of God and asked for the privilege of providing* a dwelling place for the God of Jacob.ⁱ **47** But it was Sol’o-mon who built a house for him.^j **48** However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands,^k

FOOTNOTES

7:46 *Or “finding.”

STUDY NOTES

7:38 the congregation in the wilderness: Here the Israelites who were called out of Egypt are referred to as a “congregation.” In the Hebrew Scriptures, the Hebrew word *qa-hal*, usually rendered “congregation” in the *New World Translation*, is from a root word meaning “to call together; to congregate.” (Nu 20:8; De 4:10) The word is frequently used to describe the Israelites as an organized body, in such expressions as “congregation of Israel” (Le 16:17; Jos 8:35; 1Ki 8:14), “congregation of the true God” (Ne 13:1), “congregation of Jehovah” (De 23:2, 3; Mic 2:5), and “Jehovah’s congregation” (Nu 20:4; 1Ch 28:8). In the *Septuagint*, the Hebrew word *qa-hal* is often rendered by the Greek word *ek-kle-si’a* (as at Ps 22:22 [21:23, LXX]), which is the expression used in the Christian Greek Scriptures for “congregation.”—See study notes on Mt 16:18; Ac 5:11.

7:44 the tent of the witness: Or “the tabernacle of the testimony.” In the *Septuagint*, which may have influenced Luke’s wording of this verse, this expression is used to render the Hebrew term for “the tent of meeting.” (Ex 27:21; 28:43; Nu 1:1) During Israel’s wilderness trek, this tent was where the ark of the covenant, with its principal contents, the “two tablets of the Testimony,” was kept. In these contexts, the term “Testimony” usually refers to the Ten Commandments as written on stone tablets. (Ex 25:16, 21, 22; 31:18; 32:15) The Hebrew term for “testimony” could also be rendered “reminder.” The ark served as a holy archive for the safekeeping of sacred reminders or testimony.—See  Glossary, “Ark of the covenant” and “Most Holy, the.”

pattern: Or “design; type.” The Greek word *ty’pos* used here has the same meaning at Heb 8:5 and in the *Septuagint* at Ex 25:40.

7:45 Joshua: Here referring to the leader of Israel who brought the Israelites into the Promised Land. (De 3:28; 31:7; Jos

1:1, 2) The Hebrew name Jehoshua and its shortened form Joshua mean “Jehovah Is Salvation.” Luke here uses its Greek equivalent, *I-e-sous*’. The Latin form of the same name is Jesus (*Iesus*). (See  App. A4.) This was a common name among Jews in Bible times. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, four people referred to by the Greek name *I-e-sous*’ are mentioned: Joshua, the son of Nun, the successor of Moses (Ac 7:45; Heb 4:8); an ancestor of Jesus Christ (Lu 3:29); Jesus Christ himself (Mt 1:21); and a Christian, evidently Jewish, who was one of Paul’s fellow workers (Col 4:11). Josephus mentions several others, besides those in the Bible record, bearing that name.

7:48 houses made with hands: Or “places (things) made with hands.” The Greek word *khei-ro-poi’e-tos* is also used at Ac 17:24 (“handmade”) and Heb 9:11, 24 (“made with hands”).

just as the prophet says: **49** ‘The heaven is my throne,^a and the earth is my footstool.^b What sort of house will you build for me? Jehovah says. Or where is my resting-place? **50** My hand made all these things, did it not?’^c

51 “Obstinate men and uncircumcised in hearts and ears,^d you are always resisting the holy spirit; as your forefathers did, so you do.^e **52** Which one of the prophets did your forefathers not persecute?^f Yes, they killed those who announced in advance the coming of the righteous one,^g whose betrayers and murderers you have now become,^h **53** you who received the Law as transmitted by angelsⁱ but have not kept it.”

Stoning of Stephen

54 Well, at hearing these things, they were infuriated in their hearts and began to grind their teeth at him.^j **55** But he, being full of holy spirit, gazed into heaven and caught sight of God’s glory and of Jesus standing at God’s right hand,^k **56** and he

CHAP. 7

- a Ps 11:4
- b Mt 5:34, 35
- c Isa 66:1, 2
Heb 3:4
- d Ex 33:3, 5
Le 26:41
Jer 6:10
- e Isa 63:10
- f 2Ch 36:16
- g Mt 23:31
- h Isa 53:8
Ac 3:13, 14
- i Ac 7:38
Ga 3:19
- j Ac 5:33
- k Ps 110:1
Mt 26:64
Eph 1:20
Col 3:1

 STUDY NOTES

7:49 Jehovah: In this quote from Isa 66:1, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text. The phrase rendered **Jehovah says** corresponds to a phrase at the beginning of Isa 66:1 (“This is what Jehovah says”) and also to a phrase in the middle of the next verse (“declares Jehovah”).—Isa 66:2; see  App. C.

7:51 Obstinate: Lit., “Stiff-necked.” The Greek word used here occurs only once in the Christian Greek Scriptures but is used a few times in the *Septuagint* to render a Hebrew expression with a similar meaning.—Ex 33:3, 5, ftns.; 34:9, ftn.; De 9:6, ftn.; Pr 29:1, ftn.

uncircumcised in hearts and ears: This figurative expression for being stubborn and unresponsive has its background in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Le 26:41, ftn.; Jer 9:25, 26; Eze 44:7, 9) At Jer 6:10 (ftn.), the literal phrase “their ear is uncircumcised” is rendered “their ears are closed.” So hearts and ears that are not sensitive to or responsive to God’s direction are spoken of as being uncircumcised.

7:53 as transmitted by angels: Stephen’s account delivered before the Sanhedrin

includes a number of facts concerning Jewish history that are not found in the Hebrew Scriptures. One example is the role of angels in giving the Mosaic Law. (Ga 3:19; Heb 2:1, 2) For other details in Stephen’s speech that cannot be found in the Hebrew Scriptures, see study notes on Ac 7:22, 23, 30.

7:54 they were infuriated: Or “they felt cut.” The Greek expression occurs only here and at Ac 5:33. It literally means “to be sawn through” but is used figuratively in both occurrences to describe a strong emotional response.

grind their teeth: Or “gnash (clench) their teeth.” The expression can include the idea of anguish, despair, or anger, possibly accompanied by bitter words and violent action. In this context, it obviously refers to furious rage.—Job 16:9; see study note on Mt 8:12.

7:55 Jesus standing at God’s right hand: Stephen was the first to bear witness that he had seen Jesus in heaven and standing at the right hand of God, as prophesied at Ps 110:1. The right hand was considered to be of great importance symbolically. To be on the right hand of a ruler was to have the second most important position, next to the ruler himself (Ro 8:34; 1Pe

3:22), or to have a position in his favor.—See study notes on Mt 25:33; Mr 10:37; Lu 22:69.

7:58 Saul: Meaning “Asked [of God]; Inquired [of God].” Saul, also known by his Roman name Paul, was “of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born from Hebrews.” (Php 3:5) Since Saul was born a Roman citizen (Ac 22:28), it is logical that his Jewish parents may have given him the Roman name Paulus, or Paul, meaning “Little; Small.” From childhood, he likely had both names. His parents may have named him Saul for a number of reasons. Saul was a traditional name of importance among Benjaminites because the first king over all Israel, a Benjaminite, was named Saul. (1Sa 9:2; 10:1; Ac 13:21) Or his parents might have given him the name because of its meaning. Another possibility is that his father’s name was Saul, and according to custom, the son was named after the father. (Compare Lu 1:59.) Whatever the reason, when among fellow Jews—and especially when studying to be a Pharisee and living as one—he would have used his Hebrew name, Saul. (Ac 22:3) And for over a decade after becoming a Christian, he seemed to have been known mostly by his Hebrew name.—Ac 11:25, 30; 12:25; 13:1, 2, 9.

CHAP. 7

- a Da 7:13
 b Ro 8:34
 c Le 24:14, 16
 Mt 23:37
 Joh 16:2
 d De 17:7
 e Ac 8:1
 Ac 22:20
 f Mt 5:44
 Lu 23:34

CHAP. 8

- g Ac 7:58
 Ac 22:20
 1Ti 1:13
 h Mt 10:23
 Ac 11:19

said: “Look! I see the heavens opened up and the Son of man^a standing at God’s right hand.”^b **57** At this they cried out at the top of their voices and put their hands over their ears and rushed at him all together. **58** After throwing him outside the city, they began stoning him.^c The witnesses^d laid down their outer garments at the feet of a young man called Saul.^e **59** As they were stoning Stephen, he made this appeal: “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” **60** Then, kneeling down, he cried out with a strong voice: “Jehovah, do not charge this sin against them.”^f And after saying this, he fell asleep in death.

Saul the Persecutor

8 Saul, for his part, approved of his murder.^g

On that day great persecution arose against the congregation that was in Jerusalem; all except the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Ju-de’a and Sa-mar’i-a.^h

STUDY NOTES

7:59 he made this appeal: “Lord Jesus”:

As mentioned in verses 55 and 56, Stephen had a vision in which he saw “the heavens opened up and the Son of man standing at God’s right hand.” So Stephen clearly distinguished Jesus from Jehovah. Stephen was aware that Jehovah had given Jesus the power to resurrect the dead. It would therefore have been natural for Stephen to speak directly to Jesus, whom he had seen in the vision, and to ask Jesus to safeguard his **spirit**, or life force. (Joh 5:27-29) Stephen addressed Jesus by using the expression “Lord Jesus [Greek, *Ky’ri-e I-e-sou*].” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, but here the context clarifies that *Ky’ri-os* refers to Jesus. The Greek word here rendered “he made this appeal” is not the usual word for “praying” in the Christian Greek Scriptures, but it is rendered “prayed” in many Bible translations, giving the impression that Stephen prayed directly to Jesus. However, reliable reference works state that the Greek word used here (*e-pi-ka-le’o*) means “to call on; to invoke; to appeal to an authority,” and it is often rendered that way. (Ac 2:21; 9:14; Ro 10:13; 2Ti 2:22) The same word is used in rendering Paul’s words: “I appeal to Caesar!” (Ac 25:11)

Therefore, there is no reason for concluding that Stephen was praying directly to Jesus. Rather, because of this vision, Stephen felt free to make this plea to him. —See study note on Ac 7:60.

7:60 Jehovah: Available Greek manuscripts use the term “Lord” (*Ky’ri-os*) here. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, this title often refers to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. In this case, the reference is apparently to Jehovah God for the following reasons: Stephen here echoes Jesus’ words to his Father at Lu 23:34: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” In Luke’s account of Stephen’s speech, recorded at Ac 7:2-53, the term *Ky’ri-os* is used three times. All three are quotes from or allusions to the Hebrew Scriptures that clearly refer to God. (See study notes on Ac 7:31, 33, 49.) Many commentators and translators support the view that in these contexts, *Ky’ri-os* refers to Jehovah. (See 3 App. C.) While the term *Ky’ri-os* also occurs at Ac 7:59, there Stephen specifically says “Lord Jesus.” However, this statement does not mean, as some claim, that Jesus is the one addressed as *Ky’ri-os* at Ac 7:60. There is a natural break between Stephen’s words in verse 59 and his words in verse 60. Stephen had been standing, so when he knelt in front of his enemies,

it was likely in order to address Jehovah in prayer. (Compare Lu 22:41; Ac 9:40; 20:36; 21:5, where kneeling is connected with prayer to God.) Therefore, it seems that Stephen’s last words were a prayer to the almighty God, Jehovah. In addition, Ac 7:56 says that Stephen saw “the heavens opened up and the Son of man standing at God’s right hand,” so it is understandable that he would address Jesus in verse 59 and then Jehovah in verse 60. A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁷, 18, 22, 23 in 3 App. C4) use the Tetragrammaton here in verse 60 but not in verse 59 when rendering the expression “Lord Jesus.”—See 3 App. C3 introduction; Ac 7:60.

he fell asleep in death: The Scriptures use the expressions “sleep” and “fall asleep” to refer both to physical sleep (Mt 28:13; Lu 22:45; Joh 11:12; Ac 12:6) and to the sleep of death (Joh 11:11; Ac 7:60; 13:36; 1Co 7:39; 15:6, 51; 2Pe 3:4). When these expressions are used in contexts that refer to death, Bible translators often use such wording as “fall asleep in death” or simply “died,” which helps the reader avoid confusion. In the figurative sense, the term “asleep” is applied in the Scriptures to those who have died because of the sin and death passed on from Adam. —See study notes on Mr 5:39; Joh 11:11.

2 But devout men carried Stephen away to bury him, and they made a great mourning over him. 3 Saul, though, began to ravage the congregation. He would invade one house after another, dragging out both men and women and turning them over to prison.^a

Philip's Fruitful Ministry in Samaria

4 However, those who had been scattered went through the land declaring the good news of the word.^b 5 Now Philip^c went down to the city of Sa-mar'i-a^d and began to preach the Christ to them. 6 The crowds with one accord were paying attention to what Philip said while they listened and observed the signs he was performing. 7 For many had unclean spirits, and these would cry out with a loud voice and come out.^e Moreover, many who were paralyzed and lame were cured. 8 So there came to be a great deal of joy in that city.

9 Now in the city was a man named Simon, who prior to this had been practicing magical arts and amazing the nation of Sa-mar'i-a, claiming that he was somebody great. 10 All of them, from the least to the greatest, would pay attention to him and say: "This man is the Power of God, which is called Great." 11 So they would pay attention to him because he had amazed them for quite a while by his magical arts. 12 But when they believed Philip, who was declaring the good news of the Kingdom of God^f and of the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were getting baptized.^g 13 Simon himself also became a believer, and after being baptized, he continued with Philip; and he was amazed at seeing the signs and great powerful works taking place.

CHAP. 8

a Ac 9:1, 2
Ac 22:4
Ac 26:10
1Co 15:9
Ga 1:13
Php 3:5, 6

b Ac 11:19

c Ac 6:5

d Joh 4:39-42
Ac 1:8

e Mt 10:1
Mr 6:7

f Lu 8:1

g Mt 28:19
Ac 18:8

STUDY NOTES

8:5 Philip: According to Ac 8:1, "all except the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria." Therefore, the Philip mentioned here is not the apostle Philip. (Mt 10:3; Ac 1:13) Rather, it is apparently the Philip who was among the "seven reputable men" appointed to organize the daily distribution of food among the Greek-speaking and Hebrew-speaking Christian widows in Jerusalem. (Ac 6:1-6) After the events recorded in Acts chapter 8, Philip is mentioned just once more, at Ac 21:8, as "Philip the evangelizer."—See study note on Ac 21:8.

the city: Or, according to some manuscripts, "a city." This is apparently referring to the main city of the Roman district of Samaria. The name Samaria originally referred to the capital city of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel as well as to the entire territory of that kingdom. Samaria was the capital until that kingdom was overthrown by the Assyrians in 740 B.C.E. The city, however, remained throughout Roman times, and in Jesus' day, Samaria was also the name of the Roman district that lay between Galilee in the N and Judea in the S. (See  Glossary, "Samaria.") Herod the Great rebuilt the city of Samaria and renamed it

Sebaste in honor of Roman Emperor Augustus. (The name Sebaste is a feminine Greek form of the Latin name Augustus.) The present-day Arabic name, Sabastiya, preserves the name Herod gave it.—See  App. B10.

See  Gallery, map 7, Activities of Philip the Evangelizer.

8:14 Samaria . . . accepted the word of God: After Jesus preached to a Samaritan woman, "many of the Samaritans" put faith in him. (Joh 4:27-42) This may have laid the foundation for many of these Samaritans to respond to Philip's preaching.—Ac 8:1, 5-8, 14-17.

CHAP. 8

Peter and John Sent to Samaria

- a Ac 11:1
 b Mt 16:19
 c Ac 10:47, 48
 Ac 19:2, 3
 d Ac 6:5, 6
 Ac 19:6
 2Ti 1:6
 e Mt 10:8
 Ac 10:45

14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Sa-mar'i-a had accepted the word of God,^a they sent Peter and John to them; **15** and these went down and prayed for them to get holy spirit.^b **16** For it had not yet come upon any one of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.^c **17** Then they laid their hands on them,^d and they began to receive holy spirit.

Simon Tries to Buy Holy Spirit

18 Now when Simon saw that the spirit was given through the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money, **19** saying: "Give me this authority also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive holy spirit." **20** But Peter said to him: "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could acquire the free gift of God with money.^e **21** You have neither part nor share in this matter, for your heart is not straight in the sight of God. **22** So repent of this badness of yours, and supplicate Jehovah that, if possible, the wicked intention of your heart may be forgiven you; **23** for I see you are a bitter poison and a slave of unrighteousness." **24** In answer Simon said to them: "Make supplication for me to Jehovah that none of the things you have said may come upon me."

25 Therefore, when they had given the witness thoroughly and had spoken the word of Jehovah, they started back toward

STUDY NOTES

8:18 Simon . . . offered them money:

From this Bible account comes the term "simony," referring to the buying or selling of positions, specifically in a religious context. Peter's reply to Simon, recorded at Ac 8:20-24, shows that Christians must be on guard against the wicked practice of trying to gain "authority" by using money or other means.—Ac 8:19; 1Pe 5:1-3.

8:22 supplicate Jehovah: The Greek verb for "supplicate" is used in the *Septuagint* in connection with prayers, requests, and pleadings addressed to Jehovah. In these scriptures, the divine name is often used in the Hebrew text. (Ge 25:21; Ex 32:11; Nu 21:7; De 3:23; 1Ki 8:59; 13:6) The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the name Jehovah in this verse, although available Greek manuscripts read "the

Lord" (Greek, *tu Ky-ri'ou*), are explained in  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Ac 8:22.—For a discussion of the Greek word for "supplicate," which can also be rendered "make supplication," see study note on Ac 4:31.

8:23 a bitter poison: Lit., "gall of bitterness." The Greek word *kho-le'* literally refers to the fluid produced by the liver and stored in the gallbladder. Gall, or bile, is an extremely bitter yellowish or greenish fluid used by the body in digestion. Gall came to be associated with something that is bitter or poisonous, and that is how the word is used here.—Compare study note on Mt 27:34.

8:24 Make supplication for me to Jehovah: See study note on Ac 8:22 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 8:24.

8:25 the word of Jehovah: This expression has its background in the

Hebrew Scriptures, where it appears as a combination of a Hebrew term for "word" and the divine name. Together with the expression "Jehovah's word," it occurs in some 200 verses. (Some examples are found at 2Sa 12:9; 24:11; 2Ki 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isa 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jer 1:4; 2:4; Eze 1:3; 6:1; Ho 1:1; Mic 1:1; Zec 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zec 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo'gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression "the word of Jehovah" in the main text, although many Greek manuscripts of Ac 8:25 read "the word of the Lord," are explained in  App. C3 introduction; Ac 8:25.

Jerusalem, and they went declaring the good news to many villages of the Sa-mar'i-tans.^a

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

26 However, Jehovah's angel^b spoke to Philip, saying: "Get up and go to the south to the road that runs down from Jerusalem to Gaz'a." (This is a desert road.) **27** With that he got up and went, and look! an E-thi-o'pi-an eunuch, a man who had authority under Can-da'ce, queen of the E-thi-o'pi-ans, and who was in charge of all her treasure. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship,^c **28** and he was returning and was sitting in his chariot, reading aloud the prophet Isaiah. **29** So the spirit said to Philip: "Go over and approach this chariot." **30** Philip ran alongside and heard him reading aloud Isaiah the prophet, and he said: "Do you actually know what you are reading?" **31** He said: "Really, how could I ever do so unless someone guided me?" So he urged Philip to get on and sit down with him. **32** Now this was the passage of Scripture that he was reading: "Like a sheep he was brought to the slaughter,^d and like a lamb that is silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth."^e **33** Dur-

CHAP. 8

- a Mt 9:35
Ac 1:8
- b Heb 1:7, 14
Re 14:6
- c 2Ch 6:32, 33
- d Joh 1:29
1Co 5:7
- e Mt 27:12-14
1Pe 2:23

STUDY NOTES

8:26 Jehovah's angel: See study note on Ac 5:19 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 8:26.

8:27 Ethiopian: From the region of an ancient nation S of Egypt, then referred to as Ethiopia. The Greek word for "Ethiopia" (*Ai-thi-o-pi'a*, meaning "Region of Burnt Faces") was the name applied by the ancient Greeks to the region of Africa S of Egypt. It generally corresponded with the Hebrew name Cush, which primarily embraced the southernmost part of modern-day Egypt and the present Sudan. When the *Septuagint* translation was made, the translators used the Greek term "Ethiopia" to render the Hebrew "Cush" in almost all passages. One example is Isa 11:11, where "Cush" ("Ethiopia" in LXX) is mentioned as one of the lands to which the Jewish exiles were scattered after the Babylonian conquest of Judah. Hence, this Ethiopian official may have had association with Jews in his area or perhaps in Egypt, where many Jews resided.

eunuch: In a literal sense, the Greek word *eu-nou'khos* refers to a man deprived of

his ability to procreate. Castrated men were often appointed to serve in various capacities in ancient royal courts of the Middle East and northern Africa, especially as attendants or caretakers of the queen and the concubines. However, the term "eunuch" was not always used of men who had been castrated. It came to refer more generally to men assigned to various official duties in royal courts. Similar to the Greek term, the Hebrew word for "eunuch" (*sa-ris'*) can refer to a royal officer. For example, Potiphar, a married man, is called "a court official [lit., "a eunuch"] of Pharaoh." (Ge 39:1) In this account, the Ethiopian man who oversaw the royal treasury is referred to by the term "eunuch," apparently used in the sense of a court official. He was obviously a circumcised proselyte—that is, a non-Jew who had embraced the worship of Jehovah—for he had just **gone to Jerusalem to worship**. (See  Glossary, "Proselyte.") The Mosaic Law forbade castrated men from coming into the congregation of Israel (De 23:1), so he could not have been a literal eunuch. Therefore, this Ethiopian proselyte was apparently

not viewed as a Gentile and did not precede Cornelius as the first uncircumcised Gentile to convert to Christianity.—Ac 10:1, 44-48; for an explanation of the figurative use of the term "eunuch," see study note on Mt 19:12.

Candace: Instead of being a specific personal name, Candace, like Pharaoh and Caesar, is considered to be a title. Ancient writers, including Strabo, Pliny the Elder, and Eusebius used this designation in referring to queens of Ethiopia. Pliny the Elder (c. 23-79 C.E.) wrote that "the town [Meroë, capital of ancient Ethiopia] possesses few buildings. They said that it is ruled by a woman, Candace, a name that has passed on through a succession of queens for many years."—*Natural History*, VI, XXXV, 186.

8:30 know: Or "understand." The Greek word *gi-no'sko* basically means "to know" but is broad in meaning and can also be rendered "understand; perceive."

8:33 his generation: In this quote from Isa 53:8, the term "generation" apparently refers to one's "descent," or "family history." When Jesus was on trial before

CHAP. 8

a Mt 26:59

b Isa 53:7, 8

Da 9:26

Php 2:8

c Ac 21:8

ing his humiliation, justice was taken away from him.^a Who will tell the details of his generation? Because his life is taken away from the earth.”^b

34 The eunuch then said to Philip: “I beg you, about whom does the prophet say this? About himself or about some other man?” **35** Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he declared to him the good news about Jesus. **36** Now as they were going along the road, they came to a body of water, and the eunuch said: “Look! Here is water; what prevents me from getting baptized?” **37** — **38** With that he commanded the chariot to halt, and both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. **39** When they came up out of the water, Jehovah’s spirit quickly led Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him anymore, but he went on his way rejoicing. **40** Philip, however, found himself in Ash’dod, and he went through the territory and kept on declaring the good news to all the cities until he got to Caes-a-re’a.^c

 STUDY NOTES

the Sanhedrin, its members did not take into account his background—that he fulfilled the requirements for the promised Messiah.

8:36 getting baptized: Or “being immersed.” The Greek word *ba-pti’zo* means “to dip; to plunge.” The context indicates that baptism involves complete immersion. If pouring or sprinkling water were all that was needed, it would not have been necessary for the eunuch to halt his chariot at a **body of water**. Although it cannot be determined whether this was a river, a stream, or a pond, the account says that “both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water.” (Ac 8:38) Other Biblical references agree with the idea that being baptized means being totally immersed in a body of water. For example, Jesus was baptized in a river, the Jordan. Also, on one occasion John the Baptist chose a location in the Jordan Valley near Salim to baptize people “because there was a great quantity of water there.” (Joh 3:23) It is worth noting that the Greek word *ba-pti’zo* is used in the *Septuagint* at 2Ki 5:14 when recounting how Naaman “plunged into the Jordan seven times.” Further, the Scriptures equate baptism with burial, indicating that a person who

is baptized is completely submerged.—Ro 6:4-6; Col 2:12.

8:37 Some later Greek manuscripts and some ancient translations into other languages, with slight variations in wording, add: “Philip said to him: ‘If you believe with all your heart, it is permissible.’ In reply he said: ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’” However, these words do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and are most likely not part of the original text of Acts.—See  App. A3.

8:39 Jehovah’s spirit: See study note on Ac 5:9 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 8:39.

8:40 Ashdod: This is the Hebrew name of the place known by the Greek name Azotus in the first century C.E.—Jos 11:22; 15:46; see  App. B6 and B10.

See  Gallery, image 130, Caesarea.

Saul Travels to Damascus

9 But Saul, still breathing threat and murder against the disciples of the Lord,^a went to the high priest **2** and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that he might bring bound to Jerusalem any whom he found who belonged to The Way,^b both men and women.

3 Now as he was traveling and getting near Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him,^c **4** and he fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him: “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” **5** He asked: “Who are you, Lord?” He said: “I am Jesus,^d whom you are persecuting.^e **6** But get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” **7** Now the men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing, indeed, the sound of a voice but seeing no one.^f **8** Saul then got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. **9** And for three days he did not see anything,^g and he neither ate nor drank.

Ananias Sent to Help Saul

10 There was a disciple named An·a·ni·as^h in Damascus, and the Lord said to him in a vision: “An·a·ni·as!” He said: “Here I am, Lord.” **11** The Lord said to him: “Get up, go to the street called Straight, and look for a man named Saul, from Tarsus,ⁱ

CHAP. 9

- a Ac 8:3
Ac 22:4
Ac 26:10, 11
Ga 1:13
1Ti 1:12, 13
- b Ac 11:26
Ac 19:9, 23
Ac 22:4
Ac 24:22
- c Ac 22:6-11
Ac 26:13-18
- d 1Co 15:8
- e Mt 25:45
- f Ac 22:9
Ac 26:13
- g Ac 13:11
- h Ac 22:12
- i Ac 21:39
Ac 22:3

STUDY NOTES

9:1 Saul: See study note on Ac 7:58.

the high priest: That is, Caiaphas.—See study note on Ac 4:6.

See  Gallery, image 131, Saul and Damascus.

9:2 letters: In the first century C.E., people relied on letters from a credible source to introduce a stranger and to authenticate his or her identity or authority. (Ro 16:1; 2Co 3:1-3) Jews in Rome referred to this kind of communication. (Ac 28:21) The letters Saul requested from the high priest and addressed to the synagogues in Damascus authorized him to persecute the Jewish Christians in that city. (Ac 9:1, 2) The letters Saul requested apparently asked the synagogues in Damascus to cooperate with Saul in his campaign against the Christians.

Damascus: Located in modern-day Syria, Damascus is said to be one of the oldest cities in the world to be continuously inhabited from the time it was founded. The patriarch Abraham may have passed by or through this city on his way S to Canaan. At some point, he took Eliezer, “a man of Damascus,” into his household as a servant. (Ge 15:2) Nearly a thousand years later, Damascus reappears in the Bible account. (See  Glossary, “Aram; Aramaeans.”) At this time, the Syrians (Aramaean) were at war with Israel, and the two nations became enemies. (1Ki 11:23-25) In the first century, Damascus was part of the Roman province of Syria. By that time, Damascus had a Jewish population of perhaps some 20,000 and a number of **synagogues**. Saul may have targeted the Christians living in Damascus because the city was located at the crossroads of important travel routes

and he feared that Christian teachings would quickly spread from that city.—See  App. B13.

The Way: A designation used in the book of Acts to refer to the Christian way of life and the early Christian congregation. It may have roots in Jesus’ statement at Joh 14:6: “I am the way.” Those who became followers of Jesus were spoken of as belonging to “The Way,” that is, they kept a way of life following Jesus’ example. (Ac 19:9) His life centered on worship of the only true God, Jehovah. For Christians, this manner of life also focused on faith in Jesus Christ. Sometime after 44 C.E., in Syrian Antioch, disciples of Jesus “were by divine providence called Christians.” (Ac 11:26) However, even after that designation was applied, Luke refers to the congregation as “The Way” or “this Way.” —Ac 19:23; 22:4; 24:22; see study notes on Ac 18:25; 19:23.

CHAP. 9

- a Ac 9:17
 b Ac 9:1, 2
 c Ac 13:2
 Ro 1:1
 1Ti 1:12
 d Ro 1:5
 Ga 2:7
 Eph 3:8
 1Ti 2:7
 e Ac 26:1
 Ac 27:24
 f Ac 20:22, 23
 Ac 21:11
 2Co 11:23-28
 Col 1:24
 2Ti 1:12
 g Ac 22:12, 13
 h Ac 26:19, 20
 i Ac 8:3
 Ga 1:13, 23

at the house of Judas. For look! he is praying, **12** and in a vision he has seen a man named An-a-ni'as come in and lay his hands on him so that he may recover sight.”^a **13** But An-a-ni'as answered: “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, about all the harm he did to your holy ones in Jerusalem. **14** And here he has authority from the chief priests to arrest all those calling on your name.”^b **15** But the Lord said to him: “Go! because this man is a chosen vessel* to me^c to bear my name to the nations^d as well as to kings^e and the sons of Israel. **16** For I will show him plainly how many things he must suffer for my name.”^f

17 So An-a-ni'as went and entered the house, and he laid his hands on him and said: “Saul, brother, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road along which you were coming, has sent me so that you may recover sight and be filled with holy spirit.”^g **18** And immediately, what looked like scales fell from his eyes, and he recovered his sight. He then got up and was baptized, **19** and he ate some food and gained strength.

Saul Preaches in Damascus

He stayed for some days with the disciples in Damascus,^h **20** and immediately in the synagogues he began to preach about Jesus, that this one is the Son of God. **21** But all those hearing him were astonished and were saying: “Is this not the man who ravaged those in Jerusalem who call on this name?ⁱ Did he not come here for the purpose of arresting them and

FOOTNOTES

9:15 * Or “tool; instrument.”

STUDY NOTES

9:3 See  Gallery, image 5, Saul on the Road to Damascus.

9:7 hearing . . . the sound of a voice: At Ac 22:6-11, Paul himself describes his experience on the road to Damascus. That account taken together with this account gives the full picture of what happened. The Greek words used in both accounts are the same, but the grammar is different. The Greek term *pho-ne'* could be rendered both “sound” and “voice.” Here it is in the genitive case and is therefore rendered “the sound of a voice.” (At Ac 22:9, the same Greek word is in the

accusative case and is rendered “voice.”) So the men accompanying Paul heard the sound of a voice but apparently could not hear *and* understand the words spoken. So they did not hear the voice the way Paul did.—Ac 26:14; see study note on Ac 22:9.

9:11 the street called Straight: This is the only street mentioned by name in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It is believed to have been the main thoroughfare that ran from E to W through Damascus, which in the first century C.E. was laid out in a grid. The street was about 1.5 km (1 mi) long and 26 m (85 ft) wide, including pedestrian lanes, and it may also have been lined with columns. A main thoroughfare still runs through what remains of the old Roman city and follows the course of

the ancient Roman Via Recta, or Straight Street.

See  Gallery, image 132, Roman Road in Tarsus.

9:12 in a vision: These words are found in a number of ancient manuscripts.

9:14 arrest: Or “imprison.” Lit., “bind; put in bonds,” that is, prison bonds.—Compare Col 4:3.

9:15 the sons of Israel: Or “the people of Israel; the Israelites.”—See  Glossary, “Israel.”

9:17 See  Gallery, image 133, Construction of a Roman Road.

taking them* to the chief priests?"^a **22** But Saul kept on acquiring more and more power and was confounding the Jews who lived in Damascus, as he proved logically that this is the Christ.^b

23 Now when many days had passed, the Jews plotted together to do away with him.^c **24** However, their plot against Saul became known to him. They were also watching the gates closely both day and night in order to do away with him. **25** So his disciples took him and let him down by night through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.^d

Saul Visits Jerusalem

26 On arriving in Jerusalem,^e he made efforts to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, because they did not believe he was a disciple. **27** So Bar'na-bas^f came to his aid and led him to the apostles, and he told them in detail how on the road he had seen the Lord,^g and that he had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.^h **28** So he remained with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. **29** He was talking and disputing with the Greek-speaking Jews, but these made attempts to do away with him.ⁱ **30** When the brothers found out about this, they brought him down to Caes'a-re'a and sent him off to Tarsus.^j

31 Then, indeed, the congregation throughout the whole of Ju-de'a and Gal'i-lee and Sa-mar'i-a^k entered into a period of peace, being built up; and as it walked in the fear of Jehovah and in the comfort of the holy spirit,^l it kept on multiplying.

CHAP. 9

- a Ac 9:1, 2
- b Ac 17:2, 3
- c Ac 20:2, 3
Ac 23:12
Ac 25:2, 3
2Co 11:23
- d 2Co 11:32, 33
- e Ga 1:18
- f Ac 4:36, 37
- g Ac 9:3, 4
1Co 9:1
- h Ac 9:19, 20
- i 2Co 11:23, 26
- j Ac 11:25
Ga 1:21
- k Ac 8:1
- l Joh 14:16

FOOTNOTES

9:21 * Lit., “come here in order that he might lead them bound.”

STUDY NOTES

9:25 a basket: Luke here used the Greek word *sphy-ris'*, which is also used in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark for the seven baskets in which leftovers were collected after Jesus fed 4,000 men. (See study note on Mt 15:37.) This word refers to a large basket or hamper. In telling the Corinthian Christians about his escape, the apostle Paul used the Greek word *sar-ga'ne*, which denotes a plaited basket or “wicker basket” made of rope or woven twigs. Both Greek terms can be used

for the same type of large basket.—2Co 11:32, 33; ftn.

9:28 moving about freely: Or “carrying on his daily life.” Lit., “going in and going out.” This expression reflects a Semitic idiom that includes the idea of freely conducting the regular activities of life or associating with others without hindrance.—Compare De 28:6, 19; Ps 121:8, ftn.; see study note on Ac 1:21.

9:29 the Greek-speaking Jews: Lit., “the Hellenists.” Most likely, these were Jews who communicated in Greek rather than in Hebrew. These Jews had probably come to Jerusalem from various parts of the Roman Empire. At Ac 6:1, the term applies to Christians, but the

context here at Ac 9:29 shows that these Greek-speaking Jews were not disciples of Christ. The Theodotus Inscription, found on the hill of Ophel in Jerusalem, provides evidence that many Greek-speaking Jews came to Jerusalem.—See study note on Ac 6:1.

See  Gallery, image 127, Theodotus Inscription to Greek-Speaking Jews.

9:31 the fear of Jehovah: The expression “the fear of Jehovah” is found many times in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of a Hebrew word for “fear” and the Tetragrammaton. (Some examples are found at 2Ch 19:7, 9; Ps 19:9; 111:10; Pr 2:5; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 19:23; Isa 11:2, 3.) However, the expression “fear of the Lord”

CHAP. 9

Peter Heals Aeneas

a Ac 9:38

b Mt 10:8

Ac 4:9, 10

c Ac 3:6

d Lu 8:51

e Mt 9:24, 25

Lu 7:14, 15

Joh 11:43, 44

f 1Ki 17:23

g Joh 11:44, 45

h Ac 10:6, 32

32 Now as Peter was traveling through all the region, he came down also to the holy ones who lived in Lyd'da.^a

33 There he found a man named Ae-ne'as, who had been lying flat on his bed for eight years, for he was paralyzed. **34** Peter said to him: "Ae-ne'as, Jesus Christ heals you.^b Rise and make up your bed."^c And he got up immediately. **35** When all those living in Lyd'da and the Plain of Shar'on saw him, they turned to the Lord.

Peter Resurrects Generous Dorcas

36 Now there was in Jop'pa a disciple named Tab'i-tha, which means, when translated, "Dor'cas." She abounded in good deeds and gifts of mercy that she was making. **37** But in those days she fell sick and died. So they bathed her and laid her in an upper room. **38** Since Lyd'da was near Jop'pa, when the disciples heard that Peter was in that city, they sent two men to him to urge him: "Please come to us without delay."^{*} **39** At that Peter got up and went with them. And when he arrived, they led him up into the upper room; and all the widows presented themselves to him, weeping and showing many garments and robes that Dor'cas had made while she was with them. **40** Peter then put everyone outside,^d and kneeling down, he prayed. Then turning toward the body, he said: "Tab'i-tha, rise!" She opened her eyes, and as she caught sight of Peter, she sat up.^e **41** Giving her his hand, he raised her up, and he called the holy ones and the widows and presented her alive.^f **42** This became known throughout all Jop'pa, and many became believers in the Lord.^g **43** He remained for quite a few days in Jop'pa with a tanner named Simon.^h

FOOTNOTES

9:38 *Or "Please do not delay to come to us."

STUDY NOTES

is never used in the Hebrew Scripture text. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression "the fear of Jehovah" in the main text, although most Greek manuscripts of Ac 9:31 read "the fear of the Lord," are explained in  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Ac 9:31.

9:36 **Tabitha:** The Aramaic name Tabitha means "Gazelle" and apparently corre-

sponds to a Hebrew word (*tsevi-yah'*) meaning "female gazelle." (Ca 4:5; 7:3) The Greek name **Dorcās** also means "Gazelle." In a seaport such as Joppa, with its mixed population of Jews and Gentiles, it may be that Tabitha was known by both names, according to the language being spoken. Or Luke may have translated the name for the benefit of Gentile readers.

See  Gallery, image 134, Joppa.

9:37 See  Gallery, image 90, Upper Room.

9:39 **robes:** Or "outer garments." The Greek word *hi-ma'ti-on* appears to have

been a loose robe, but more often it was a rectangular piece of material.

See  Gallery, image 135, Garments and Robes.

9:40 **Tabitha, rise!:** Peter followed a procedure similar to that used by Jesus in resurrecting Jairus' daughter. (Mr 5:38-42; Lu 8:51-55) This is the first reported resurrection performed by an apostle, resulting in many becoming believers throughout Joppa.—Ac 9:39-42.

9:43 **a tanner named Simon:** See study note on Ac 10:6.

Cornelius' Vision

CHAP. 10

a Ac 3:1
 b Ps 65:2
 c Ac 11:5-10

10 Now there was a man in Caes-a-re'a named Cornelius, an army officer in what was called the Italian unit. **2** He was a devout man who feared God together with all his household, and he made many gifts of mercy to the people and made supplication to God continually. **3** About the ninth hour^a of the day, he saw plainly in a vision an angel of God come in to him and say: "Cornelius!" **4** Cornelius stared at him, terrified, and asked: "What is it, Lord?" He said to him: "Your prayers and gifts of mercy have ascended as a remembrance before God.^b **5** So now send men to Jop'pa and summon a man named Simon who is called Peter. **6** This man is staying as a guest with* Simon, a tanner who has a house by the sea." **7** As soon as the angel who spoke to him left, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who were his attendants, **8** and he related everything to them and sent them to Jop'pa.

Peter's Vision of Cleansed Animals

9 The next day as they were continuing on their journey and were approaching the city, Peter went up to the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. **10** But he became very hungry and wanted to eat. While they were preparing the meal, he fell into a trance^c **11** and saw heaven opened and something* descending like a great linen sheet being let down by its four corners on the earth; **12** and in it were all sorts of four-footed animals and reptiles* of the earth and birds of heaven. **13** Then a voice said to him: "Get up, Peter, slaughter* and eat!" **14** But Peter

FOOTNOTES

10:6 *Or "being entertained by." **10:11**
 *Lit., "some sort of object (vessel)."
10:12 *Or "creeping things." **10:13**
 *Or "sacrifice."

STUDY NOTES

10:1 **an army officer:** Or "a centurion." A centurion was in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army.

what was called the Italian unit: This was probably a cohort, so named to distinguish it from the regular Roman legions. A cohort in full strength consisted of about 600 men, that is, about one tenth of the number in a legion. (See study note on Mt 26:53.) There is verification that the Second Italian Cohort

of Roman Citizen Volunteers (Latin, *Cohors II Italica voluntariorum civium Romanorum*) was present in Syria in 69 C.E., and some have suggested that this was the Italian unit mentioned here.

10:3 **About the ninth hour of the day:** That is, about 3:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

10:6 **Simon, a tanner:** A tanner worked with the hides of animals, using a lime solution to remove any fur or traces of flesh and fat. Then he treated the hide with a potent liquor so that it could be used to make articles of leather. The tanning process smelled bad and required a great deal of water, which may explain why Simon lived **by the sea**, likely on the outskirts of Joppa. According to the Mo-

saic Law, a person who worked with the carcasses of animals was ceremonially unclean. (Le 5:2; 11:39) Therefore, many Jews looked down on tanners and would hesitate to lodge with one. In fact, the Talmud later rated the tanner's profession as lower than that of a dung collector. However, Peter did not let prejudice keep him from staying with Simon. Peter's open-mindedness in this case makes an interesting prelude to the assignment that came next—visiting a Gentile in his home. Some scholars consider the Greek word for "tanner" (*byr-seus*) to be a surname of Simon.

CHAP. 10

- a Le 11:4
Le 11:13-20
Le 20:25
De 14:3, 19
Eze 4:14
- b Ac 11:11
- c Ac 8:29
Ac 13:2
Ac 15:28
Ac 16:6
Ac 20:23
- d Ac 10:1

said: “Not at all, Lord, because I have never eaten anything defiled and unclean.”^a **15** And the voice spoke again to him, the second time: “Stop calling defiled the things God has cleansed.” **16** This happened a third time, and immediately it* was taken up into heaven.

Peter Visits Cornelius

17 While Peter was still perplexed about what the vision he had seen could mean, just then the men sent by Cornelius asked where Simon’s house was and stood there at the gate.^b **18** They called out and inquired whether Simon who was called Peter was a guest there. **19** As Peter was still pondering over the vision, the spirit^c said: “Look! Three men are asking for you. **20** So get up, go downstairs and go with them, not doubting at all, because I have sent them.” **21** Then Peter went downstairs to the men and said: “Here I am, the one you are looking for. Why are you here?” **22** They said: “Cornelius,^d an army officer, a righteous and God-fearing man who is well-reported-on by the whole nation of the Jews, was given divine instructions by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.” **23** So he invited them in and had them stay as his guests.

The next day he got up and went off with them, and some of the brothers from Jop’pa went with him. **24** The following day he entered into Caes-a-re’a. Cornelius, of course, was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close

FOOTNOTES

10:16 *Lit., “the object (vessel).”

STUDY NOTES

10:9 the housetop: The roofs of houses were flat and were used for many purposes, including storage (Jos 2:6), rest (2Sa 11:2), sleep (1Sa 9:26), festivals for worship (Ne 8:16-18), and as a private place to pray. When Peter prayed on the rooftop, he was not being like the hypocrites who made sure that they were seen while praying. (Mt 6:5) A parapet around the flat roof likely hid him from view. (De 22:8) The roof was also a place to relax and escape street noise in the evening.—See study note on Mt 24:17.

about the sixth hour: That is, about 12:00 noon.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

10:10 a trance: The Greek word *ek’sta-sis* (from *ek*, meaning “out of,” and *sta’sis*, meaning “standing”) refers to a person’s being cast out of his normal state of mind because of amazement, astonishment, or a vision from God. The Greek word is rendered “ecstasy” (Mr 5:42), “amazement” (Lu 5:26), and “overwhelmed with emotion” (Mr 16:8). In the book of Acts, the word is connected with divine action. Apparently, the holy spirit would, at times, superimpose on a person’s mind a vision or a picture of God’s purpose while the person was in a state of deep concentration or a sleeplike condition. An individual in a trance would be oblivious of his physical surroundings and would be receptive to a vision.—See study note on Ac 22:17.

10:22 was given divine instructions: The Greek verb *khre-ma-ti’zo* appears nine

times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (Mt 2:12, 22; Lu 2:26; Ac 10:22; 11:26; Ro 7:3; Heb 8:5; 11:7; 12:25) In most occurrences, the word has a clear connection with things having divine origin. For example, the verb is here used together with the expression “by a holy angel.” At Mt 2:12, 22, it is used in connection with divinely inspired dreams. The related noun *khre-ma-ti-smos’* appears at Ro 11:4, and most lexicons and translations use such renderings as “divine pronouncement; divine response; God’s reply; the answer of God.” Here at Ac 10:22, one translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁸ in  App. C4) reads “was given a command of Jehovahah.”—See study note on Ac 11:26.

friends. **25** As Peter entered, Cornelius met him, fell down at his feet, and did obeisance to him. **26** But Peter lifted him up, saying: “Rise; I too am just a man.”^a **27** As he conversed with him, he went in and found many people assembled. **28** He said to them: “You well know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or approach a man of another race,^b and yet God has shown me that I should call no man defiled or unclean.^c **29** So I came, really without objection, when I was sent for. Therefore, I ask you why you sent for me.”

30 Then Cornelius said: “Four days ago counting from this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour; just then a man in bright clothing stood in front of me **31** and said: ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been favorably heard, and your gifts of mercy have been remembered before God.’^d **32** Therefore, send to Jop’pa and call for Simon who is called Peter. This man is a guest in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.’^e **33** I then sent for you at once, and you were kind enough to come here. So now we are all present before God to hear all the things you have been commanded by Jehovah to say.”

Peter Proclaims Good News to Gentiles

34 At this Peter began to speak, and he said: “Now I truly understand that God is not partial,^f **35** but in every nation the man who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.^g **36** He sent out the word to the sons of Israel to declare to them the good news of peace^h through Jesus Christ—this one

CHAP. 10

- a Lu 4:8
Ac 14:12-15
Re 19:10
Re 22:8, 9
- b Joh 18:28
- c Ac 10:15, 45
Eph 3:5, 6
- d Ac 10:2
- e Ac 9:43
- f De 10:17
2Ch 19:7
Job 34:19
Ro 2:11
- g Ac 15:7, 14
Ro 2:13
Ro 3:29
1Co 12:13
Ga 3:28
- h Isa 52:7
Na 1:15

STUDY NOTES

10:25 did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; prostrated himself to him; paid him homage.” When Jesus was on earth, people did obeisance to him, and he did not reprove them. (Lu 5:12; Joh 9:38) This was because Jesus was the heir to the throne of David and was rightfully honored as a king. (Mt 21:9; Joh 12:13-15) Also, in the Hebrew Scriptures, people are said to bow down when meeting prophets, kings, or other representatives of God, who accepted the honor. (1Sa 25:23, 24; 2Sa 14:4-7; 1Ki 1:16; 2Ki 4:36, 37) However, when Cornelius bowed down to Peter and did obeisance to him, Peter refused to accept this honor and told him: “Rise; I too am just a man.” (Ac 10:26) The teachings

of Christ apparently introduced new standards of conduct between human servants of God. Jesus taught his disciples: “One is your Teacher, and all of you are brothers. . . . Your Leader is one, the Christ.”—Mt 23:8-12.

10:28 how unlawful it is for a Jew:

The Jewish religious leaders in Peter’s day taught that anyone who entered a Gentile’s home would become ceremonially unclean. (Joh 18:28) However, the Law given through Moses made no specific injunction against this type of association. In addition, the wall separating Jews from Gentiles was removed when Jesus gave his life as a ransom and the new covenant was established. In doing so, Jesus made “the two groups one.” (Eph 2:11-16) Yet, even after Pentecost 33 C.E., the

early disciples were slow to grasp the significance of what Jesus had done. In fact, Jewish Christians took many years to free themselves of the attitudes that were promoted by their former religious leaders and that were embedded in their culture.

10:30 at the ninth hour: That is, about 3:00 p.m.—See study note on Mt 20:3.

10:33 Jehovah: Most Greek manuscripts use the term “the Lord” (Greek, *tau Ky-ri’ou*) here. However, as explained in **App. C**, there are several reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced by the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.—See **App. C3** introduction; Ac 10:33.

CHAP. 10

- a Mt 28:18
Ro 14:9
Re 19:11, 16
- b Lu 4:14
- c Mr 1:4
- d Isa 11:2
Isa 42:1
Isa 61:1
Mt 3:16
- e Lu 13:16
- f Joh 3:1, 2
- g Lu 23:33
- h Jon 1:17
Jon 2:10
Ac 2:23, 24
- i Lu 24:30, 31
Lu 24:41-43
Joh 21:13, 14
- j Mt 28:19, 20
Ac 1:8
- k Ac 17:31
Ro 14:9
2Co 5:10
2Ti 4:1
1Pe 4:5
- l Lu 24:27
Re 19:10
- m Isa 53:11
Jer 31:34
Da 9:24
- n Ac 4:31
Ac 8:14, 15
- o Ac 2:1, 4
Ac 19:6

is Lord of all.^a **37** You know the subject that was talked about throughout all Ju-de'a, starting from Gal'i-lee^b after the baptism that John preached:^c **38** about Jesus who was from Naz'-a-reth, how God anointed him with holy spirit^d and power, and he went through the land doing good and healing all those oppressed by the Devil,^e because God was with him.^f **39** And we are witnesses of all the things he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem; but they did away with him by hanging him on a stake.^g **40** God raised this one up on the third day^h and allowed him to become manifest,^{*} **41** not to all the people, but to witnesses appointed beforehand by God, to us, who ate and drank with him after his rising from the dead.ⁱ **42** Also, he ordered us to preach to the people and to give a thorough witness^j that this is the one decreed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.^k **43** To him all the prophets bear witness,^l that everyone putting faith in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."^m

Gentiles Receive Holy Spirit and Get Baptized

44 While Peter was still speaking about these matters, the holy spirit came upon all those hearing the word.ⁿ **45** And the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the free gift of the holy spirit was being poured out also on people of the nations. **46** For they heard them speaking in foreign languages and magnifying God.^o Then Peter responded: **47** "Can anyone deny water to prevent these from

FOOTNOTES

10:40 *Or "to become visible; to be seen."

STUDY NOTES

10:34 is not partial: The Greek phrase for "is not partial" could literally be rendered "is not one who takes (receives; accepts) faces." God, who is impartial, does not judge by outward appearance, favoring people because of their race, nationality, social standing, or any external factors. Imitating God's impartiality means, not making surface judgments, but paying attention to the character and qualities of others, particularly qualities that reflect those of our impartial Creator.

10:36 the sons of Israel: Or "the people of Israel; the Israelites."—See **U** Glossary, "Israel."

10:39 a stake: See study note on Ac 5:30.

10:44 the holy spirit came upon all those hearing the word: This is the only reported instance when holy spirit was poured out on disciples *before* baptism. Additionally, Peter is here taking an active role in the conversion of Cornelius and his family, none of whom were Jews. So Peter was using the third of "the keys of the Kingdom of the heavens," opening up the Kingdom of the heavens," opening up the preaching work and the prospect of entering God's Kingdom to the vast field of Gentiles—those who were not Jews, Jewish proselytes, or Samaritans. Peter had

used the first of those keys to open up the same hope to the Jews and Jewish proselytes, and the second, to the Samaritans.—Ac 2:22-41; 8:14-17; see study note on Mt 16:19.

10:45 the circumcised believers: Or "the faithful ones of those circumcised." That is, Jewish Christians.—Ac 10:23.

10:46 in foreign languages: Lit., "in tongues." This miracle gave visible evidence that God was now extending the heavenly calling to Gentiles. Just as at Pentecost, Jehovah used holy spirit to show clearly that this new arrangement had his backing. This convincing evidence could be both seen and heard.—See study note on Ac 2:4.

being baptized^a who have received the holy spirit just as we have?” **48** With that he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.^b Then they requested him to stay for some days.

CHAP. 10

- a Mt 3:11
Ac 8:36
Ac 11:17
b Mt 16:19
Ac 2:38

Peter Reports to the Apostles in Jerusalem

CHAP. 11

11 Now the apostles and the brothers who were in Ju-de'a heard that people of the nations had also accepted the word of God. **2** So when Peter came up to Jerusalem, the supporters of circumcision^c began to criticize him,^{*} **3** saying: “You went into the house of men who were not circumcised and ate with them.” **4** At this Peter went on to explain the matter in detail to them, saying:

- c Ac 10:45
Ac 15:1
Ga 2:12
Ga 6:12, 13
d Ac 10:10-16
e Ac 10:17-20

5 “I was in the city of Jop'pa praying, and while in a trance I saw a vision, something^{*} descending like a great linen sheet being let down by its four corners from heaven, and it came right down to me.^d **6** Looking closely into it, I observed four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles,^{*} and birds of heaven. **7** I also heard a voice say to me: ‘Get up, Peter, slaughter and eat!’ **8** But I said: ‘Certainly not, Lord, because a defiled or unclean thing has never entered my mouth.’ **9** The second time, the voice from heaven answered: ‘You stop calling defiled the things God has cleansed.’ **10** This happened a third time, and everything was pulled up again into heaven. **11** Also just at that moment, three men were standing at the house where we were staying, having been sent to me from Caes-a-re'a.^e **12** Then the spirit told me to go with them, not doubting at all. But these six brothers also went with me, and we entered into the house of the man.

FOOTNOTES

11:2 *Or “began to contend with him; took issue with him.” **11:5** *Lit., “some sort of object (vessel).” **11:6** *Or “creeping things.”

STUDY NOTES

11:5 See  Gallery, image 134, Joppa.

11:20 **Antioch:** This city was located in Syria on the river Orontes, some 32 km (20 mi) upstream from the Mediterranean seaport of Seleucia. By the first century C.E., Syrian Antioch ranked third in size and wealth among the cities of the

Roman Empire, after Rome and Alexandria. It hosted a large and ancient Jewish community, and there was no great hostility between Jews and Gentiles at this time. Syrian Antioch apparently offered the right atmosphere for something new to take place—the disciples were preaching not only to Jews but also to uncircumcised Gentiles. (See study note on **the Greek-speaking people** in this verse.) This Antioch should not be confused with Antioch in Pisidia in Asia Minor.—See study notes on Ac 6:5; 13:14 and  App. B13.

the Greek-speaking people: Lit., “Hellenists.” The meaning of the Greek term used here (*Hel-le-ni-stes*) has to be determined by the context. When used at Ac 6:1, it most likely means “Greek-speaking Jews.” (See study note on Ac 6:1.) This has led some scholars to conclude that the disciples in Syrian Antioch must have been preaching to circumcised Jews or proselytes who spoke Greek. However, what is described here apparently refers to a new development in Antioch. As mentioned at Ac 11:19, the preaching of God’s word in Antioch had

CHAP. 11

- a Ac 10:30-33
 b Ac 2:1, 4
 Ac 10:44, 45
 c Mt 3:11
 Mr 1:8
 Lu 3:16
 Ac 1:5
 d Joe 2:28
 Joh 1:33
 Ac 1:5
 Ac 2:17
 e Ac 10:47
 f Isa 11:10
 Ac 15:14-18
 Ac 17:30
 Ro 10:12
 Ro 15:8, 9
 g Ac 8:1
 h Ac 15:3
 Ac 21:3, 4
 Ac 27:3
 i Mt 10:5, 6
 j Ac 2:47
 Ac 9:35
 k Ac 4:36, 37
 l Ac 13:43
 Ac 14:21, 22

13 “He reported to us how he saw the angel stand in his house and say: ‘Send men to Jop’pa and summon Simon who is called Peter,^a **14** and he will tell you things by which you and all your household may get saved.’ **15** But when I started to speak, the holy spirit fell on them just as it did also on us in the beginning.^b **16** At this I recalled the saying of the Lord, how he used to say: ‘John baptized with water,^c but you will be baptized with holy spirit.’^d **17** If, therefore, God gave the same free gift to them that he gave to us who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I should be able to hinder God?”^e

18 When they heard these things, they stopped objecting,^{*} and they glorified God, saying: “So, then, God has also granted to people of the nations repentance leading to life.”^f

Barnabas and Saul Preach in Antioch of Syria

19 Now those who had been scattered^g by the tribulation that arose over Stephen went as far as Phoe-ni’cia,^h Cy’prus, and Antioch, but they spoke the word only to the Jews.ⁱ **20** However, some of the men among them from Cy’prus and Cy-re’ne came to Antioch and began talking to the Greek-speaking people, declaring the good news of the Lord Jesus. **21** Furthermore, the hand of Jehovah was with them, and a great number became believers and turned to the Lord.^j

22 The report about them reached the ears of the congregation in Jerusalem, and they sent out Bar’na-bas^k as far as Antioch. **23** When he arrived and saw the undeserved kindness of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all to continue in the Lord with heartfelt resolve;^l **24** for he was a good man and full of holy spirit and faith. And a considerable crowd was

FOOTNOTES

11:17 * Or “to stand in God’s way.”
11:18 * Lit., “they became silent.”

STUDY NOTES

previously been restricted to Jews only, but now the message was apparently spreading among the non-Jews living there. Barnabas was likely dispatched to Antioch to encourage these new disciples who communicated in Greek. (Ac 11:22, 23) Some ancient manuscripts use the word *Hel’le-nas* (meaning “Greeks”; see Ac 16:3) here instead of *Hel’le-ni-stes*’.

So a number of translations use the terms “the Greeks” or “the Gentiles.” These terms would indicate that none of those spoken to in Antioch were adherents to the Jewish religion. It is possible, though, that *both* Jews and Gentiles familiar with the Greek language may have been referred to, and for that reason, the term “Greek-speaking people” is used in this translation. These Greek-speaking people may have come from various national backgrounds, but they adopted the Greek language and perhaps Greek customs.

11:21 **hand of Jehovah:** This phrase, as well as “Jehovah’s hand,” is often found

in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “hand” and the Tetragrammaton. (Some examples are found at Ex 9:3; Nu 11:23; Jg 2:15; Ru 1:13; 1Sa 5:6, 9; 7:13; 12:15; 1Ki 18:46; Ezr 7:6; Job 12:9; Isa 19:16; 40:2; Eze 1:3.) In the Bible, the term “hand” is often used figuratively for “power.” Since the hand applies the power of the arm, “hand” may also convey the idea of “applied power.” The Greek expression rendered “the hand of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s hand”) also occurs at Lu 1:66 and Ac 13:11.—See study notes on Lu 1:6, 66 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 11:21.

added to the Lord.^a **25** So he went to Tarsus to make a thorough search for Saul.^b **26** After he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year they assembled with them in the congregation and taught quite a crowd, and it was first in Antioch that the disciples were by divine providence called Christians.^c

Agabus Foretells a Famine

27 In those days prophets^d came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. **28** One of them named Ag'a-bus^e stood up and foretold through the spirit that a great famine was about to come on the entire inhabited earth,^f which, in fact, did take place in the time of Claudius.^g **29** So the disciples determined, each according to what he could afford,^h to send reliefⁱ to the brothers living in Ju-de'a; **30** and this they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Bar'na-bas and Saul.^j

CHAP. 11

a Ac 2:47

Ac 4:4

Ac 5:14

Ac 9:31

b Ac 21:39

c Ac 9:2

d 1Co 12:28

Eph 4:11

e Ac 21:10, 11

f Mt 24:7

g Ac 18:2

h 2Co 8:12

i Ga 2:10

j Ac 12:25

STUDY NOTES

11:26 were by divine providence called:

Most Bible translations simply read “were called.” However, the Greek words commonly rendered “called” are not used here. (Mt 1:16; 2:23; Mr 11:17; Lu 1:32, 60; Ac 1:12, 19) The word that appears in this verse is *khre-ma-ti'zo*, and in most of the nine places where it occurs in the Christian Greek Scriptures, it clearly refers to things that come from God, that have a divine origin. (Mt 2:12, 22; Lu 2:26; Ac 10:22; 11:26; Ro 7:3; Heb 8:5; 11:7; 12:25) For example, at Ac 10:22, this word is used together with the expression “by a holy angel,” and at Mt 2:12, 22, it is used in connection with divinely inspired dreams. The related noun *khre-ma-ti-smos'* appears at Ro 11:4, and most lexicons and Bible translations use such renderings as “divine pronouncement; divine response; God’s reply; the answer of God.” It is possible that Jehovah directed Saul and Barnabas to use the name Christians. Some have suggested that the Gentile population in Antioch may have used the nickname Christians out of jest or scorn, but the usage of the Greek term *khre-ma-ti'zo* clearly indicates that God was responsible for the designation “Christians.” And it would have been most unlikely that the Jews would label Jesus’ followers “Christians” (from Greek)

or “Messianists” (from Hebrew). They had rejected Jesus as the Messiah, or Christ, so they would not have tacitly recognized him as the Anointed One, or Christ, by identifying his followers with the designation “Christians.”

Christians: The Greek term *Khri-sti-a-nos'*, meaning “follower of Christ,” is found only three times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (Ac 11:26; 26:28; 1Pe 4:16) It is derived from *Khri-stos'*, meaning Christ, or Anointed One. Christians follow both the example and the teachings of Jesus, “the Christ,” or the one anointed by Jehovah. (Lu 2:26; 4:18) The designation “Christians” was given “by divine providence” possibly as early as the year 44 C.E. when the events mentioned in this text occurred. The name apparently gained widespread acceptance, so that when Paul appeared before King Herod Agrippa II, about 58 C.E., Agrippa knew who the Christians were. (Ac 26:28) The historian Tacitus indicates that by about the year 64 C.E., the term “Christian” was in use among the general population in Rome. In addition, sometime between 62 and 64 C.E., Peter wrote his first letter to Christians scattered throughout the Roman Empire. By then, the name Christian seems to have been widespread, distinctive, and specific. (1Pe 1:1, 2; 4:16) With this divinely provided name, Jesus’ disci-

ples could no longer be mistaken for a sect of Judaism.

See  Gallery, image 136, Antioch of Syria.

11:28 a great famine: The report of this disaster, which occurred about 46 C.E., was corroborated by Josephus, who also referred to “the great famine” that occurred during the reign of Roman Emperor Claudius. Famines were particularly hard on the poor, who had no reserves of money or food. The Christians in Antioch were thus moved to send a relief contribution to their impoverished brothers in Judea.

in the time of Claudius: Roman Emperor Claudius, who ruled from 41 to 54 C.E., began his reign with a friendly disposition toward the Jews. By the end of his reign, the relationship had soured, and he expelled all Jews from Rome. (Ac 18:2) Claudius was reportedly poisoned with mushrooms given to him by his fourth wife. Nero succeeded him.

See  Gallery, image 137, Emperor Claudius.

11:29 relief: Or “a relief ministrations.” This is the first recorded instance of Christians sending relief aid to fellow Christians living in another part of the world. The Greek word *di-a-ko-ni'a*, often

CHAP. 12

James Killed; Peter Imprisoned

- a Joh 15:20
 b Mt 4:21
 c Mt 20:20-23
 Lu 11:49
 d Ex 12:15
 Ex 23:15
 Le 23:6
 e Lu 21:12

12 About that time Herod the king began mistreating some of those of the congregation.^a **2** He put James the brother of John^b to death by the sword.^c **3** When he saw that it was pleasing to the Jews, he also went on to arrest Peter. (This was during the days of the Unleavened Bread.)^d **4** He seized him and put him in prison,^e turning him over to four shifts of four soldiers each to guard him, intending to bring him out*

FOOTNOTES

12:4 *Or “to bring him out to trial.”

STUDY NOTES

rendered “ministry,” is also used in the sense of “relief work” at Ac 12:25 and “relief ministry” at 2Co 8:4. The use of the Greek word *di-a-ko-ni'a* in the Christian Greek Scriptures shows that Christians have a twofold ministry. One aspect is “the ministry [form of *di-a-ko-ni'a*] of the reconciliation,” that is, the preaching and teaching work. (2Co 5:18-20; 1Ti 2:3-6) The other aspect involves their ministry in behalf of fellow believers, as mentioned here. Paul stated: “There are different ministries [plural of *di-a-ko-ni'a*], and yet there is the same Lord.” (1Co 12:4-6, 11) He showed that these different aspects of the Christian ministry all constitute “sacred service.”—Ro 12:1, 6-8.

11:30 the elders: Lit., “the older men.” In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation, although the term sometimes refers to physically older men. (See study note on Mt 16:21.) In the ancient nation of Israel, elders shared the responsibility of leadership and administration, both on a community level (De 25:7-9; Jos 20:4; Ru 4:1-12) and on a national level (Jg 21:16; 1Sa 4:3; 8:4; 1Ki 20:7). This is the first use of the term in connection with the Christian congregation. As had been true in fleshly Israel, the elders in spiritual Israel were responsible for the direction of the congregation. In this context, the elders were the ones who received the relief contribution, and they supervised its distribution to the congregations in Judea.

12:1 Herod: That is, Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great. (See  Glossary.) Born in 10 B.C.E., Herod Agrippa I was educated in Rome. He cultivated friendships with various members of the imperial family. One friend was Gaius, better known as Caligula, who became emperor in 37 C.E. He soon proclaimed Agrippa king over the regions of Ituraea, Trachonitis, and Abilene. Later, Caligula expanded Agrippa's domain to include Galilee and Perea. Agrippa was in Rome when Caligula was assassinated in 41 C.E. Reportedly, Agrippa played an important role in resolving the crisis that ensued. He participated in tense negotiations between another powerful friend, Claudius, and the Roman Senate. The result was that Claudius was proclaimed emperor and civil war was averted. To reward Agrippa for his mediation, Claudius granted him kingship also over Judea and Samaria, which had been administered by Roman procurators since 6 C.E. Thus Agrippa came to be in charge of territories equaling those of Herod the Great. Agrippa's capital was Jerusalem, where he won the favor of the religious leaders. He is said to have observed Jewish law and traditions scrupulously by, among other things, offering sacrifices in the temple daily and reading the Law publicly. He is also said to have been a zealous protector of the Jewish faith. However, he belied his claim of being a worshipper of God by arranging gladiatorial combats and pagan spectacles in the theater. Agrippa's character has been described as treacherous, superficial, and extravagant. His rule was cut short when he was executed by Jehovah's angel, as described at Ac 12:23. Scholars place the death of King Herod Agrippa I in 44 C.E. He was at that time

54 years old and had reigned for three years over all Judea.

See  Gallery, image 138, Herod Agrippa I.

12:2 put James the brother of John to death: The execution probably took place about the year 44 C.E. James thus became the first of the 12 apostles to die as a martyr. Herod may have targeted James because that apostle was known to be particularly close to Jesus or because James had a reputation for fiery zeal. It was likely for this reason that James and his brother John had been given the surname Boanerges, which means “Sons of Thunder.” (Mr 3:17) Herod's cowardly, politically motivated act did not stop the spread of the good news, but it did rob the congregation of a beloved apostle, shepherd, and source of encouragement. The expression **by the sword** may indicate that James was beheaded.

12:3 the days of the Unleavened Bread: The Festival of Unleavened Bread began on Nisan 15, the day after the Passover (Nisan 14), and lasted for seven days. (See  Glossary, “Festival of Unleavened Bread,” and  App. B15.) The frequent references in the Gospel accounts and the book of Acts to the various festival seasons show that the Jewish calendar continued to be observed by the Jews during the time of Jesus and the apostles. These festival seasons serve as a guide for determining the approximate time of Biblical events of that time.—Mt 26:2; Mr 14:1; Lu 22:1; Joh 2:13, 23; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2, 37; 10:22; 11:55; Ac 2:1; 12:3, 4; 20:6, 16; 27:9.

before the people after the Passover.^a **5** So Peter was being kept in the prison, but the congregation was intensely praying to God for him.^b

Peter Miraculously Set Free

6 When Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping bound with two chains between two soldiers, and guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. **7** But look! Jehovah's angel was standing there,^c and a light shone in the prison cell. Hitting Peter on the side, he woke him, saying: "Get up quickly!" And the chains fell off his hands.^d **8** The angel said to him: "Get dressed and put on your sandals." He did so. Finally he said to him: "Put your outer garment on, and keep following me." **9** And he went out and kept following him, but he did not know that what was happening through the angel was real. In fact, he thought he was seeing a vision. **10** Going past the first sentinel guard and the second, they reached the iron gate leading into the city, and this opened to them by itself.^e After they went out, they made their way down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. **11** And Peter, realizing what was happening, said: "Now I know for sure that Jehovah sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's hand and from everything that the Jews were expecting to happen."^f

12 After he realized this, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John who was called Mark,^g where quite a few were gathered together and were praying. **13** When he knocked at

CHAP. 12

a Nu 28:16

b 2Co 1:11

c Ps 34:7

Da 3:28

Da 6:21, 22

Heb 1:7, 14

d Ac 5:18, 19

e Ac 16:26

f 2Pe 2:9

g Ac 13:5

Ac 15:37, 38

Col 4:10

STUDY NOTES

12:7 Jehovah's angel: See study note on Ac 5:19 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 12:7.

12:8 Get dressed: Or "Gird yourself." Apparently referring to securing a loose inner garment with a belt or a piece of cloth.—See study note on Lu 12:35.

12:11 Jehovah sent his angel: The phrase "sent his angel" calls to mind similar acts of deliverance mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, at Da 3:28; 6:22, God is said to have "sent his angel" to rescue Daniel and his companions.—Compare Ps 34:7; see  App. C3 introduction; Ac 12:11.

12:12 the house of Mary: The congregation in Jerusalem apparently met in a

private home, that of Mary the mother of John Mark. The house was spacious enough to accommodate "quite a few" worshippers, and a servant girl worked there. So Mary may have been a relatively wealthy woman. (Ac 12:13) Further, the residence is referred to as "the house of Mary," without any mention of a husband, so it is possible that she was a widow.

John who was called Mark: One of Jesus' disciples, "the cousin of Barnabas" (Col 4:10), and the writer of the Gospel of Mark. (See "Introduction to Mark" and study note on **Mark**.) The English name John is the equivalent of the Hebrew name Jehohanan or Johanan, which means "Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious." At Ac 13:5, 13, this disciple is simply called John.

However, here and at Ac 12:25; 15:37, his Roman surname, Mark, is also given. Elsewhere in the Christian Greek Scriptures, he is referred to simply as Mark.—Col 4:10; 2Ti 4:11; Phm 24; 1Pe 5:13.

12:15 It is his angel: Both the Hebrew and the Greek terms rendered "angel" mean "messenger." (See study note on Joh 1:51.) Those who referred to "his [Peter's] angel" may have assumed that an angelic messenger representing the apostle was at the gate. It appears that some Jews believed that each servant of God had his own angel—in effect, a guardian angel, a view that is not directly taught in God's Word. Jesus' disciples knew, though, that throughout history, angels rendered personal assistance to

CHAP. 12

- a Mt 13:55
Ac 15:13
Ac 21:18
1Co 15:7
Ga 1:19
Ga 2:9
- b Ac 16:27

the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the call. **14** On recognizing the voice of Peter, she was so overjoyed that she did not open the gate, but ran inside and reported that Peter was standing at the gateway. **15** They said to her: “You are out of your mind.” But she kept insisting that it was so. They began to say: “It is his angel.” **16** But Peter remained there, knocking. When they opened the door, they saw him and were astonished. **17** But he motioned to them with his hand to be silent and told them in detail how Jehovah had brought him out of the prison, and he said: “Report these things to James^a and the brothers.” With that he went out and traveled to another place.

18 Now when it became day, there was quite a disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. **19** Herod made a diligent search for him, and not finding him, he interrogated the guards and commanded them to be led off to punishment;^b and he went down from Ju-de’a to Caes-a-re’a and spent some time there.

Herod Struck by an Angel

20 Now he was in an angry mood* against the people of Tyre and Si’don. So they came to him with one purpose,[#] and after persuading Blastus, the man in charge of the king’s household affairs, they sued for peace, because their country was supplied with food from the land of the king. **21** On a set day, Herod clothed himself with royal raiment and sat down on the judgment seat and began giving them a public address. **22** Then

FOOTNOTES

12:20 *Or “a fighting mood.” [#]Or “they unitedly presented themselves before him.”

STUDY NOTES

God’s people. For example, Jacob spoke of “the angel who has been recovering me from all calamity.” (Ge 48:16) Also, Jesus said of his disciples that “*their* angels in heaven always look upon the face of my Father,” showing that angels take an active interest in each of Jesus’ disciples. (See study note on Mt 18:10.) Those gathered at Mary’s house would not have imagined that Peter himself was appearing in some angelic form, as if he had died and was now a spirit; they knew what

the Hebrew Scriptures said about the condition of the dead.—Ec 9:5, 10.

12:17 **Jehovah:** Most Greek manuscripts use the term “the Lord” (Greek, *ho Ky’ri-os*) here. However, as explained in  App. C, there are a number of reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced by the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.—See  App. C3 introduction; Ac 12:17.

James: Most likely referring to Jesus’ half brother. He may have been next to Jesus in age, being the first named of Mary’s four natural-born sons: James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. (Mt 13:55; Mr 6:3; Joh 7:5) James was an eyewitness at Pentecost 33 C.E. when thousands of visiting

Jews from the Diaspora responded to the good news and got baptized. (Ac 1:14; 2:1, 41) Peter instructed the disciples to “report . . . to James,” indicating that James was taking the lead in the Jerusalem congregation. He is apparently also the James mentioned at Ac 15:13; 21:18; 1Co 15:7; Ga 1:19 (where he is called “the brother of the Lord”); 2:9, 12 and the one who wrote the Bible book bearing his name.—Jas 1:1; Jude 1.

12:20 **the man in charge of the king’s household affairs:** Lit., “the man over the king’s bedchamber.” Apparently, this was a highly respected person who was entrusted with considerable responsibility for the king’s house and personal affairs.

the people who were assembled began shouting: “A god’s voice, and not a man’s!” **23** Instantly the angel of Jehovah struck him, because he did not give the glory to God, and he was eaten up with worms and died.

Barnabas and Saul Sent Out as Missionaries

24 But the word of Jehovah went on growing and spreading.^a

25 As for Bar’na-bas^b and Saul, after fully carrying out the relief work in Jerusalem,^c they returned and took along with them John,^d the one also called Mark.

13 Now in Antioch there were prophets and teachers in the local congregation:^e Bar’na-bas,^f Sym’e-on who was called Ni’ger, Lucius of Cy-re’ne, Man’a-en who was educated with Herod^g the district ruler, and Saul. **2** As they were ministering to Jehovah and fasting, the holy spirit said: “Set aside for me Bar’na-bas and Saul^h for the work to which I have called them.”ⁱ **3** Then after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

CHAP. 12

- a Ac 6:7
Ac 19:20
Col 1:6
- b Ac 4:36, 37
- c Ac 11:29, 30
- d Ac 13:5
Ac 15:37, 38

CHAP. 13

- e 1Co 12:28
Eph 4:11, 12
- f Ac 4:36, 37
- g Lu 3:1
- h Ac 9:15
- i 1Ti 2:7

STUDY NOTES

12:23 **angel of Jehovah:** See study note on Ac 5:19 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 12:23.

12:24 **the word of Jehovah:** See study note on Ac 8:25 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 12:24.

12:25 **the relief work:** Or “the relief ministry.”—See study note on Ac 11:29.

13:1 **Herod the district ruler:** See study note on Mt 14:1.

See  Gallery, map 8, Acts of Apostles—Paul’s First Missionary Tour (Ac 13:1–14:28) c. 47–48 C.E.

See  Gallery, image 136, Antioch of Syria.

13:2 **were ministering:** Or “were publicly ministering.” The Greek word *lei-tour-ge’o* used here and the related words *lei-tour-gi’a* (public service, or ministry) and *lei-tour-gos’* (public servant, or worker) were used by the ancient Greeks to refer to work or service performed for the State or for civil authorities and to the benefit of the people. For example, at Ro 13:6, the secular authorities are called God’s “public servants” (plural form of *lei-tour-gos’*) in the sense that they pro-

vide beneficial services for the people. At Lu 1:23 (see study note), the term *lei-tour-gi’a* is rendered “holy service” (or, “public service”) regarding the ministry of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist. In that verse, the use of the word *lei-tour-gi’a* reflects how it and related terms are used in the *Septuagint* in connection with the service performed by priests and Levites at the tabernacle (Ex 28:35; Nu 1:50; 3:31; 8:22) and at the temple (2Ch 31:2; 35:3; Joe 1:9, 13; 2:17). Such service included the idea of a ministry for the benefit of the people. However, the idea of holiness was included in some contexts because the Levitical priests taught God’s Law (2Ch 15:3; Mal 2:7) and offered sacrifices that covered the sins of the people (Le 1:3–5; De 18:1–5). At Ac 13:2, the Greek word *lei-tour-ge’o* is used in a more general sense, describing the ministering by Christian prophets and teachers in the congregation in Antioch of Syria. The word refers to the different expressions of devotion and service to God, including such aspects of the Christian ministry as prayer, preaching, and teaching. The ministry performed by these prophets and teachers no doubt included preaching to the public.—Ac 13:3.

ministering to Jehovah: The Greek word *lei-tour-ge’o* (to minister; to serve) used in this verse often appears in the *Septuagint* rendering of Hebrew Scripture passages where the divine name is found in the original Hebrew text. For example, at 2Ch 13:10, the same Greek expression found at Ac 13:2 is used in the *Septuagint* to render the Hebrew phrase “ministering to Jehovah.” At 2Ch 35:3, the same Greek words are used to render the Hebrew phrase “serve Jehovah.”—1Sa 2:11; 3:1; Eze 45:4; Joe 2:17; see  App. C3 introduction; Ac 13:2.

13:4 **Seleucia:** A fortified Mediterranean port town serving Syrian Antioch and located about 20 km (12 mi) SW of that city. The two sites were connected by road and by the navigable Orontes River, which flowed past Antioch and emptied into the Mediterranean Sea a short distance S of Seleucia. Seleucus I (Nicator), one of the generals of Alexander the Great, founded the city and named it after himself. Accompanied by Barnabas, Paul sailed from Seleucia at the start of his first missionary journey, in about 47 C.E. Seleucia was just N of Süveydiye, or Samandag, in modern-day Turkey. Silt from the Orontes

Ministry on Cyprus

^a Ac 12:25

4 So these men, sent out by the holy spirit, went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed away to Cyprus. **5** When they arrived in Salamis, they began proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as an attendant.*^a

6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they met up with a Jewish man named Bar-Jesus, who was a sorcerer and a false prophet. **7** He was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. Calling Barnabas and Saul to him, this man was eager to hear the word of God. **8** But Elmas the sorcerer (for that is how his name is translated) began opposing them, trying to turn the proconsul away from the faith. **9** Then Saul, also called Paul, becoming filled

FOOTNOTES

13:5 * Or “an assistant.”

STUDY NOTES

has converted ancient Seleucia’s harbor into a marsh.—See  App. B13.

they sailed away to Cyprus: A journey of about 200 km (125 mi). If winds were favorable, a first-century ship could travel about 150 km (93 mi) in a day. In unfavorable conditions, such a journey could take much longer. Cyprus was Barnabas’ home.—See  App. B13.

13:5 Salamis: Located on the E side of the island of Cyprus, Salamis was a sensible choice to start the preaching tour in Cyprus, although Paphos, located on the W coast, was the Roman capital. Salamis was closer to the missionaries’ starting point near Syrian Antioch, and it was the cultural, educational, and commercial center of the island. There was also a sizable population of Jews in Salamis, a city that had more than one synagogue. Barnabas, a native of Cyprus, no doubt served as an able guide for the group. Depending on the route taken, the men may have walked at least 150 km (about 100 mi) as they preached throughout the island.—See  App. B13.

John: That is, John Mark, one of Jesus’ disciples, “the cousin of Barnabas” (Col 4:10), and the writer of the Gospel of Mark.

(See “Introduction to Mark” and study note on **Mark**.) He is also called John at Ac 13:13, but the other three verses in Acts where he is mentioned add “who was [or, “the one also”] called Mark,” his Roman surname. (Ac 12:12, 25; 15:37) John is the English equivalent of the Hebrew name Jehohanan or Johanan, which means “Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious.” Elsewhere in the Christian Greek Scriptures, he is referred to as “Mark.”—Col 4:10; 2Ti 4:11; Phm 24; 1Pe 5:13.

13:7 proconsul: The title of the governor of a province administered by the Roman Senate. Some Roman provinces, such as Judea, were imperial provinces under the direct rule of the emperor, who appointed a governor. Because Cyprus became a senatorial province in 22 B.C.E., it was governed by a proconsul. A coin from Cyprus has been found with the head and title of Roman Emperor Claudius (in Latin) on one side and “Under Cominius Proclus, Proconsul of the Cyprians” (in Greek) on the other side.—See  Glossary.

See  Gallery, image 139, Coin From Cyprus, With the Title “Proconsul.”

13:9 Saul, also called Paul: From this point on, Saul is referred to as Paul. The apostle was born a Hebrew with Roman citizenship. (Ac 22:27, 28; Php 3:5) It is therefore likely that from childhood, he

had both the Hebrew name Saul and the Roman name Paul. It was not unusual for Jews of that time, particularly among those living outside Israel, to have two names. (Ac 12:12; 13:1) Some of Paul’s relatives likewise had Roman and Greek names. (Ro 16:7, 21) As “an apostle to the nations,” Paul was commissioned to declare the good news to non-Jews. (Ro 11:13) He apparently decided to use his Roman name; he might have felt that it would be more acceptable. (Ac 9:15; Ga 2:7, 8) Some have suggested that he adopted the Roman name in honor of Sergius Paulus, which seems unlikely, since Paul retained the name even after leaving Cyprus. Others have suggested that Paul avoided using his Hebrew name because its Greek pronunciation sounded similar to a Greek word that referred to a person (or an animal) who swaggered when walking.—See study note on Ac 7:58.

Paul: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the name *Pau’los*, from Latin *Paulus*, meaning “Little; Small,” is used 157 times when referring to the apostle Paul and once when referring to the proconsul of Cyprus named Sergius Paulus.—Ac 13:7.

with holy spirit, looked at him intently **10** and said: “O man full of every sort of fraud and every sort of villainy, you son of the Devil,^a you enemy of everything righteous, will you not quit distorting the right ways of Jehovah? **11** Look! Jehovah’s hand is upon you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sunlight for a time.” Instantly a thick mist and darkness fell on him, and he went around trying to find someone to lead him by the hand. **12** Then the proconsul, on seeing what had happened, became a believer, for he was astounded at the teaching of Jehovah.

Paul’s Speech in Antioch in Pisidia

13 Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Pa’phos and arrived at Perga^b in Pam-phyli’a. But John^c left them and returned to Jerusalem.^d **14** However, they went on from Perga and came to Antioch^e in Pi-sidi’a. And going into the synagogue^f on the Sabbath day, they took a seat. **15** After the public reading of the Law and the Prophets,^g the presiding officers of the synagogue sent word to them, saying: “Men, brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, tell it.” **16** So Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand, he said:

“Men, Israelites and you others who fear God, listen. **17** The God of this people Israel chose our forefathers, and he exalted the people while they lived as foreigners in the land of Egypt and brought them out of it with an uplifted arm.^h **18** And for a period of about 40 years, he put up with them in the wilderness.ⁱ **19** After destroying seven nations in the land of Ca’-

CHAP. 13

- a Joh 8:44
- b Ac 14:24, 25
- c Ac 12:12
- d Ac 15:37, 38
- e 2Ti 3:11
- f Mt 4:23
Ac 17:1, 2
Ac 18:4
Ac 19:8
- g Lu 4:16
Ac 15:21
- h Ex 6:1, 6
De 7:6, 8
- i Ex 16:35
Nu 14:33, 34

STUDY NOTES

13:10 ways of Jehovah: Paul’s reply to the Jewish sorcerer Bar-Jesus (recorded in verses 10 and 11) contains several expressions that have a background in the Hebrew Scriptures. Some examples are: The Greek phrase here rendered “distorting . . . ways” is found at Pr 10:9 (“making his ways crooked”) in the *Septuagint*. The Greek words that appear in the phrase “the right ways of Jehovah” also appear in the *Septuagint* rendering of Ho 14:9. In that verse, the original Hebrew text uses the divine name (“For the ways of Jehovah are upright”).—See [☞](#) App. C3 introduction; Ac 13:10.

13:11 Jehovah’s hand: See study note on Ac 11:21 and [☞](#) App. C3 introduction; Ac 13:11.

13:12 the teaching of Jehovah: The expression “the teaching of Jehovah” is synonymous with “the word of God,” used at Ac 13:5. That verse says that when Paul and his companions arrived in Cyprus, they “began proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.” As a result, the proconsul Sergius Paulus was “eager to hear the word of God.” (Ac 13:7) After witnessing what Paul said and did, Sergius Paulus was astounded at what he learned about Jehovah God and the teaching originating from Him.—See [☞](#) App. C3 introduction; Ac 13:12.

13:14 Antioch in Pisidia: A city in the Roman province of Galatia. This city was situated on the border of the regions of Phrygia and Pisidia, so at different times in history it might have been considered

part of one of these regions. The ruins of the city are located near Yalvaç in modern-day Turkey. Pisidian Antioch is referred to here and at Ac 14:19, 21. Anyone traveling from **Perga**, a city near the Mediterranean Coast, to Pisidian Antioch faced a difficult trek; this city was about 1,100 m (3,600 ft) above sea level (see [☞](#) App. B13), and bandits roamed the treacherous mountain passages. “Antioch in Pisidia” is not to be confused with Antioch in Syria. (Ac 6:5; 11:19; 13:1; 14:26; 15:22; 18:22) In fact, most of the occurrences of the name Antioch in Acts refer, not to Pisidian Antioch, but to Syrian Antioch.

13:15 the public reading of the Law and the Prophets: In the first century C.E., this public reading was done “on every

CHAP. 13

- a De 7:1
Jos 14:1, 2
- b Jg 2:16
1Sa 3:20
- c 1Sa 8:4, 5
- d 1Sa 10:21
1Sa 11:15
- e 1Sa 16:12, 13
Ps 89:20
- f 1Sa 16:1
- g 1Sa 13:13, 14
- h 2Sa 7:12
Isa 11:1
Lu 1:31, 32
Lu 1:68, 69
- i Mt 3:1, 6
- j Joh 1:20
- k Mt 3:11
Lu 3:16
- l Mt 10:5, 6
Lu 24:47, 48
- m Isa 53:7, 8
- n Mt 26:59, 60
Lu 23:13-15
Joh 19:4
- o Mt 27:22, 23
Joh 19:15
- p Mt 27:59, 60
Joh 19:40-42
- q Mt 28:5, 6
Ac 2:24

naan, he assigned their land as an inheritance.^a **20** All of that was during about 450 years.

“After this he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.^b **21** But afterward they demanded a king,^c and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin,^d for 40 years. **22** After removing him, he raised up for them David as king,^e about whom he bore witness and said: ‘I have found David the son of Jes’s^f a man agreeable to my heart;^g he will do all the things I desire.’ **23** According to his promise, from the offspring of this man, God has brought to Israel a savior, Jesus.^h **24** Before the arrival of that one, John had preached publicly to all the people of Israel baptism in symbol of repentance.ⁱ **25** But as John was finishing his course, he would say: ‘What do you suppose I am? I am not he.’^j But look! One is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.’^k

26 “Men, brothers, you descendants of Abraham’s family and those others among you who fear God, the word of this salvation has been sent to us.^l **27** For the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize this one, but when acting as judges, they fulfilled the things spoken by the Prophets,^m which are read aloud every sabbath. **28** Even though they found no cause for death,ⁿ they demanded of Pilate to have him executed.^o **29** And when they had accomplished all the things written about him, they took him down from the stake and laid him in a tomb.^p **30** But God raised him up from the dead,^q **31** and

FOOTNOTES

13:25 * Or “What you suppose I am, I am not.”

STUDY NOTES

Sabbath.” (Ac 15:21) One feature of synagogue worship was the reciting of the Shema, or what amounted to the Jewish confession of faith. (De 6:4-9; 11:13-21) The Shema received its name from the first word of the first scripture used, “Listen [Shema]”, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.” (De 6:4) The most important part of the service was the reading of the Torah, or Pentateuch. In many synagogues, the entire Law was scheduled to be read in the course of one year; in others, the program took three years. Portions of the Prophets were also

read and explained. At the conclusion of the public reading, a discourse was given. It was after the public reading in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch that Paul was invited to speak words of encouragement to those assembled.—See study note on Lu 4:16.

13:20 during about 450 years: Paul’s discussion of Israelite history begins with a significant event, namely, when God “chose our forefathers.” (Ac 13:17) Paul apparently had in mind the time when Isaac was actually born as the promised offspring. (Ge 17:19; 21:1-3; 22:17, 18) Isaac’s birth definitely settled the question as to whom God would recognize as this offspring, an issue that had been in doubt because of Sarai’s (Sarah’s) barrenness. (Ge 11:30) From this starting

point, Paul recounts God’s acts in behalf of His chosen nation down to the time when He **gave them judges until Samuel the prophet**. The period of “about 450 years,” therefore, apparently spans from Isaac’s birth in 1918 B.C.E. to the year 1467 B.C.E. This period extends 46 years after the start of Israel’s Exodus from Egypt, in 1513 B.C.E. This end point is appropriate because the Israelites spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness and 6 years conquering the land of Canaan.—Nu 9:1; 13:1, 2, 6; De 2:7; Jos 14:6, 7, 10.

13:23 offspring: Or “descendants.” Lit., “seed.”—See  App. A2.

13:29 the stake: Or “the tree.”—See study note on Ac 5:30.

tomb: Or “memorial tomb.”—See  Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

for many days he became visible to those who had gone with him from Gal'i-lee up to Jerusalem. These are now his witnesses to the people.^a

32 “So we are declaring to you the good news about the promise made to the forefathers. **33** God has completely fulfilled it to us, their children, by resurrecting Jesus;^b just as it is written in the second psalm: ‘You are my son; today I have become your father.’^c **34** And the fact that He resurrected him from the dead never again to return to corruption, He has stated in this way: ‘I will give you the expressions of loyal love promised to David, which are faithful.’^{*d} **35** So it also says in another psalm: ‘You will not allow your loyal one to see corruption.’^e **36** David, on the one hand, rendered service to God in his own generation, fell asleep in death, was laid with his forefathers, and did see corruption.^f **37** On the other hand, the one whom God raised up did not see corruption.^g

38 “Let it therefore be known to you, brothers, that through this one a forgiveness of sins is being proclaimed to you,^h **39** and that from all the things from which you could not be declared guiltless by means of the Law of Moses,ⁱ everyone who believes is declared guiltless by means of this one.^j **40** Therefore, watch out that what is said in the Prophets does not come

CHAP. 13

- a Mt 28:16
Ac 1:3
Ac 3:15
1Co 15:4-7
- b Ro 1:4
- c Ps 2:7
Heb 1:5
Heb 5:5
- d Isa 55:3
- e Ps 16:10
Ac 2:31
- f Ac 2:29
- g Ac 2:27
- h Lu 24:46, 47
Ac 5:31
Ac 10:43
- i Heb 10:1
- j Isa 53:11
Ro 3:28
Ro 5:18
Ro 8:3
Heb 7:19

FOOTNOTES

13:34 *Or “trustworthy; reliable; dependable.”

STUDY NOTES

13:36 rendered service to God: Or “served the will (purpose) of God.”—See study note on Ac 20:27.

13:43 who worshipped God: The Greek word *se'bo-mai*, here rendered “who worshipped God,” means “to worship; to revere; to venerate.” It could also be rendered “God-fearing; devout.” (See study note on Ac 13:50.) The Syriac *Peshitta* renders it “who feared God.” One translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁸ in  App. C4) uses the divine name here and the whole expression can be rendered “who feared Jehovah.”

the undeserved kindness of God: In view of Paul’s background as a resister of Jesus and his followers (Ac 9:3-5), Paul

had every reason to emphasize Jehovah’s undeserved kindness. (See  Glossary, “Undeserved kindness.”) Paul realized that it was only by God’s undeserved kindness that he was able to carry out his ministry. (1Co 15:10; 1Ti 1:13, 14) When meeting with the elders from Ephesus, he speaks of this quality twice. (Ac 20:24, 32) In his 14 letters, Paul mentions “undeserved kindness” some 90 times, far more than any other Bible writer. For example, he refers to the undeserved kindness of God or of Jesus in the opening salutations of all his letters except his letter to the Hebrews, and he uses the expression in the closing remarks of every letter.

13:44 the word of Jehovah: See study note on Ac 8:25 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 13:44.

13:47 Jehovah has commanded us in these words: The quote that follows in this verse is taken from Isa 49:6, where the context of the original Hebrew text

clearly identifies Jehovah as the one speaking. (Isa 49:5; compare Isa 42:6.) The fulfillment of the prophecy involves the work that Jehovah’s Servant, Jesus Christ, and his followers would do.—Isa 42:1; see study note on Lu 2:32 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 13:47.

to the ends of the earth: Or “to the most distant part of the earth.” This prophecy is quoted from Isa 49:6, where the same Greek expression appears in the *Septuagint*. Isaiah foretold that Jehovah’s servant would be “a light of nations” and that salvation from God would “reach the ends of the earth.” When speaking in Pisidian Antioch, Paul and Barnabas indicated that these prophetic words constituted a command from Jehovah that Christ’s followers should serve as a light to the nations. The Greek expression, here rendered “to the ends of the earth,” is also used at Ac 1:8 (see study note) to show the extent to which Jesus’ followers would be witnesses of him.

CHAP. 13

- a Hab 1:5
 b Ac 11:23
 Ac 14:21, 22
 c Ac 14:1, 2
 Ac 17:4, 5
 d Mt 10:5, 6
 Ac 3:25, 26
 Ro 1:16
 e Lu 2:29-32
 Ac 18:5, 6
 Ro 10:19
 f Isa 49:6
 Ac 1:8

upon you: **41** ‘Look at it, you scorers, and be amazed, and perish, for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will never believe even if anyone relates it to you in detail.’”^a

Prophetic Command to Turn to the Nations

42 Now when they were going out, the people pleaded with them to speak about these matters on the following Sabbath.

43 So after the synagogue assembly was dismissed, many of the Jews and the proselytes who worshipped God followed Paul and Bar’na·bas, who, as they spoke to them, urged them to remain in the undeserved kindness of God.^b

44 The next Sabbath nearly all the city gathered together to hear the word of Jehovah. **45** When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began blasphemously contradicting the things Paul was saying.^c **46** Then Paul and Bar’na·bas boldly said to them: “It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken first to you.^d Since you are rejecting it and do not judge yourselves worthy of everlasting life, look! we turn to the nations.^e **47** For Jehovah has commanded us in these words: ‘I have appointed you as a light of nations, for you to be a salvation to the ends of the earth.’”^f

48 When those of the nations heard this, they began to rejoice and to glorify the word of Jehovah, and all those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers.

STUDY NOTES

13:48 the word of Jehovah: See study note on Ac 8:25 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 13:48.

were rightly disposed for: This expression describes certain Gentiles in Pisidian Antioch who **became believers** after hearing Paul and Barnabas preach. The Greek word here rendered “were rightly disposed for” (a form of the verb *tas’so*) has a wide range of meaning, including “to set; to position; to arrange; to appoint.” The context helps to determine the intended meaning. Ac 13:46 contrasts certain Jews of Pisidian Antioch with the Gentiles mentioned here in verse 48. On the preceding Sabbath, Paul had given both groups a thorough witness by means of a stirring public discourse. (Ac 13:16-41) According to Paul and Barnabas, the Jews stubbornly rejected “the word of God” and

showed by their attitude and actions that they did not “judge [themselves] worthy of everlasting life.” (Ac 13:46) The Gentiles in that city, however, showed a very different attitude. The account says that **they began to rejoice and to glorify the word of Jehovah**. So in this context, the Greek verb *tas’so* conveys the idea that these non-Jews in Antioch “put themselves in a position for” gaining life by showing an attitude, inclination, or disposition that could result in their gaining everlasting life. So the Greek term is appropriately rendered “were rightly disposed for.” Many Bible translations, though, render Ac 13:48 with such expressions as “were destined for; were appointed for,” which could give the impression that these people were predestined by God to gain life. However, neither the immediate context nor the rest of the Bible supports the idea that these Gentiles in Antioch were predestined to gain life, any more than the Jews there were predestined not to gain everlasting life. Paul tried to persuade the Jews to accept the good news, but they made a conscious choice to reject the message. They were not predestined to do so. Jesus explained that some would show by their actions that they are not “well-suited for the Kingdom of God.” (Lu 9:62) By contrast, these Gentiles in Antioch were among those whom Jesus said would show by their attitude that they are “deserving” of the good news.—Mt 10:11, 13.

49 Furthermore, the word of Jehovah was being spread throughout the whole country. **50** But the Jews incited the prominent women who were God-fearing and the principal men of the city, and they stirred up persecution^a against Paul and Bar'na-bas and threw them outside their boundaries. **51** So they shook the dust off their feet against them and went to I-co'-ni-um.^b **52** And the disciples continued to be filled with joy^c and holy spirit.

CHAP. 13

- a Mt 23:34
Ac 14:2, 19
Ac 17:5
2Ti 3:11
- b Mt 10:14
Lu 9:5
- c Mt 5:12

CHAP. 14

- d Ac 17:2
- e Ac 13:45
- f Ac 19:11
Heb 2:3, 4
- g Ac 14:19
2Ti 3:11
- h Mt 10:23

Increase and Opposition in Iconium

14 Now in I-co'ni-um they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in such a manner that a great multitude of both Jews and Greeks became believers.^d **2** But the Jews who did not believe stirred up and wrongly influenced the people of the nations against the brothers.^e **3** So they spent considerable time speaking with boldness by the authority of Jehovah, who bore witness to the word of his undeserved kindness by allowing signs and wonders to be performed through them.^f **4** However, the multitude of the city was divided; some were for the Jews but others for the apostles. **5** When both the people of the nations and the Jews with their rulers made an attempt to treat them insolently and stone them,^g **6** they were informed of it, and they fled to the cities of Lyc'a-o'ni-a, Lys'tra and Der'be, and to the surrounding country.^h **7** There they went on declaring the good news.

STUDY NOTES

13:49 the word of Jehovah: See study note on Ac 8:25 and **☞** App. C3 introduction; Ac 13:49.

13:50 who were God-fearing: Or “who worshipped God.” The Greek word *se'bo-mai* may also be rendered “to revere; to venerate.” The Syriac *Peshitta* renders the expression “who feared God.” Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J⁷, 8, 10, 18 in **☞** App. C4) use the divine name here, and the expression can be rendered “who feared Jehovah.”

13:51 they shook the dust off their feet against them: Paul and Barnabas here applied Jesus' instruction recorded at Mt 10:14; Mr 6:11; Lu 9:5. Pious Jews who had traveled through Gentile country would shake what they perceived to be unclean dust off their sandals before

reentering Jewish territory. However, Jesus apparently had a different meaning in mind when giving these instructions to his disciples. This gesture signified that the disciples disclaimed responsibility for the consequences that would come from God. When Paul did something similar in Corinth by shaking out his garments, he added the explanatory words: “Let your blood be on your own heads. I am clean.” —See study note on Ac 18:6.

14:2 the people: Or “the souls of the people.”—See **☞** App. A2 and **📖** Glossary, “Soul.”

14:3 by the authority of Jehovah: Lit., “upon the Lord.” (See **☞** App. C.) In the context of Ac 14:3, the preposition *e-pi'* (“upon”) is understood to indicate the grounds, or basis, on which the disciples were speaking boldly. The rest of the verse shows that God was bearing witness,

or testifying, that what they preached was really his word and that they had his approval and support in doing so. (Compare Ac 4:29-31.) The Greek expression for “upon the Lord” can also be found in the *Septuagint* to render phrases where the Tetragrammaton appears in the original Hebrew text. (Ps 31:6 [30:7, LXX]; Jer 17:7) In line with this, some have suggested that the expression also conveys the idea of speaking “in reliance on Jehovah.” —See **☞** App. C3 introduction; Ac 14:3.

wonders: Or “portents.”—See study note on Ac 2:19.

14:12 Zeus: See **📖** Glossary.

Hermes: A Greek god, said to be the son of Zeus, Hermes was regarded as the messenger of the gods. He was believed to be the discreet counselor of the mythological heroes and considered to be the god of commerce, skillful speech, gym-

CHAP. 14

Paul and Barnabas Mistaken for Gods

- a Mt 9:28
 b Isa 35:6
 Ac 3:5-8
 c Ac 28:3-6
 d Ac 10:25, 26
 e Jer 10:10
 Da 6:26
 f Ex 20:11
 Ps 146:6
 Re 4:11
 g Ac 17:30
 h Ac 17:26, 27
 Ro 1:20
 i Ps 65:9, 10
 Ps 147:8
 Jer 5:24
 Mt 5:45
 j Ps 145:16
 k Ac 13:50
 Ac 14:2
 Ac 17:13

8 Now in Lys'tra there was a man sitting down whose feet were crippled. He was lame from birth and had never walked.

9 This man was listening to Paul as he was speaking. Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well,^a **10** said with a loud voice: "Stand up on your feet." So the man leaped up and began walking.^b **11** When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they cried out in the Lyc·a·o'ni-an language: "The gods have become like humans and have come down to us!"^c **12** And they started calling Bar'na-bas Zeus, but Paul Her'mes, since he was taking the lead in speaking. **13** And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance of the city,^{*} brought bulls and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifices with the crowds.

14 However, when the apostles Bar'na-bas and Paul heard of it, they ripped their garments and leaped out into the crowd and cried out: **15** "Men, why are you doing these things? We too are humans having the same infirmities as you have.^d And we are declaring the good news to you, for you to turn from these vain things to the living God,^e who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them.^f **16** In past generations he permitted all the nations to go on in their ways,^g **17** although he did not leave himself without witness^h in that he did good, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons,ⁱ satisfying you with food and filling your hearts with gladness."^j **18** And yet despite saying these things, they barely restrained the crowds from sacrificing to them.

Paul Survives Stoning; Strengthens the Congregations

19 But Jews arrived from Antioch and I-co'ni-um and persuaded the crowds,^k and they stoned Paul and dragged him

FOOTNOTES

14:9 *Or "to be saved." **14:13** *Or "whose temple was located just outside the city." Lit., "the (one) being before the city."

STUDY NOTES

nastic skill, sleep, and dreams. Because Paul took **the lead in speaking**, the inhabitants of the Roman city of Lystra identified Paul with the god Hermes. This identification harmonizes with their con-

ception of Hermes as a divine messenger and a god of skillful speech. In fact, various words related to this name are used in the Scriptures referring to *translation* as well as to *interpretation*. (Some examples are the Greek verb *her-me-neu'o*, rendered "translated" at Joh 1:42 and Heb 7:2, and the noun *her-me-ni'a*, rendered "interpretation" at 1Co 12:10; 14:26; see also study note on Lu 24:27.) Among the archaeological finds in the vicinity of ancient Lystra are a statue of the god Hermes; an altar dedicated to Zeus

and Hermes has also been discovered in that area. The Romans identified Hermes with their god of commerce, Mercury.

14:13 garlands: Or "wreaths." The priest of Zeus may have intended to put these garlands on the heads of Paul and Barnabas, as was sometimes done to idols, or on themselves and the sacrificial animals. Such garlands were generally made of foliage and flowers, though some were made of wool.

outside the city, imagining that he was dead.^a **20** However, when the disciples surrounded him, he got up and entered the city. On the next day he left with Bar'na-bas for Der'be.^b **21** After declaring the good news to that city and making quite a few disciples, they returned to Lys'tra, I-co'ni-um, and Antioch. **22** There they strengthened the disciples,^c encouraging them to remain in the faith and saying: "We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations."^d **23** Moreover, they appointed elders for them in each congregation,^e offering prayer with fasting,^f and they entrusted them to Jehovah, in whom they had become believers.

CHAP. 14

- a 2Co 11:25
2Ti 3:11
- b Ac 16:1
- c Ac 11:22, 23
- d Mt 10:38
Joh 15:19
Ro 8:17
1Th 3:4
- e Tit 1:5
- f Ac 13:2, 3
- g Ac 13:13
- h Ac 13:1, 2

Returning to Antioch of Syria

24 Then they went through Pi-sid'i-a and came into Pam-phyl'i-a,^g **25** and after proclaiming the word in Perga, they went down to At-ta-li'a. **26** From there they sailed off for Antioch, where they had been entrusted to the undeserved kindness of God for the work they had now completed.^h

STUDY NOTES

14:22 the disciples: Or "the souls of the disciples."—See  App. A2 and  Glossary, "Soul."

14:23 appointed: Here the Scriptures show that traveling overseers, Paul and Barnabas, appointed the elders. They did so by **offering prayer with fasting**, showing that they viewed making these appointments as a weighty matter. Titus and apparently Timothy are also described as taking part in appointing men as "elders" in the congregations. (Tit 1:5; 1Ti 5:22) The Greek word used here for "appointed," *khei-ro-to-ne'o*, has the literal meaning "to extend (stretch out; lift up) the hand." Based on this meaning, some have understood that the elders were elected by the congregation through a show of hands. But this Greek word is also used in a more general sense, without reference to how the appointing was done. First-century Jewish historian Josephus confirms this meaning of the term in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 6, chaps. 4 and 13 (Loeb 6:54 and 6:312), where he uses the same Greek verb to describe God's appointment of Saul as king. In that case, a show of hands by the congregation of Israel did not vote King Saul into office.

Rather, the Scriptures state that the prophet Samuel poured oil on Saul's head and said: "Has not Jehovah anointed you as a leader?" This showed that Saul was appointed by Jehovah God. (1Sa 10:1) Also, according to the Greek grammatical structure of Ac 14:23, the apostles Paul and Barnabas, not the assembly or congregation, did the appointing (Lit., "stretching out of the hands"). In other situations, when qualified men were appointed to responsible positions in the first-century congregation, the apostles and other authorized men would literally lay their hands on them, a gesture that symbolized confirmation, approval, or appointment.—Compare study note on Ac 6:6.

elders: Lit., "older men." In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation, although the term sometimes refers to physically older men. (See study note on Mt 16:21.) Just as older, mature men shared the responsibility of leadership and administration in communities of the ancient nation of Israel, so spiritually mature men served in the Christian congregations in the first century C.E. (1Ti 3:1-7; Tit 1:5-9) Although Paul

and Barnabas were "sent out by the holy spirit" on this missionary journey, they still prayed and fasted when making appointments. Then they "entrusted [these elders] to Jehovah." (Ac 13:1-4; 14:23) In addition to Paul and Barnabas, Titus and apparently also Timothy are described as taking part in appointing men as "elders" in the congregations. (Tit 1:5; 1Ti 5:22) There is no record of congregations independently making such appointments. The first-century congregations apparently had a number of elders who served together as a "body of elders."—1Ti 4:14; Php 1:1.

they entrusted them to Jehovah:

The Greek verb rendered "entrusted" is also used at Ac 20:32, where Paul says to the elders from Ephesus: "I entrust you to God," and at Lu 23:46 to render Jesus' words: "Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit." This is a quote from Ps 31:5, where the *Septuagint* (30:6, LXX) uses the same Greek word for "entrust" and where the divine name appears in the immediate context of the original Hebrew text. The concept of entrusting oneself to Jehovah is expressed several times in the Hebrew Scriptures.—Ps 22:8; 37:5; Pr 16:3; see  App. C3 introduction; Ac 14:23.

CHAP. 14

a Ac 11:18

CHAP. 15

b Ge 17:9, 10
Ex 12:43, 44
Ex 12:48
Le 12:2, 3

c Ga 2:1

d Ac 11:19

e Ac 21:17-19

f Ex 12:48
Ac 11:2, 3

27 When they had arrived and had gathered the congregation together, they related the many things God had done by means of them, and that he had opened to the nations the door to faith.^a 28 So they spent considerable time with the disciples.

Dispute Regarding Circumcision Brought to Jerusalem

15 Now some men came down from Ju-de'a and began to teach the brothers: "Unless you get circumcised according to the custom of Moses,^b you cannot be saved." 2 But after quite a bit of dissension and disputing by Paul and Bar'na-bas with them, it was arranged for Paul, Bar'na-bas, and some of the others to go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem^c regarding this issue.

3 So after being escorted partway by the congregation, these men continued on through both Phoe-ni'cia^d and Sa-mar'i-a, relating in detail the conversion of people of the nations and bringing great joy to all the brothers. 4 On arriving in Jerusalem, they were kindly received by the congregation and the apostles and the elders, and they related the many things God had done by means of them.^e 5 But some of those of the sect of the Pharisees who had become believers stood up from their seats and said: "It is necessary to circumcise them and command them to observe the Law of Moses."^f

STUDY NOTES

14:25 the word: There is good manuscript support for the reading "the word" (*ton lo'gon*) here, and most modern translations follow that reading. However, there are other Greek manuscripts that read "the word of the Lord," (*ton lo'gon tou Ky-ri'ou*); see [☞](#) App. C and study note on Ac 8:25) and a few ancient manuscripts read "the word of God." Additionally, at least two translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J17, 28 in [☞](#) App. C4) use the divine name here and can be rendered "the word of Jehovah."

14:27 the door to faith: Or "the door of faith." Jehovah opened this figurative door by giving people of **the nations**, or non-Jews, the opportunity to acquire faith. In the Scriptural sense, gaining faith includes the idea of cultivating trust that leads to obedient action. (Jas 2:17; see study note on Joh 3:16.) Paul used the term "door" in a figurative sense three

times in his letters.—1Co 16:9; 2Co 2:12; Col 4:3.

15:2 elders: Lit., "older men." Here the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers to those who held a position of responsibility in the early Christian congregation. The elders of the Jerusalem congregation are mentioned together with **the apostles** as the ones to whom Paul, Barnabas, and some other brothers from Syrian Antioch went in order to get the matter of circumcision settled. So just as some elders served in fleshly Israel on a national level, these elders together with the apostles formed a governing body for all the Christian congregations in the first century C.E. This indicates that the original group serving as a governing body, the 12 apostles, had now been enlarged.—Ac 1:21, 22, 26; see study notes on Mt 16:21; Ac 11:30.

issue: Or "dispute." The Greek word *ze'te-ma* often refers to a controversial question or a specific issue being debated. It is related to a Greek word meaning

"to seek" (*ze-te'o*).—See study note on Ac 15:7.

15:3 conversion: The Greek word used here, *e-pi-stro-phe'*, comes from a verb that means "to return; to turn back (around)." (Joh 12:40; 21:20; Ac 15:36) Used in a spiritual sense, it may involve turning to or returning to the true God as well as turning away from idols and false gods. (This verb appears at Ac 3:19; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18, 20; 2Co 3:16.) At 1Th 1:9, the verb is used in the phrase "how you *turned* to God from your idols." Conversion is preceded by repentance.—See study notes on Mt 3:2, 8; Ac 3:19; 26:20.

15:5 those of the sect of the Pharisees: Apparently, these Christians were still identified in some sense with their Pharisaic background.—Compare study note on Ac 23:6.

Apostles and Elders Meet Together

6 So the apostles and the elders gathered together to look into this matter. **7** After much intense discussion had taken place, Peter rose and said to them: “Men, brothers, you well know that from early days God made the choice among you that through my mouth people of the nations should hear the word of the good news and believe.^a **8** And God, who knows the heart,^b bore witness by giving them the holy spirit,^c just as he did to us also. **9** And he made no distinction at all between us and them,^d but purified their hearts by faith.^e **10** So why are you now making a test of God by imposing on the neck of the disciples a yoke^f that neither our forefathers nor we were capable of bearing?^g **11** On the contrary, we have faith that we are saved through the undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus^h in the same way that they are.”ⁱ

CHAP. 15

- a Mt 16:19
Ac 10:34, 35
Ac 11:16, 17
- b 1Ch 28:9
Jer 11:20
- c Ac 10:44, 45
Ac 11:15
- d Ga 3:28
- e Ga 2:15, 16
1Pe 1:22
- f Ga 5:1
- g Ga 3:10
- h Isa 53:11
Joh 1:17
Ro 3:23, 24
Ro 5:17
- i Mt 20:28

STUDY NOTES

15:7 intense discussion: Or “disputing.” The Greek word used here is related to a verb meaning “to seek” (*ze-te'o*) and denotes “a seeking; a questioning.” (*Kingdom Interlinear*) It thus indicates that the apostles and elders diligently searched out the matter by asking questions, by carefully investigating the issue, and no doubt by frankly and openly expressing their different opinions.

15:12 wonders: Or “portents.”—See study note on Ac 2:19.

15:13 James: Likely referring to Jesus’ half brother and the James mentioned at Ac 12:17. (See study notes on Mt 13:55; Ac 12:17.) It appears that when the circumcision issue came before “the apostles and elders in Jerusalem,” James presided over the discussion. (Ac 15:1, 2) Apparently referring to that occasion, Paul mentions that James, Cephas (Peter), and John were “the ones who seemed to be pillars” of the Jerusalem congregation.—Ga 2:1-9.

15:14 Symeon: That is, Simon Peter. The Greek form *Sy-me-on'* closely reflects the Hebrew form of the name (Simeon). The use of the Greek form of the name that closely reflects the Hebrew form of the name indicates that Hebrew may have been the language spoken at this meet-

ing. In the Bible, the apostle Peter is only once called by this form of the name.—See study note on Mt 10:2.

a people for his name: This expression may allude to statements in the Hebrew Scriptures where Jehovah is said to have chosen a people as his special property. (Ex 19:5; De 7:6; 14:2; 26:18, 19) This new people bearing Jehovah’s name, referred to as “the Israel of God,” that is, spiritual Israel, would now also include non-Jewish believers. (Ga 6:16; Ro 11:25, 26a; Re 14:1) They were to declare the praises of the One they represented and were to glorify his name publicly. (1Pe 2:9, 10) As had been true of fleshly Israel, members of spiritual Israel were the ones Jehovah called “the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.” (Isa 43:21) Those early Christians boldly proclaimed that Jehovah is the one true God, exposing as false all the gods that were being worshipped at that time.—1Th 1:9.

15:15 the words of the Prophets: The speech by Symeon, or Simon Peter (Ac 15:7-11), and the evidence submitted by Barnabas and Paul (Ac 15:12) probably brought to James’ mind pertinent scriptures that shed light on the subject under discussion. (Joh 14:26) After saying that “the words of the Prophets agree” with what was just presented, James quoted

Am 9:11, 12, a book in the part of the Hebrew Scriptures commonly called “the Prophets.”—Mt 22:40; Ac 15:16-18; see study note on Lu 24:44.

15:16 the tent of David: Or “the booth (dwelling) of David.” Jehovah promised that David’s kingdom would “be secure forever.” (2Sa 7:12-16) “The tent of David,” that is, his royal house, or dynasty, fell when King Zedekiah was dethroned. (Eze 21:27) From that time on, no king of the line of David occupied “Jehovah’s throne” in earthly Jerusalem. (1Ch 29:23) However, Jehovah would rebuild the symbolic tent of David with David’s descendant Jesus as the permanent King. (Ac 2:29-36) James indicated that this rebuilding foretold by Amos (the reestablishment of the kingship in David’s line) would include the gathering of Jesus’ disciples (Kingdom heirs) from among both Jews and Gentiles.—Am 9:11, 12.

15:17 so that the men who remain may earnestly seek Jehovah: As shown in the study note on Ac 15:15, James quoted the words of Am 9:11, 12. Parts of this quote, however, read somewhat differently from the Hebrew text that is currently available. It has been suggested that the difference may exist because James quoted from the *Septuagint*, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. However, when James referred to Peter, he used a Greek form of

CHAP. 15

- a Ac 12:17
Ga 1:19
- b Ac 12:17
- c Mt 10:2
Ac 11:13
2Pe 1:1
- d Ac 10:34, 35
1Pe 2:9, 10
- e Am 9:11, 12
- f Isa 45:21
Isa 48:3
Am 3:7

12 At that the entire group became silent, and they began to listen to Bar'na-bas and Paul relate the many signs and wonders that God had done through them among the nations. **13** After they finished speaking, James^a replied: "Men, brothers, hear me.^b **14** Sym'e-on^c has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name.^d **15** And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written: **16** 'After these things I will return and raise up again the tent of David that is fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins and restore it, **17** so that the men who remain may earnestly seek Jehovah, together with people of all the nations, people who are called by my name, says Jehovah, who is doing these things,^e **18** known from of old.'^f

 STUDY NOTES

the name that closely reflects the Hebrew name Simeon, indicating that Hebrew may have been spoken at this meeting. (Ac 15:14) If that is so, another possibility is that James quoted the verses in Hebrew but Luke recorded the quotation using the wording from the *Septuagint*. This approach was used by Luke, James, and other Bible writers when they quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures. While some of such verses quoted from the *Septuagint* vary slightly from the Hebrew text that is available today, Jehovah permitted the Bible writers to use this translation, thereby making such quotes part of the inspired record. (2Ti 3:16) Regarding this quotation from Am 9:12, it is noteworthy that the *Septuagint* reads "the men who remain," whereas the available Hebrew manuscripts read "what is remaining of Edom." Some suggest that the difference may have arisen because in ancient Hebrew the word for "men" looked very similar to the word for "Edom." The Hebrew words for "seek" and "possess" also look similar. It has been suggested that the *Septuagint* rendering of Am 9:12 was based on an ancient Hebrew text that varied from the Hebrew text available today; however, that remains uncertain. Whatever the case, the *Septuagint* and the Hebrew Masoretic text convey the basic thrust of James' argument; both texts indicate that Amos foretold that Gentiles would be called by Jehovah's name.

Jehovah: James says at Ac 15:14 that Symeon related "how God . . . turned his attention to the nations," and in verse 19, James refers to "the nations who are turning to God." James is here quoting from Am 9:11, 12. In the original Hebrew text, the divine name appears once, in the expression "declares [or, "says"] Jehovah." However, the Greek term *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) appears twice here at Ac 15:17, both times referring to Jehovah. In view of the context, the Hebrew Scripture background, and the use of the term *Ky'ri-os* in the *Septuagint* and elsewhere in the Christian Greek Scriptures, there are good reasons for using the divine name in both occurrences of *Ky'ri-os* in this verse.—See  App. C1 and C3 introduction; Ac 15:17.

together with people of all the nations: That is, with non-Jews, or Gentiles. A Gentile who submitted himself to circumcision would no longer be considered a man of the nations but would "become like a native of the land," in other words, a Jew. (Ex 12:48, 49) In Esther's day, many Gentiles "were declaring themselves Jews." (Es 8:17) It is worth noting that the *Septuagint* rendering of Es 8:17 says that these Gentiles "were circumcised, and became Jews." The prophecy at Am 9:11, 12, as quoted here in Acts, stated that "people of all the nations" (uncircumcised Gentiles) would join "the men who remain" of the house of Israel (Jews and circumcised proselytes) and would become "people who are called by my

[Jehovah's] name." On the basis of this prophecy, the disciples discerned that uncircumcised people of the nations would not have to get circumcised to become acceptable to God.

people who are called by my name: Or "people on whom my name has been called." In the Hebrew Scriptures, Jehovah's name being called on the Israelites indicated that they were his people. (De 28:10; 2Ch 7:14; Isa 43:7; 63:19; Da 9:19) Jehovah also placed his name on Jerusalem with its temple, thereby accepting it as the approved center for worship of him.—2Ki 21:4, 7.

says Jehovah: In this quote from Am 9:12, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See  App. C.

who is doing these things, [vs. 18] known from of old: Or according to another understanding of the Greek text, this could be translated "who has been making these things [vs. 18] known from of old."

19 Therefore, my decision is not to trouble those from the nations who are turning to God,^a **20** but to write them to abstain from things polluted by idols,^b from sexual immorality,^c from what is strangled, and from blood.^d **21** For from ancient times* Moses has had those who preach him in city after city, because he is read aloud in the synagogues on every sabbath.”^e

CHAP. 15

- a Ac 15:10
- b Ge 35:2
Ex 20:3
1Co 10:14
- c 1Co 6:9, 10
Col 3:5
1Th 4:3
- d Ge 9:4
Le 3:17
Le 7:26
Le 17:10, 13
Le 19:26
De 12:23
De 15:23
1Sa 14:32, 33
- e Ac 13:15
2Co 3:15
- f 1Th 1:1
1Pe 5:12
- g Ac 11:26
- h Ac 15:1
Ga 2:4
Tit 1:10

Letter From the Governing Body

22 Then the apostles and the elders, together with the whole congregation, decided to send chosen men from among them to Antioch, along with Paul and Bar’na-bas; they sent Judas who was called Bar’sab-bas and Silas,^f who were leading men among the brothers. **23** They wrote this and sent it through them:

“The apostles and the elders, your brothers, to those brothers in Antioch,^g Syria, and Ci-li’cia who are from the nations: Greetings! **24** Since we have heard that some went out from among us and caused you trouble with what they have said,^h trying to subvert you, although we did not give them any instructions, **25** we have come to a unanimous decision to

FOOTNOTES

15:21 *Or “from generations of old.”

STUDY NOTES

15:19 my decision is: Or “my opinion (conclusion) is.” Lit., “I am judging.” As the Greek expression is used here, it does not indicate that James, who apparently was acting as chairman of the meeting, tried to impose his own opinion on the entire group. Rather, he was proposing for their consideration a course of action based on the evidence heard and on what the Scriptures said about the matter. One lexicon defines the Greek word in this context as “to make a judgment based on taking various factors into account.” Therefore, the verb used here refers, not to a formal judicial decision, but to James’ opinion based on his conclusion from the scripture just quoted.

15:20 sexual immorality: The Greek word *por-nei’a* is a general term for all sexual activity that is unlawful according to the Bible. It includes adultery, prostitution, sexual relations between unmarried individuals, homosexual acts, and bestiality.—See  Glossary.

what is strangled: Or “what is killed without draining its blood.” This prohibition would apparently also include an animal that dies by itself or as a result of a wound caused by another animal. In either case, the animal’s body would not have been properly drained of its blood.—Ex 22:31; Le 17:15; De 14:21.

15:21 Moses: James referred to the writings of Moses, which included not only the Law code but also a record of God’s dealings with His people and the indications of His will that predated the Law. For example, God’s view on the consumption of blood, on adultery, and on idolatry can be plainly seen in the book of Genesis. (Ge 9:3, 4; 20:2-9; 35:2, 4) Jehovah thus revealed principles that are binding on all of mankind, whether Jew or Gentile. The decision recorded at Ac 15:19, 20 would not “trouble,” or make things difficult for, Gentile Christians by imposing on them the many requirements of the Mosaic Law. It would also show respect for the conscientious views held by Jewish Christians, who over the years had heard **Moses . . . read aloud in the synagogues on every sabbath.** (See study notes on Lu 4:16; Ac 13:15.) The recom-

mended course would strengthen the bond between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

read aloud in the synagogues on every sabbath: See study notes on Lu 4:16; Ac 13:15.

15:22 the apostles and the elders: See study note on Ac 15:2.

15:23 Greetings!: The Greek word *khai’ro*, which literally means “to rejoice,” is here used as a salutation and conveys the thought “may things be well with you.” The introduction to this letter concerning circumcision, which was sent to the congregations, follows the common ancient form of letter writing. First the writer was mentioned, then a person was addressed, and third the common greeting was given. (See study note on Ac 23:26.) Of all the letters included in the Christian Greek Scriptures, only the letter of James uses the Greek term *khai’ro* as a salutation in the same way as this letter from the first-century governing body. (Jas 1:1) The disciple James was involved in formulating this letter, which supports the conclusion that the James who wrote the letter bearing his name is the same as the

CHAP. 15

a Ac 13:50
1Co 15:30, 31
2Co 11:23-26

b Ac 16:4

c Joh 16:13
Ac 5:32

d Ge 35:2
Ex 20:3
Ex 34:15
1Co 10:14

e Ge 9:4
Le 3:17
Le 7:26
Le 17:10
De 12:16, 23
1Sa 14:32, 33

f Le 17:13

g Ge 39:7-9
1Co 6:9, 10
Eph 5:5
Col 3:5
1Th 4:3

h Ac 18:23

choose men to send to you together with our beloved Bar'na-bas and Paul, **26** men who have given up their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.^a **27** We are therefore sending Judas and Silas, so that they also may report the same things by word of mouth.^b **28** For the holy spirit^c and we ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you except these necessary things: **29** to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols,^d from blood,^e from what is strangled,^f and from sexual immorality.^g If you carefully keep yourselves from these things, you will prosper. Good health to you!"

Congregations Encouraged

30 So when these men were dismissed, they went down to Antioch, and they gathered the whole group together and handed them the letter. **31** After reading it, they rejoiced over the encouragement. **32** And Judas and Silas, since they were also prophets, encouraged the brothers with many talks and strengthened them.^h **33** After they had spent some time there, they were sent off in peace by the brothers to those who had

STUDY NOTES

one who had a prominent part in the meeting recounted in Acts chapter 15.

15:24 **subvert you:** Or “unsettle you.” Here “you” is rendered from the Greek “the souls of you [plural].” In this context, *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” refers to the person himself, so it is rendered by the pronoun “you.”—See L Glossary, “Soul.”

15:25 **unanimous:** Lit., “like-mindedly (of one mind).” The Greek word *ho-mo-thy-ma-don'* appears several times in the book of Acts, often describing the unique unity among the early Christians. Some examples are “with one purpose,” Ac 1:14; “with a united purpose,” Ac 2:46; “with one accord,” Ac 4:24.

15:26 **have given up their lives for:** Here the plural form of the Greek word *psy-khe'*, often rendered “soul,” is rendered “lives.” It can refer to a person or to a person's life. (See L Glossary, “Soul.”) The whole phrase could be understood to mean “have risked their lives (souls) for” or “have devoted their lives (or, themselves) to.”

15:29 **keep abstaining from:** Or “keep away from.” The verb used here could apply to all the practices that follow. Christians were to avoid idolatry, sexual immorality, and the eating of meat from animals that were strangled and thus not bled properly. With regard to abstaining from blood, the meaning of this verb is broader than simply not consuming blood. It implies avoiding all misuse of blood, showing regard for its sacredness.—Le 17:11, 14; De 12:23.

keep abstaining . . . from blood: This decree rests, ultimately, on God's command not to eat blood, a command given to Noah and his sons and, therefore, to all mankind. (Ge 9:4-6) Eight centuries later, God put that command in his Law to the Israelites. (Le 17:13-16) Fifteen centuries after that, he reaffirmed it to the Christian congregation, as mentioned here. In God's eyes, abstaining from blood is as important as avoiding idolatry and sexual immorality.

what is strangled: See study note on Ac 15:20.

sexual immorality: See study note on Ac 15:20.

Good health to you!: Or “Farewell.” The Greek expression used here was typical for letters of that time. It does not necessarily mean that the requirements mentioned immediately before were given as health measures, suggesting that ‘if you abstain from these things, you will have better health.’ However, it was a closing wish for the recipient to have strength, health, and happiness. The expression is similar in intent to the Hebrew expression *sha-lohm'*, wishing “peace” to the recipient. (Ex 4:18; Jg 18:6; 19:20; 1Sa 1:17) In fact, one translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures into modern Hebrew (referred to as J²² in E App. C4) renders the expression *sha-lohm' la-khem'*, “May you have peace!”

sent them. **34** — **35** But Paul and Bar'na·bas stayed in Antioch, teaching and declaring, along with many others, the good news of the word of Jehovah.

Paul and Barnabas Go Separate Ways

36 After some days, Paul said to Bar'na·bas: “Let us now* return and visit the brothers in every one of the cities where we proclaimed the word of Jehovah, to see how they are.”^a

37 Bar'na·bas was determined to take along John, who was called Mark.^b **38** Paul, however, was not in favor of taking him along with them, seeing that he had departed from them in Pam·phyl'i-a and had not gone with them to the work.^c **39** At this there was a sharp burst of anger, so that they separated from each other; and Bar'na·bas^d took Mark along and sailed away to Cy'prus. **40** Paul selected Silas and departed after he had been entrusted by the brothers to the undeserved kindness of Jehovah.^e **41** He went through Syria and Ci-li'cia, strengthening the congregations.

Paul Selects Timothy

16 So he arrived at Der'be and also at Lys'tra.^f And a disciple named Timothy^g was there, the son of a believing Jewish woman but of a Greek father, **2** and he was well-reported-on by the brothers^h in Lys'tra and I-co'ni-um. **3** Paul

CHAP. 15

a 2Co 11:28

b Ac 13:4, 5

Col 4:10

2Ti 4:11

c Ac 13:13

d Ac 4:36, 37

e Ac 14:26

CHAP. 16

f Ac 14:5-7

2Ti 3:11

g Ac 19:22

Ro 16:21

1Co 4:17

1Th 3:2

1Ti 1:2

h 1Ti 3:7

FOOTNOTES

15:36 *Or possibly, “by all means.”

STUDY NOTES

15:34 Some later Greek manuscripts and some ancient translations into other languages, with slight variations in wording, add: “But it seemed good to Silas to remain there further; however Judas alone departed for Jerusalem.” These words, though, do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and thus are not part of the original text of Acts. The passage was probably a marginal note intended to explain Ac 15:40; in time, it was added to the text of a minority of manuscripts.—See **☞** App. A3.

15:35 **the word of Jehovah:** See study note on Ac 8:25 and **☞** App. C3 introduction; Ac 15:35.

15:36 **the word of Jehovah:** See study note on Ac 8:25 and **☞** App. C3 introduction; Ac 15:36.

See **📍** Gallery, map 9, Acts of Apostles —Paul's Second Missionary Tour (Ac 15:36–18:22) c. 49-52 C.E.

15:40 **of Jehovah:** In the book of Acts, the expression **undeserved kindness** is most often connected with God. (Ac 11:23; 13:43; 20:24, 32) At Ac 14:26, the similar expression “entrusted to the undeserved kindness of God” is found.—See **☞** App. C3 introduction; Ac 15:40.

16:1 **Timothy:** In the Bible, this is the first mention of Timothy, whose Greek name means “One Who Honors God.” It is not known precisely when Timothy embraced Christianity. However, his believing Jewish mother, Eunice, and probably also his grandmother Lois taught him from his early childhood “the holy writings” found

in the Hebrew Scriptures, as the Jews understood them. (2Ti 1:5; 3:15) It is very likely that Eunice and Lois became Christians when Paul visited Lystra during his first missionary tour. Timothy's father was called a **Greek**, meaning either that his ancestors were from Greece or that he was a member of another race. He was apparently not a Christian. During Paul's second missionary tour, in late 49 or early 50 C.E., Paul came to Lystra, apparently Timothy's hometown. At that time, Timothy was a Christian disciple who “was well-reported-on by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium.” (Ac 16:2) Timothy may then have been in his late teens or early 20's, a conclusion supported by Paul's statement to Timothy some 10 or 15 years later when he said: “Never let anyone look down on your youth.” (1Ti 4:12, likely written between 61 and 64 C.E.) This indicates that even then, Timothy was a relatively young man.

CHAP. 16

- a 1Co 9:20
 b Ac 15:28, 29
 c Ac 18:23
 d 1Pe 1:1

expressed the desire for Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews in those places,^a for they all knew that his father was a Greek. **4** As they traveled on through the cities, they would deliver to them for observance the decrees that had been decided on by the apostles and the elders who were in Jerusalem.^b **5** Then, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number day by day.

Vision of the Macedonian Man

6 Moreover, they traveled through Phryg'i-a and the country of Ga-la'ti-a,^c because* they were forbidden by the holy spirit to speak the word in the province of Asia. **7** Further, when they came down to Mys'i-a, they made efforts to go into Bi-thyn'i-a,^d but the spirit of Jesus did not permit them. **8** So they passed by Mys'i-a and came down to Tro'as. **9** And during the night a vision appeared to Paul—a Mac-e-do'ni-an man was standing there urging him and saying: “Step over into Mac-e-do'ni-a and help us.” **10** As soon as he had seen the vision, we tried to go into Mac-e-do'ni-a, drawing the conclusion that God had summoned us to declare the good news to them.

FOOTNOTES

16:6 *Or “and.”

STUDY NOTES

16:3 circumcised him: Paul well knew that circumcision was not a Christian requirement. (Ac 15:6-29) Timothy, whose father was an unbeliever, had not been circumcised. Paul knew that this might stumble some of the Jews whom they would visit together on their preaching tour. Instead of allowing this obstacle to impede their work, Paul asked Timothy to submit to this painful surgery. Both men thus exemplified what Paul himself later wrote to the Corinthians: “To the Jews I became as a Jew in order to gain Jews.” —1Co 9:20.

16:4 the apostles and the elders who were in Jerusalem: As shown in the study note on Ac 15:2, some elders in the nation of Israel served in positions of responsibility on a national level. Likewise, these elders in Jerusalem together with the apostles formed a governing body for all the Christian congregations in the

first century C.E. After handling the issue of circumcision, these apostles and elders made their decision known to the congregations, and it was accepted as authoritative.

16:6 the province of Asia: See  Glossary, “Asia.”

16:7 the spirit of Jesus: Apparently referring to Jesus' use of the holy spirit, or active force, which he had “received . . . from the Father.” (Ac 2:33) As head of the Christian congregation, Jesus used the spirit to direct the preaching work of the first Christians, indicating where they should concentrate their efforts. In this case, Jesus used “the holy spirit” to prevent Paul and his traveling companions from preaching in the province of Asia and the province of Bithynia. (Ac 16:6-10) These regions, however, were later reached with the good news.—Ac 18:18-21; 1Pe 1:1, 2.

16:8 passed by: Or “passed through.” The Greek verb *pa-rer'kho-mai*, here rendered “passed by,” allows for the idea of traveling through the area, which is ap-

parently what Paul and his companions did. The seaport of **Troas** was in the region of **Mysia**, located in the NW part of Asia Minor. They had to travel through Mysia to reach Troas, so they “passed by Mysia” in the sense that they traveled through the area without stopping to do extensive preaching there.

16:9 Macedonia: See  Glossary.

16:10 we: Up to Ac 16:9, the book of Acts is narrated strictly in the third person, that is, the writer Luke reports only what others said and did. Here at Ac 16:10, however, there is a change in that style, and Luke includes himself in the narrative. From this point on, he uses the pronouns “we” and “us” in sections of the book where he was apparently accompanying Paul and his traveling companions. (See study note on Ac 1:1 and “Introduction to Acts.”) Luke first accompanied Paul from Troas to Philippi in about 50 C.E., but when Paul left Philippi, Luke was no longer with him.—Ac 16:10-17, 40; see study notes on Ac 20:5; 27:1.

declare the good news: See study note on Ac 5:42.

Lydia's Conversion in Philippi

CHAP. 16

a Php 1:1
 b Re 1:11
 c Lu 24:45
 1Co 3:7
 d Ac 16:33
 Ac 18:8

11 So we put out to sea from Tro'as and made a straight run to Sam'o-thrace, but on the following day to Ne-ap'o-lis; **12** and from there we went to Phi-lip'pi,^a a colony, which is the principal city of the district of Mac-e-do'ni-a. We stayed in this city for some days. **13** On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate beside a river, where we thought there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled. **14** And a woman named Lyd'i-a, a seller of purple from the city of Thy-a-ti'ra^b and a worshipper of God, was listening, and Jehovah opened her heart wide to pay attention to the things Paul was saying.^c **15** Now when she and her household got baptized,^d she urged us: "If you have considered me to be faithful to Jehovah, come and stay at my house." And she just made us come.

STUDY NOTES

16:11 See  Gallery, image 140, Neapolis.

16:12 Philippi: This city was originally called Crenides (Krenides). Philip II of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great) took the city from the Thracians about the middle of the fourth century B.C.E. and named it after himself. There were rich gold mines in the area, and gold coins were issued in Philip's name. About 168 B.C.E., the Roman consul Lucius Aemilius Paulus defeated Perseus, the last of the Macedonian kings, and took Philippi and the surrounding territory. In 146 B.C.E., all Macedonia was formed into a single Roman province. The battle in which Octavian (Octavius) and Mark Antony defeated the armies of Brutus and Gaius Cassius Longinus, assassins of Julius Caesar, took place on the Plain of Philippi in 42 B.C.E. Afterward, as a memorial of his great victory, Octavian made Philippi a Roman **colony**. Some years later, when Octavian was made Caesar Augustus by the Roman Senate, he named the town Colonia Augusta Julia Philippensis.—See  App. B13.

16:13 a river: Many scholars identify the river with the Gangites, located 2.4 km (1.5 mi) W of Philippi, more than a sabbath day's journey away. Some feel that because of Philippi's military character, the Jews may have been forbidden to

assemble for worship inside the city and had to meet far away. Others favor the Crenides (Krenides), a small stream that is closer to the city and is locally called the stream of Lydia. However, Roman tombs have been found there, and since it was an area in public view, some feel that it would have been an unlikely place for prayer. Still others suggest the area of a now-dry streambed that was outside the Neapolis Gate, where a number of churches were built in the fourth or fifth century C.E. to commemorate Paul's visit to Philippi.

a place of prayer: Perhaps the Jews were forbidden to have a synagogue in the city because of Philippi's military character. Or the city might have lacked ten Jewish males—the minimum number traditionally required for establishing a synagogue.

See  Gallery, image 141, A Place of Prayer Near Philippi.

16:14 a woman named Lydia: Lydia is named only twice in the Bible, here and at Ac 16:40. There is documentary evidence to show that Lydia was used as a proper name, though some believe that Lydia was a nickname meaning "Lydian Woman." Lydia and her household became Christians about 50 C.E. in Philippi, so they were among the first individuals in Europe to embrace Christianity as a result of Paul's preaching. Lydia—who possibly never married or was a widow—had a gen-

erous spirit that enabled her to enjoy rewarding association with missionaries Paul, Silas, and Luke.—Ac 16:15.

a seller of purple: Lydia may have traded in purple goods of various kinds, including purple fabric, clothing, tapestries, dyes, or other items. She was originally from **Thyatira**, a city of western Asia Minor in the region called Lydia. An inscription found in Philippi testifies to the presence of a guild of sellers of purple in that city. The Lydians and their neighbors were famed for their skill in the dyeing of purple since the days of Homer (ninth or eighth century B.C.E.). Since Lydia's trade required substantial capital and she had a large house capable of hosting four men—Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke—in all likelihood she was a successful and wealthy merchant. The reference to "her household" could mean that she lived with relatives, but it could also imply that she had slaves and servants. (Ac 16:15) And the fact that before leaving the city, Paul and Silas met with some brothers in this hospitable woman's home suggests that it became a meeting place for the first Christians in Philippi.—Ac 16:40.

Jehovah opened her heart wide: Lydia is identified as a **worshipper of God**, an expression that indicates that she was a Jewish proselyte. (Ac 13:43) On

CHAP. 16

Paul and Silas Imprisoned in Philippi

- a Le 19:31
Le 20:6
- b Mr 1:23, 24
Lu 4:41
- c Mt 17:18
Mr 1:25, 26
Mr 1:34
Lu 9:1
Lu 10:17
- d Ac 19:24, 25
- e Mt 10:18
- f Ac 17:6
- g Es 3:8
- h Ac 17:7
- i 1Th 2:2

16 Now it happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a servant girl with a spirit, a demon of divination,^a met us. She supplied her masters with much profit by fortune-telling. **17** This girl kept following Paul and us and crying out with the words: “These men are slaves of the Most High God^b and are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.” **18** She kept doing this for many days. Finally Paul got tired of it and turned and said to the spirit: “I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.^c

19 Well, when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone,^d they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the rulers.^e **20** Leading them up to the civil magistrates, they said: “These men are disturbing our city very much.^f They are Jews, **21** and they are proclaiming customs that it is not lawful for us to adopt or practice,^g seeing that we are Romans.”^h **22** And the crowd rose up together against them, and the civil magistrates, after tearing the garments off them, gave the command to beat them with rods.ⁱ **23** After

STUDY NOTES

the Sabbath, she had gathered with other women at a place of prayer at a river outside Philippi. (Ac 16:13) It may be that there were few Jews and no synagogue in Philippi. Lydia may have become acquainted with the worship of Jehovah in her home city, Thyatira, which had a large Jewish population and a Jewish meeting place. Jehovah, the God whom she worshipped, noticed that she **was listening** attentively.—See  App. C3 introduction; Ac 16:14.

16:15 faithful to Jehovah: As shown in the study note in the preceding verse, Lydia’s background as a Jewish proselyte makes it logical that she had Jehovah in mind. She had just heard about Jesus Christ from Paul’s preaching but had not yet shown that she was faithful to Jesus. It seems logical, then, that she was referring to her faithfulness to the God whom she had already been worshipping, Jehovah.—See  App. C3 introduction; Ac 16:15.

16:16 with a spirit, a demon of divination: Lit., “with a spirit of python.” Python was the name of the mythical snake or

dragon that guarded the temple and oracle of Delphi, Greece. The Greek word *pythōn* came to refer to a person who could foretell the future and to the spirit that spoke through that one. Although later used to denote a ventriloquist, here in Acts it is used to describe a demon who enabled a young girl to practice the art of prediction.

by fortune-telling: Or “by practicing the art of prediction.” In the Bible, magic-practicing priests, spiritistic diviners, astrologers, and others are listed as claiming the ability to foretell the future. (Le 19:31; De 18:11) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the only mention of demons predicting the future is in connection with this event in Philippi. The demons oppose God and those who do his will, so it is not surprising that Paul and Silas suffered severe opposition as a result of casting out this demon of divination.—Ac 16:12, 17-24.

16:19 marketplace: Or “public square; forum.” The Greek word *a-go-ra* is here used to refer to an open area that served as a center for buying and selling and as a place of public assembly in cities and

towns of the ancient Near East and the Greek and Roman world. From this account about what happened in Philippi, it appears that some judicial matters were handled in the marketplace. Excavations of the ruins of Philippi indicate that the Egnatian Way ran through the middle of the city and alongside it was a fair-sized forum, or marketplace.—See study notes on Mt 23:7; Ac 17:17.

16:20 the civil magistrates: The plural form of the Greek term *stra-te-gos* here denotes the highest officials of the Roman colony of Philippi. These had the duties of keeping order, administering finances, trying and judging violators of the law, and ordering punishment.

16:21 we are Romans: The city of Philippi was a Roman colony, and its inhabitants were granted many privileges, possibly including a partial or secondary form of Roman citizenship. This may explain why they seem to have had a stronger attachment to Rome than would otherwise have been the case.—See study note on Ac 16:12.

they had inflicted many blows on them, they threw them into prison^a and ordered the jailer to guard them securely.^b **24** Because he got such an order, he threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

CHAP. 16

- a 2Co 6:4, 5
2Co 11:23
- b Lu 21:12
- c Eph 5:19
Col 3:16
Jas 5:13
- d Ac 5:18-20
Ac 12:7
- e Ac 12:18, 19
- f Joh 3:16
Joh 6:47
- g Ac 8:12

Jailer and His Household Baptized

25 But about the middle of the night, Paul and Silas were praying and praising God with song,^c and the prisoners were listening to them. **26** Suddenly a great earthquake occurred, so that the foundations of the jail were shaken. Moreover, all the doors were instantly opened, and everyone’s bonds came loose.^d **27** When the jailer woke up and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, assuming that the prisoners had escaped.^e **28** But Paul called out with a loud voice: “Do not hurt yourself, for we are all here!” **29** So he asked for lights and rushed in, and seized with trembling, he fell down before Paul and Silas. **30** He brought them outside and said: “Sirs, what must I do to get saved?” **31** They said: “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will get saved, you and your household.”^f **32** Then they spoke the word of Jehovah to him together with all those in his house. **33** And he took them along in that hour of the night and washed their wounds. Then he and his entire household were baptized without delay.^g **34** He brought them into his house and set a table before them, and he rejoiced greatly with all his household now that he had believed in God.

Paul’s Release From Prison

35 When it became day, the civil magistrates sent the constables to say: “Release those men.” **36** The jailer reported their

STUDY NOTES

16:32 the word of Jehovah: See study note on Ac 8:25 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 16:32.

16:33 were baptized without delay: The jailer and his **household**, his family, were Gentiles and were likely unfamiliar with basic Scriptural truths. After having encouraged them to “believe in the Lord Jesus,” Paul and Silas spoke “the word of Jehovah” to them, no doubt extensively. (Ac 16:31, 32) This affected them deeply, for that same night, as Ac 16:34 shows, they “believed in God,” or came to

have faith in him. Therefore, it was appropriate that they were baptized without delay. When Paul and Silas left Philippi, Paul’s traveling companion Luke did not leave together with them, as indicated at Ac 16:40. (See study note on Ac 16:10.) Perhaps Luke was able to remain in Philippi for some time to give extra help to the new Christians there.

16:35 the constables: The Greek word *rha·bdou'khos*, literally meaning “rod bearer,” referred to an official attendant assigned to escort a Roman magistrate in public and to carry out his instructions.

The Roman term was *licitor*. Some of the duties of the Roman constables were polielike in nature, but the constables were strictly attached to the magistrate, with the responsibility of being constantly at his service. They were not directly subject to the wishes of the people but only to the orders of their magistrate.

16:37 we are Romans: That is, Roman citizens. Paul and apparently also Silas were Roman citizens. Roman law stated that a citizen was always entitled to a proper trial and was never to be punished in public uncondemned. Roman citizenship

CHAP. 16

- a Ac 22:25
Ac 23:27
b Ac 22:27-29
c Ac 16:14
d 2Co 1:3, 4

CHAP. 17

- e 1Th 2:1
f Ac 9:19, 20
Ac 13:13, 14
Ac 14:1
Ac 18:4
g Ac 18:19
h Ps 22:7
Ps 34:20
Ps 69:21
Ps 118:22
Isa 50:6
Isa 53:3, 5
i Ps 16:10
Lu 24:45, 46
j Ac 15:22, 40
k Ac 13:45

words to Paul: “The civil magistrates have sent men to have you two released. So come out now and go in peace.” **37** But Paul said to them: “They flogged us publicly, uncondemned,* though we are Romans,^a and threw us into prison. Are they now throwing us out secretly? No, indeed! Let them come themselves and escort us out.” **38** The constables reported these words to the civil magistrates. These grew fearful when they heard that the men were Romans.^b **39** So they came and pleaded with them, and after escorting them out, they requested them to depart from the city. **40** But they came out of the prison and went to the home of Lyd’i-a;^c and when they saw the brothers, they encouraged them^d and departed.

Paul and Silas in Thessalonica

17 They now traveled through Am-phil’o-lis and Ap-ol-lo’-ni-a and came to Thes-sa-lo-ni’ca,^e where there was a synagogue of the Jews. **2** So according to Paul’s custom^f he went inside to them, and for three sabbaths he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,^g **3** explaining and proving by references that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer^h and to rise from the dead,ⁱ saying: “This is the Christ, this Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you.” **4** As a result, some of them became believers and associated themselves with Paul and Silas,^j and so did a great multitude of the Greeks who worshipped God, along with quite a few of the principal women.

5 But the Jews, getting jealous,^k gathered together some wicked men who were loitering at the marketplace and formed a mob and proceeded to throw the city into an uproar. They assaulted the house of Ja’son and were seeking to have Paul and

FOOTNOTES

16:37 *Or “without a trial.”

STUDY NOTES

entitled a person to certain rights and privileges wherever he went in the empire. A Roman citizen was subject to Roman law, not to the laws of provincial cities. When accused, he could agree to be tried according to local law; yet, he still retained the right to be heard by a Roman tribunal. In the case of a capital offense, he had the right to appeal to the emperor. The apostle Paul preached ex-

tensively throughout the Roman Empire. He made use of his rights as a Roman citizen on three recorded occasions. The first is here in Philippi when he informed the Philippian magistrates that they had infringed on his rights by beating him.—For the other two occasions, see study notes on Ac 22:25; 25:11.

17:2 reasoned: Paul did not simply tell them the good news. He explained it and presented proof **from the Scriptures**, that is, from the inspired Hebrew Scriptures. He did more than read the Scriptures; he reasoned from them, and he adapted his reasoning to his audience.

The Greek verb *di-a-le’go-mai* has been defined as “to engage in an interchange of speech; to converse; to discuss.” It denotes interacting with people. This Greek word is also used at Ac 17:17; 18:4, 19; 19:8, 9; 20:7, 9.

17:3 proving by references: The Greek word literally means “to put alongside (place beside).” This may imply that Paul carefully compared the Messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures with the events of Jesus’ life, showing how Jesus had fulfilled those prophecies.

Silas brought out to the mob.^a **6** When they did not find them, they dragged Ja'son and some of the brothers to the city rulers, crying out: "These men who have overturned* the inhabited earth are present here also,^b **7** and Ja'son has received them as his guests. All these men act in opposition to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king, Jesus."^c **8** When they heard these things, the crowd and the city rulers were alarmed; **9** and after taking sufficient security* from Ja'son and the others, they let them go.

CHAP. 17

- a Ac 19:29
2Co 6:4, 5
b Ac 16:19-21
c Lu 23:1, 2
Joh 19:12
d Ac 14:2, 19
e Mt 10:23
f Ac 16:1, 2
1Th 3:2

Paul and Silas in Bereoa

10 Immediately by night the brothers sent both Paul and Silas to Be-roe'a. On arriving, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. **11** Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, for they accepted the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. **12** Therefore, many of them became believers, and so did quite a few of the reputable Greek women as well as some of the men. **13** But when the Jews from Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca learned that the word of God was also being proclaimed by Paul in Be-roe'a, they came there to incite and agitate the crowds.^d **14** Then the brothers immediately sent Paul away to the sea,^e but both Silas and Timothy remained behind there. **15** However, those accompanying Paul brought him as far as Athens, and they departed after receiving instructions that Silas and Timothy^f should come to Paul as quickly as possible.

FOOTNOTES

17:6 *Or "stirred up trouble throughout." **17:9** *Or "after taking bail."

STUDY NOTES

17:6 the city rulers: Lit., "politarchs," meaning "rulers of the citizens." This Greek term (*po-li-tar'khes*) is not found in classical Greek literature. Yet, inscriptions bearing this title, some dating to the first century B.C.E., were uncovered in the Thessalonica area as well as elsewhere in the province of Macedonia. These findings confirm the Acts account and the reliability of Luke as a historian.

17:7 Caesar: Or "the Emperor." The Roman emperor at this time was Claudius,

who ruled from 41 to 54 C.E.—Ac 11:28; 18:2; see study note on Mt 22:17 and

 Glossary.

17:10 See  Gallery, image 142, Bereoa.

17:11 carefully examining: Or "thoroughly studying." The Greek term *a-na-kri'no* has been defined as "to sift; to divide up; to separate." It is sometimes used in the sense of conducting a judicial hearing. (Lu 23:14; Ac 4:9; 28:18; 1Co 4:3) Therefore, in this context, it conveys the idea of doing careful and exact research as in a legal process. The examination done by the Jews in Bereoa was therefore not superficial; they probed carefully to confirm that what Paul and Silas were teaching from the Scriptures about Jesus as the long-promised Messiah was true.

17:17 the marketplace: Located NW of the Acropolis, Athens' marketplace (Greek, *a-go-ra'*) covered 5 ha (12 ac) or so. The marketplace was much more than a location for buying and selling. It was the center of the city's economic, political, and cultural life. Athenians enjoyed meeting at this center of public life to engage in intellectual discussions.

17:18 the Epicurean . . . philosophers: Followers of the Greek philosopher Epicurus (341-270 B.C.E.), they taught that experiencing pleasure was the ultimate goal in life. The Epicureans believed in the existence of gods but thought that the gods had no interest in humans and would neither reward nor punish them, so prayer or sacrifice was useless. The Epi-

CHAP. 17

- a Joh 5:28, 29
 Joh 11:25
 1Co 15:12
 b Ac 17:33, 34
 c Ac 17:16

Paul in Athens

16 Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit within him became irritated on seeing that the city was full of idols. **17** So he began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews and the other people who worshipped God and every day in the marketplace with those who happened to be on hand. **18** But some of both the Ep-i-cu-re'an and the Sto'ic philosophers began disputing with him, and some were saying: "What is it this chatterer would like to tell?" Others: "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign deities." This was because he was declaring the good news of Jesus and the resurrection.^a **19** So they took hold of him and led him to the Ar-e-op'a-gus, saying: "Can we get to know what this new teaching is that you are speaking about? **20** For you are introducing some things that are strange to our ears, and we want to know what these things mean." **21** In fact, all Athenians and the foreigners staying there would spend their leisure time doing nothing else but telling or listening to something new. **22** Paul now stood in the midst of the Ar-e-op'a-gus^b and said:

Paul's Speech at the Areopagus

"Men of Athens, I see that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities* than others are.^c **23** For instance, while passing along and carefully observing your objects of veneration,* I found even an altar on which had been

FOOTNOTES

17:22 *Or "more religious." **17:23** *Or "worship."

STUDY NOTES

cureans' thinking and actions were devoid of moral principle. They urged moderation, however, on the grounds that it would prevent the negative consequences of overindulgence. And they believed that knowledge should be sought only to rid a person of religious fears and superstition. Neither the Epicureans nor the Stoics believed in a resurrection.—See study note on **the Stoic philosophers** in this verse.

the Stoic philosophers: A Greek school of philosophers who believed that happiness consists of living in accord with reason and nature. In their estimation,

the truly wise man was indifferent to pain or pleasure. The Stoics believed that all things were part of an impersonal deity and that the human soul emanated from such a source. Some Stoics held that the soul would eventually be destroyed along with the universe. Other Stoics believed that the soul would ultimately be reabsorbed by this deity. Neither the Stoics nor the Epicureans believed in a resurrection.—See study note on **the Epicurean . . . philosophers** in this verse.

chatterer: Lit., "seed picker." The Greek word used here, *sper-mo-lo'gos*, was applied to a bird that picks up seeds. Figuratively, it was used in a derogatory sense of a person who picks up scraps by begging or stealing or of an unqualified, unsophisticated person who repeats scraps of knowledge, an idle babbler. In effect, those learned men were saying

that Paul was ignorantly chattering about things he did not really understand.

17:19 the Areopagus: Or "Hill of Ares." Ares was the Greek god of war. Located NW of the Acropolis, the Areopagus was the traditional meeting place of the chief council of Athens. The term "Areopagus" may refer to the actual hill or to the council. (Ac 17:34) Therefore, some scholars feel that Paul was brought to this hill or nearby to be questioned, while other scholars believe that he was taken to a meeting of the council held elsewhere, perhaps at the agora. Because Ares corresponds to the Roman god Mars, some translations refer to this place as "Mars' Hill."

17:21 staying: Or "visiting." The Greek word used here, *e-pi-de-me'ō*, has been defined "to stay in a place as a stranger or visitor."

inscribed ‘To an Unknown God.’ Therefore, what you are unknowingly worshipping, this I am declaring to you. **24** The God who made the world and all the things in it, being, as he is, Lord of heaven and earth,^a does not dwell in handmade temples;^b **25** nor is he served by human hands as if he needed anything,^c because he himself gives to all people life and breath^d and all things. **26** And he made out of one man^e every nation of men to dwell on the entire surface of the earth,^f and he decreed the appointed times and the set limits of where men would dwell,^g **27** so that they would seek God, if they might grope for him and really find him,^h although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us. **28** For by* him we have life and move and exist,ⁱ even as some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also his children.’[#]

29 “Therefore, since we are the children[#] of God,^j we should not think that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and design of humans.^k **30** True, God has overlooked the times of such ignorance;^l but now he is declaring to all people everywhere that they should

CHAP. 17

- a Ps 146:6
- b 1Ki 8:27
- c Ps 50:12
- d Isa 42:5
- e Ge 5:2
- f Ge 1:28
- g De 2:5, 19
De 32:8
Ps 74:17
- h De 4:29
Ps 145:18
Isa 55:6
Ro 1:20
- i Ps 36:9
- j Ge 1:27
- k De 5:8
Isa 37:19
Isa 40:18-20
Isa 46:5
Joh 4:24
- l Ac 14:16
Eph 4:17, 18

FOOTNOTES

17:28 *Or “because of.” Lit., “in.”
17:28, 29 #Or “progeny.”

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17:23 To an Unknown God: The Greek words *A-gno'stoi the-oi'* were part of an inscription on an altar in Athens. The Athenians expressed their fear of deities by building many temples and altars, even making altars to abstract deities, such as Fame, Modesty, Energy, Persuasion, and Pity. Perhaps fearing that they might omit a god and thereby incur that god's disfavor, they dedicated an altar “to an Unknown God.” By means of such an altar, the people admitted the existence of a God about whom they knew nothing. Paul skillfully used the presence of this altar as a basis for his preaching to introduce his audience to the God—the true God—who until then was unknown to them.

See  Gallery, image 143, Altars to Unknown Gods.

17:24 the world: The Greek word *ko'smos* is closely linked with mankind in secular

Greek literature and particularly in the Bible. (See study note on Joh 1:10.) In secular Greek writings, however, the term was also used to refer to the universe and to creation in general. It is possible that Paul, who was trying to establish common ground with his Greek audience, here used the term in that sense.

handmade temples: Or “temples made by human hands.” The Greek word *khei-ro-poi'e-tos* is also used at Ac 7:48 and Heb 9:11, 24, where it is rendered “made with hands.” Unlike the Greek goddess Athena or the other deities whose glory depended on temples, shrines, and altars made by humans, the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth cannot be contained in physical temples. (1Ki 8:27) The true God is grander than any idols found in man-made temples. (Isa 40:18-26) Paul may have made this comment because he saw the many temples, shrines, and sanctuaries devoted to various deities.

17:28 we have life and move and exist: Some suggest that this statement reflects a Greek rhetorical style called tricolon, which uses three parallel words to express

a thought. Philosophers Plato, Sophocles, and Aristotle used this technique. Others suggest that this was an allusion to a poem by Epimenides, a Cretan poet of the sixth century B.C.E.

some of your own poets: Paul apparently quoted the expression “for we are also his children” from the poem *Phaenomena*, by the Stoic poet Aratus, and similar words are found in other Greek writings, including *Hymn to Zeus*, by the Stoic writer Cleanthes. Paul may have quoted Greek poets because educated speakers were expected to offer classical quotations among their proofs.

17:31 the inhabited earth: Here the Greek word for “inhabited earth” (*oi-kou-me'ne*) is used in a broad sense and refers to the earth as the dwelling place of mankind. (Lu 4:5; Ro 10:18; Re 12:9; 16:14) In the first century, this term was also used in reference to the vast Roman Empire, where the Jews had been dispersed.—Ac 24:5.

guarantee: Or “proof.” Lit., “faith.” The Greek word *pi'stis*, most often rendered “faith,” is apparently used in this context to convey the idea of a proof that gives

CHAP. 17

a Ps 96:13
Ps 98:9
Joh 5:22
Ac 10:42

b Joh 11:25
Ac 2:24
Ac 13:32, 33
1Co 15:3–8

c 1Co 1:23

CHAP. 18

d Ac 18:24, 26
1Co 16:19
2Ti 4:19

e Ac 20:34
1Co 4:11, 12
1Co 9:14, 15
1Th 2:9
2Th 3:8, 10

repent. **31** Because he has set a day on which he purposes to judge^a the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has provided a guarantee to all men by resurrecting him from the dead.”^b

32 Now when they heard of a resurrection of the dead, some began to scoff,^c while others said: “We will hear you again about this.” **33** So Paul left them, **34** but some men joined him and became believers. Among them were Di-o-nys’i-us, who was a judge of the court of the Ar-e-op’a-gus, and a woman named Dam’a-ris, and others besides them.

Paul’s Ministry in Corinth

18 After this he departed from Athens and came to Corinth. **2** And he found a Jew named Aq’ui-la,^d a native of Pon-tus who had recently come from Italy with Pris-cil’la his wife, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. So he went to them, **3** and because he had the same trade, he stayed at their home and worked with them,^e for they were tentmakers

STUDY NOTES

reason for complete confidence in something promised.

17:34 **who was a judge of the court of the Areopagus:** Or “an Areopagite,” that is, a member of the council or court of the Areopagus.—See study note on Ac 17:19.

18:1 **Corinth:** One of the oldest and most prominent cities of ancient Greece, located about 5 km (3 mi) SW of the modern-day city. The importance and great wealth of Corinth resulted largely from its strategic location at the isthmus, or narrow neck of land, connecting central Greece with the southern peninsula, the Peloponnese. Not only did Corinth control the flow of goods between northern and southern Greece but it also controlled maritime traffic between E and W on the Mediterranean Sea, since traveling the sea/land route via the isthmus was safer than making the trip around Greece. Achaia, as the Romans called Greece apart from Macedonia, became a Roman senatorial province during the reign of Caesar Augustus, and Corinth was made its capital. (See study note on Ac 18:12.) A large number of Jews had settled in Corinth and

had established a synagogue, drawing some Greek adherents. (Ac 18:4) The presence of Jews in ancient Corinth is attested to by first-century writer Philo and by an ancient Greek inscription on a marble lintel found near the gate toward the harbor of Lechaem. The inscription reads “[Sy-na:]go-ge’ He-br[ai’on],” meaning “Synagogue of the Hebrews.” Some suggest that the lintel is from the time of Paul, but most favor a later date.—See  App. B13.

18:2 **Aquila:** This faithful Christian husband and his loyal wife, **Priscilla** (also called Prisca), are described as being “fellow workers” with Paul. (Ro 16:3) They are referred to a total of six times in the Christian Greek Scriptures (Ac 18:18, 26; 1Co 16:19; 2Ti 4:19), and on each occasion they are mentioned together. The name Priscilla is the diminutive form of the name Prisca. The shorter form of the name is found in Paul’s writings, the longer form in Luke’s. Such a variation was common in Roman names. Banished from Rome by Emperor Claudius’ decree against the Jews sometime in the year 49 or early 50 C.E., Aquila and Priscilla took up residence in Corinth. When Paul arrived there in the autumn of

50 C.E., he worked with this couple at their common trade of tentmaking. Aquila and Priscilla doubtless aided Paul in building up the new congregation there. Aquila was a **native of Pontus**, a region of northern Asia Minor along the Black Sea.—See  App. B13.

See  Gallery, image 137, Emperor Claudius.

18:3 **tentmakers:** Here the Greek term *ske-no-poi-os*’ is used to describe the trade of Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla. Various opinions have been offered as to the exact type of craftsman indicated by this word (whether tentmaker, tapestry weaver, or ropemaker); however, a number of scholars hold that “tentmaker” is the probable meaning. Paul was from Tarsus in Cilicia, an area famous for its goat-hair cloth named *cilicium*, from which tents were made. (Ac 21:39) Among the Jews of the first century C.E., it was considered honorable for a young man to learn a trade even if he was also to receive a higher education. It is possible, then, that Paul learned to make tents while he was still a youth. The work was not easy, for it is reported that the *cilicium* was usually stiff and rough and, consequently, difficult to cut and sew.

by trade. **4** He would give a talk in the synagogue^a every sabbath^b and would persuade Jews and Greeks.

5 When, now, both Silas^c and Timothy^d came down from Macedonia, Paul began to be intensely occupied with the word, witnessing to the Jews to prove that Jesus is the Christ.^e

6 But after they kept on opposing him and speaking abusively, he shook out his garments^f and said to them: “Let your blood be on your own heads.^g I am clean.^h From now on I will go to people of the nations.”ⁱ **7** So he transferred from there and went into the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshipper of God, whose house adjoined the synagogue. **8** But Crispus,^j the presiding officer of the synagogue, became a believer in the Lord, along with all his household. And many of the Corinthians who heard began to believe and be baptized. **9** Moreover, the Lord said to Paul in a vision by night: “Do not be afraid, but keep on speaking and do not keep silent, **10** for I am with you^k and no man will assault you to harm you; for I have many people in this city.” **11** So he stayed there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 While Gal’li-o was proconsul of A-cha’ia, the Jews made a concerted attack against Paul and led him to the judgment seat, **13** saying: “This man is persuading people to worship God in a

CHAP. 18

- a Mt 4:23
- b Ac 17:2
- c Ac 15:27
Ac 17:14
- d Ac 16:1, 2
1Th 3:6
- e Ac 17:2, 3
Ac 28:23
- f Mt 10:14
- g Eze 3:18
Eze 33:4
- h Ac 20:26
- i Ac 13:46
Ac 28:28
Ro 1:16
- j 1Co 1:14
- k Jer 1:8, 19
Mt 28:20

 STUDY NOTES

18:4 give a talk: Or “reason with people.” The Greek verb *di-a-le’go-mai* has been defined “to discuss; to converse.” It can describe the delivering of an instructional discourse as well as an interaction with people that includes an exchange of opinions. This same Greek word is also used at Ac 17:2, 17; 18:19; 19:8, 9; 20:7, 9.

18:5 intensely occupied with the word: Or “fully absorbed in preaching the word.” This expression indicates that Paul at this point began to devote all his time to preaching.

18:6 he shook out his garments: This gesture by Paul indicated that he was free of responsibility for the Jews in Corinth who refused to accept the lifesaving message about the Christ. Paul had fulfilled his obligation and was no longer accountable for their lives. (See study note on **Let your blood be on your own heads** in this verse.) This type of gesture had a precedent in the Scriptures. When Nehe-

miah spoke to the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem, he shook out the folds of his garment to signify that a person who did not fulfill a certain promise would be cast off by God. (Ne 5:13) Paul performed a similar gesture in Pisidian Antioch when he “shook the dust off [his] feet” against those who opposed him in that city.—See study notes on Ac 13:51; Lu 9:5.

Let your blood be on your own heads: Paul uses this expression to show that he is not accountable for the consequences that would come upon the Jews who refused to accept the message about Jesus, the Messiah. Similar statements found in the Hebrew Scriptures convey the idea that a person who pursues a course of action worthy of death is responsible for the loss of his own life. (Jos 2:19; 2Sa 1:16; 1Ki 2:37; Eze 33:2-4; see study note on Mt 27:25.) Paul adds the declaration: **I am clean**, that is, “I am innocent [“guiltless; clear of responsibility”].”—See study note on Ac 20:26.

18:7 transferred from there: That is, from the synagogue to the house of Titius Justus, where Paul continued preaching. The home of Aquila and Priscilla remained Paul’s residence while he was in Corinth, but the house of Justus apparently became the center from which the apostle carried out his preaching activity.—Ac 18:3.

Titius Justus: A Corinthian believer identified as a **worshipper of God**, an expression that indicates that he was a Jewish proselyte.—See study notes on Ac 13:43; 16:14.

18:12 proconsul: A provincial governor for the Roman Senate. Here Gallio is mentioned as being proconsul of the province of Achaia. Luke is accurate in using the term “proconsul” in this case, for Achaia was a senatorial province from 27 B.C.E. to 15 C.E. and again after 44 C.E. (See study note on Ac 13:7.) An inscription from Delphi that refers to proconsul Gallio not only supports the accuracy of Luke’s

CHAP. 18

a Ac 24:5, 6

b Ac 23:29
Ac 25:19

c 1Co 1:1

d Ro 16:1

e Ac 17:2

way contrary to the law.”^a **14** But as Paul was about to speak, Gal’li-o said to the Jews: “If, indeed, it were some wrong or a serious crime, O Jews, it would be reasonable for me to hear you out patiently. **15** But if it is controversies over speech and names and your own law,^b you yourselves must see to it. I do not wish to be a judge of these things.” **16** With that he drove them away from the judgment seat. **17** So they all seized Sos’the-nes,^c the presiding officer of the synagogue, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat. But Gal’li-o would not get involved at all with these things.

Paul Returns to Antioch of Syria; Departs for Galatia and Phrygia

18 However, after staying quite a few days longer, Paul said good-bye to the brothers and sailed away for Syria, accompanied by Pris-cil’la and Aq’ui-la. He had his hair clipped short in Cen’chre-ae,^d for he had made a vow. **19** So they arrived at Eph’e-sus, and he left them there; but he entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.^e **20** Although they kept requesting him to stay longer, he would not consent **21** but said good-bye and told them: “I will return to you again, if Jehovah is willing.” And he put out to sea from Eph’e-sus **22** and came down

STUDY NOTES

account but also helps in dating Gallio’s term of office.

Achaia: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, Achaia refers to the Roman province of southern Greece with its capital at Corinth. In 27 B.C.E., when Caesar Augustus reorganized the two provinces of Greece, Macedonia and Achaia, the name Achaia applied to all of Peloponnese and to part of continental Greece. The province of Achaia was under the administration of the Roman Senate and was ruled through a proconsul from its capital, Corinth. (2Co 1:1) Other cities of the province of Achaia mentioned in the Christian Greek Scriptures were Athens and Cenchreae. (Ac 18:1, 18; Ro 16:1) Achaia and Macedonia, its neighboring province to the N, were often mentioned together.—Ac 19:21; Ro 15:26; 1Th 1:7, 8; see  App. B13.

See  Gallery, image 144, Gallio Inscription.

See  Gallery, image 145, Judgment Seat in Corinth.

18:18 Cenchreae: One of Corinth’s seaports, Cenchreae lay on the Saronic Gulf side of a narrow isthmus about 11 km (7 mi) E of Corinth. Cenchreae was Corinth’s port for points E of Greece, while Lechaeum, on the opposite side of the isthmus, served as Corinth’s port for Italy and other points W of Greece. Ruins in the area today include buildings and breakwaters near the present village of Kehries (Kechriais). According to Ro 16:1, there was a Christian congregation in Cenchreae.—See  App. B13.

See  Gallery, image 146, Harbor of Ancient Cenchreae.

18:21 if Jehovah is willing: An expression that emphasizes the need to take God’s will into account when doing or planning to do anything. The apostle Paul kept this principle closely in mind. (1Co 4:19; 16:7; Heb 6:3) The disciple James also encour-

aged his readers to say: “If Jehovah wills, we will live and do this or that.” (Jas 4:15) Such expressions should not be empty phrases; anyone who sincerely says “if Jehovah is willing” must try to act in harmony with Jehovah’s will. The expression does not always need to be made audibly but is often made only in the heart. —See study notes on Ac 21:14; 1Co 4:19; Jas 4:15 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 18:21.

to Caes-a-re/a.^a And he went up and greeted the congregation and then went down to Antioch.^b

23 After spending some time there, he departed and went from place to place through the country of Ga-la'ti-a and Phryg'-i-a,^c strengthening all the disciples.^d

Apollos Gets Help From Priscilla and Aquila

24 Now a Jew named A-pol'los,^e a native of Alexandria, arrived in Eph'e-sus; he was an eloquent man who was well-versed in the Scriptures. **25** This man had been instructed in the way of Jehovah, and aglow with the spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things about Jesus, but he was acquainted only with the baptism of John.^f **26** He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, and when Pris-cil'la and Aq'ui-la^g heard him, they took him into their company and explained the way of God more accurately to him. **27** Further, because he wanted to go across to A-cha'ia, the brothers wrote to the disciples, urging them to receive him kindly. So when he got there, he greatly helped those who through God's undeserved kindness had become believers; **28** for publicly and with great intensity he thoroughly proved the Jews to be wrong, showing them from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.^h

CHAP. 18

a Ac 8:40

b Ac 15:36

c Ac 16:6
Ga 1:1, 2

d Ac 14:21, 22
Ac 15:32

e Ac 19:1
1Co 1:12
1Co 3:5, 6

f Mr 1:4
Ac 19:2, 3

g Ro 16:3
1Co 16:19

h De 18:15
Ps 16:10
Isa 7:14
Mic 5:2

STUDY NOTES

18:22 he went up: Although Jerusalem is not specifically mentioned in the Greek text, Paul was apparently heading to that city. Jerusalem is about 750 m (2,500 ft) above sea level, and the Scriptures often speak of worshippers as “going up to Jerusalem.” In fact, the Greek verb *a-na-bai'no* (“to go up”) is many times used when Jerusalem is specifically mentioned as the destination. (Mt 20:17; Mr 10:32; Lu 18:31; 19:28; Joh 2:13; 5:1; 11:55; Ac 11:2; 21:12, 15; 24:11; 25:1, 9; Ga 2:1) In addition, a verb meaning “to go down” (*ka-ta-bai'no*) also appears in this verse, and this verb is sometimes used when referring to going away from Jerusalem.—Mr 3:22; Lu 10:30, 31; Ac 24:1, 22; 25:7.

See  Gallery, image 130, Caesarea.

18:23 See  Gallery, map 10, Acts of Apostles—Paul's Third Missionary Tour (Ac 18:23–21:17) c. 52-56 C.E.

18:24 Apollos: A Jewish Christian who had apparently been raised in the city of **Alexandria**, the capital of the Roman province of Egypt. Alexandria was a center of higher learning, renowned for its great library. It was the largest city in the Roman Empire after Rome and had a large Jewish population. It was one of the most important centers of culture and learning for both Jews and Greeks. The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures known as the *Septuagint* was produced there. This background may help explain why Apollos is described as being **well-versed** [lit., “powerful”] **in the Scriptures**, that is, the inspired Hebrew Scriptures.

18:25 instructed: The Greek verb *ka-te-khe'o* literally means “to sound down,” and it may include the idea of oral instruction. When the truths of God's Word are repeatedly sounded down into the mind and heart of a learner, he becomes qualified to teach others.—Compare Ga 6:6, where the same Greek word is used twice.

the way of Jehovah: In the following verse, the synonymous expression “the way of God” is used. The Christian way of life is centered on worship of the only true God, Jehovah, and on faith in his Son, Jesus Christ. The book of Acts refers to this course of life simply as “The Way” or “this Way.” (Ac 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:22; see study note on Ac 9:2.) Also, the expression “the way of Jehovah” appears four times in the Gospel accounts, where it is part of a quote from Isa 40:3. (See study notes on Mt 3:3; Mr 1:3; Lu 3:4; Joh 1:23.) At Isa 40:3, the original Hebrew text uses the Tetragrammaton. The expression “the way of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah's way”) also occurs at Jg 2:22; Jer 5:4, 5.—See study note on Ac 19:23 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 18:25.

aglow with the spirit: Lit., “boiling to the spirit.” The Greek word rendered “aglow” literally means “to boil,” but here it is used metaphorically to convey the idea of overflowing with or radiating zeal and enthusiasm. In this expression, the Greek word for “spirit” (*pneu'ma*) apparently re-

CHAP. 19

Paul in Ephesus; Some Rebaptized

- a Ac 18:24
1Co 3:5, 6
- b 1Co 16:8, 9
- c Ac 2:38
- d Ac 18:24, 25
- e Mt 3:11
Mr 1:4
- f Joh 1:15, 30
- g Ac 8:14, 17
- h Ac 2:1, 4
Ac 10:45, 46
1Co 12:8, 10
- i Ac 17:2
- j Ac 1:3
Ac 28:23,
30, 31
- k Ac 9:1, 2
Ac 22:4
- l Mt 10:14

19 In the course of events, while A-pol'los^a was in Corinth, Paul went through the inland regions and came down to Eph'e-sus.^b There he found some disciples **2** and said to them: "Did you receive holy spirit when you became believers?"^c They replied to him: "Why, we have never heard that there is a holy spirit." **3** So he said: "In what, then, were you baptized?" They said: "In John's baptism."^d **4** Paul said: "John baptized with the baptism in symbol of repentance,^e telling the people to believe in the one coming after him,^f that is, in Jesus." **5** On hearing this, they got baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. **6** And when Paul laid his hands on them, the holy spirit came upon them,^g and they began speaking in foreign languages and prophesying.^h **7** There were about 12 men in all.

Paul's Teaching Activities

8 Entering the synagogue,ⁱ for three months he spoke with boldness, giving talks and reasoning persuasively about the Kingdom of God.^j **9** But when some stubbornly refused to believe,^{*} speaking injuriously about The Way^k before the crowd, he withdrew from them^l and separated the disciples from them, giving talks daily in the school auditorium of Ty-ran'nus.

FOOTNOTES

19:9 *Or "some went on hardening themselves and not believing."

STUDY NOTES

fers to God's holy spirit, which can act as a driving force, moving and energizing a person to do things in accord with Jehovah's will. (See study note on Mr 1:12.) However, the term "spirit" may also refer to the impelling force that issues from a person's figurative heart and causes him to say and do things in a certain way. So this verse may express a combined idea of a person showing zeal and enthusiasm for what is right as he is guided by God's spirit. However, some feel that in this context, this expression is simply an idiom for great eagerness and enthusiasm. If so, this may explain how Apollos could be "aglow with the spirit" even though he was unacquainted with baptism in the name of Jesus. In either case, Apollos' spirit needed to be guided by God's spirit in order for him to show enthusiasm for

the right things and to be willing to accept teachings that were more accurate.—See  Glossary, "Spirit."

the baptism of John: This baptism was a public demonstration of the individual's repentance over his sins against the Law that Jehovah gave to Moses, a Law that the Jews had agreed to follow. (Ex 24:7, 8) Undergoing the baptism of John, however, was not valid after Pentecost 33 C.E. when the Law covenant ended. (Ro 10:4; Ga 3:13; Eph 2:13-15; Col 2:13, 14) From that time on, the only baptism approved by Jehovah was the one that Jesus instructed his disciples to carry out. (Mt 28:19, 20) The events involving Apollos, described here, happened about the year 52 C.E.

18:27 God's: Lit., "the." Although the Greek text does not have the word for "God's" here, many scholars agree that it is understood. In the book of Acts, the expression "undeserved kindness" is most often connected with "God."—Ac 11:23; 13:43; 14:26; 20:24, 32.

19:3 In John's baptism: See study note on Ac 18:25.

19:9 The Way: See study notes on Ac 9:2; 19:23 and  Glossary.

the school auditorium of Tyrannus: Or "the lecture hall of Tyrannus." No details are provided regarding the purpose for which that school was established, but Paul was apparently welcome to use the facilities, perhaps for a number of hours each day. A few ancient manuscripts add "from the fifth hour to the tenth," that is, from about 11:00 a.m. to about 4:00 p.m. The fact that this phrase is missing from several early manuscripts indicates that it is not part of the original text. However, some suggest that even if this addition is not original, the timing mentioned seems reasonable and may reflect Paul's daily schedule while he was in Ephesus. It would denote that Paul took the opportunity to teach the disciples during those hot but quiet hours when many stopped their work to rest.

10 This went on for two years, so that all those living in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

CHAP. 19

a Ac 14:3

b Mr 6:56

Ac 5:15

c Mt 10:1

d Ac 16:18

e Mt 8:28, 29

Mr 1:23, 24

Lu 4:33, 34

f Ac 16:16, 17

g De 18:10, 11

h Ac 6:7

Ac 12:24

Col 1:6

Success Despite Demonism

11 And God kept performing extraordinary powerful works through the hands of Paul,^a **12** so that even cloths and aprons that had touched his body were carried to the sick,^b and the diseases left them, and the wicked spirits came out.^c **13** But some of the Jews who traveled around casting out demons also tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had wicked spirits; they would say: “I solemnly charge you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.”^d **14** Now there were seven sons of a Jewish chief priest named Sce’va doing this. **15** But in answer the wicked spirit said to them: “I know Jesus^e and I am acquainted with Paul;^f but who are you?” **16** At that the man with the wicked spirit leaped on them, overpowered them one after the other, and prevailed against them, so that they fled naked and wounded out of that house. **17** This became known to all, both the Jews and the Greeks who lived in Eph’e-sus; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus went on being magnified. **18** And many of those who had become believers would come and confess and report their practices openly. **19** Indeed, quite a number of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them up before everybody.^g And they calculated their value and found them worth 50,000 pieces of silver. **20** Thus in a mighty way, the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing.^h

STUDY NOTES

19:10 the province of Asia: See  Glossary, “Asia.”

19:12 cloths and aprons: The cloths may have been handkerchiefs worn by Paul around the forehead to keep perspiration from running into the eyes. Aprons were worn by laborers, suggesting that Paul may have been plying his trade of tentmaking during his free hours, perhaps early in the morning.—Ac 20:34, 35.

19:19 magical arts: The Greek word for “magical arts” is *pe-ri’er-ga*, “curiosities.” One lexicon defines the word as “pert[aining] to undue or misdirected curiosity . . . as in the practice of magic.” (*A Greek-*

English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, Third Edition, 2000) It describes the arts of those who with the aid of evil spirits pry into forbidden things. Many people practiced magic and other forms of demonism in Ephesus. When Paul wrote his inspired letter to the Ephesians, he urged them to put on the complete suit of armor from God so that they could fight against wicked spirit forces.—Eph 6:11, 12.

50,000 pieces of silver: If the drachma or the denarius is meant by the term “pieces of silver,” a laborer would have had to spend 50,000 days, or about 137 years working seven days a week, to earn that amount of money.

19:20 the word of Jehovah: See study note on Ac 8:25 and  App. C3 introduction; Ac 19:20.

19:23 The Way: As shown in the study note on Ac 9:2, the expression “The Way” was used with reference to the early Christian congregation. True Christianity is not a matter of outward appearance or mere formal worship. It is a way of life permeated by the worship of God and guided by his spirit. (Joh 4:23, 24) The Syriac *Peshitta* reads: “the way of God”; the Latin *Vulgate* according to the Clementine recension reads: “the way of the Lord”; and some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁷, ¹⁸ in  App. C4) use

CHAP. 19

Riot in Ephesus

- a 1Co 16:5
 b Ac 20:22
 c Ac 23:11
 Ro 1:15
 d Ac 16:1, 2
 e 2Ti 4:20
 f 2Co 1:8
 g Ac 9:1, 2
 Ac 19:9
 Ac 22:4
 h Ac 16:16
 i Eph 1:1
 j Ac 14:15
 Ac 17:29
 1Co 8:4
 k Ac 20:4
 Col 4:10
 Phm 23, 24
 l 2Co 6:4, 5

21 After these things had taken place, Paul resolved in his spirit that after going through Mac·e·do·ni·a^a and A·cha'ia, he would travel to Jerusalem.^b He said: "After going there, I must also see Rome."^c **22** So he sent to Mac·e·do·ni·a two of those who ministered to him, Timothy^d and E·ras'tus,^e but he himself stayed on for some time in the province of Asia.

23 At that time quite a disturbance^f arose concerning The Way.^g **24** For a man named De·me'tri·us, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Ar'te·mis, brought considerable profit to the craftsmen.^h **25** He gathered them and others who worked at such things and said: "Men, you well know that from this business comes our prosperity. **26** Now you see and hear how, not only in Eph'e·susⁱ but in nearly all the province of Asia, this Paul has persuaded a considerable crowd and turned them to another opinion, saying that the gods made by hands are not really gods.^j **27** Moreover, the danger exists not only that this business of ours will come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Ar'te·mis will be viewed as nothing, and she who is worshipped in the whole province of Asia and the inhabited earth will be deprived of her magnificence." **28** Hearing this and becoming full of anger, the men began crying out: "Great is Ar'te·mis of the E·phe'sians!"

29 So the city became filled with confusion, and all together they rushed into the theater, dragging along with them Ga'lius and Ar·is·tar'chus,^k Mac·e·do·ni·ans, traveling companions of Paul.^l **30** For his part, Paul was willing to go inside to the people, but the disciples would not permit him. **31** Even some of the commissioners of festivals and games who were friendly

STUDY NOTES

the divine name here and read: "Jehovah's way."

See  Gallery, image 147, Inscription Mentioning Ephesian Silversmiths.

19:24 Artemis: Artemis of Ephesus was a fertility goddess who was worshipped in cities throughout Asia Minor. (Ac 19:27) Statues of Artemis were adorned with what have variously been identified as multiple breasts, eggs, and the testicles of sacrificed bulls. The mummylike lower half of her body was decorated with various symbols and animals. Though there

was a Greek virgin goddess of hunting known as Artemis, the Artemis of Ephesus has little in common with the Greek deity of classical mythology. The Roman name for Artemis was Diana.

19:29 See  Gallery, image 148, The Theater and Surroundings in Ephesus.

19:31 some of the commissioners of festivals and games: Lit., "some of the Asiarchs." These high-ranking officials or leading men of the Roman province of Asia were apparently chosen because of their influence and wealth. They presided over and financed the public games held in the province.

to him sent word to him, pleading with him not to risk going into the theater. **32** Some were, in fact, crying out one thing and others something else; for the assembly was in confusion and the majority of them did not know the reason why they had come together. **33** So they brought Alexander out of the crowd, the Jews shoving him forward, and Alexander motioned with his hand and wanted to make his defense to the people. **34** But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all started shouting in unison for about two hours: “Great is Ar’te-mis of the E-phe’sians!”

35 When the city recorder had finally quieted the crowd, he said: “Men of Eph’e-sus, who really is there among men who does not know that the city of the E-phe’sians is the temple keeper of the great Ar’te-mis and of the image that fell from heaven? **36** Since these things are indisputable, you should keep calm and not act rashly. **37** For you have brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess. **38** So if De-me’tri-us^a and the craftsmen with him do have a case against someone, court days are held and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges against one another. **39** But if you are searching for anything beyond that, it must* be decided in a regular assembly. **40** For we are really in danger of being charged with sedition over today’s affair, since there are no grounds we could present as a reason for this disorderly mob.” **41** And after saying this, he dismissed the assembly.

CHAP. 19

a Ac 19:24

FOOTNOTES

19:39 *Or “will.”

STUDY NOTES

19:38 proconsuls: A proconsul was the principal governor of a province administered by the Roman Senate. He had judicial and military power, and although his actions were subject to review by the Senate, he was the highest authority in the province. A province had only one proconsul, so the plural form here is apparently used in a general sense. Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia, and the proconsul resided there. —See  Glossary, “Asia.”

20:5 us: Luke’s use of the first person pronoun “us” indicates that he rejoined Paul at Philippi; the two men had parted company at Philippi some time earlier. (Ac 16:10-17, 40) They now traveled together from Philippi to Jerusalem, where Paul was later arrested. (Ac 20:5–21:18, 33) This is the second section of the book of Acts where Luke includes himself in the narrative.—See study notes on Ac 16:10; 27:1.

20:6 the days of the Unleavened Bread: See  Glossary, “Festival of Unleavened Bread.”—See  App. B15.

20:7 to have a meal: Lit., “to break bread.” Bread was the staple of the diet in the ancient Middle East; hence, this expression came to denote any kind of meal. Bread was generally formed into flat

loaves that were baked hard, so the bread was often broken rather than cut with a knife. Therefore, breaking the loaves to eat them was customary and something that Jesus often did. (See study note on Mt 14:19; see also Mt 15:36; Lu 24:30.) When Jesus instituted the Lord’s Evening Meal, he took a loaf and broke it. Since this was the normal way to divide a loaf, there is no spiritual significance to Jesus’ breaking the bread. (See study note on Mt 26:26.) Some claim that when this expression occurs in certain places in the book of Acts, it refers to the observance of the Lord’s Evening Meal. (Ac 2:42, 46; 20:7, 11) Every time the Lord’s Evening Meal is mentioned, though, breaking bread is associated with drinking wine from a cup. (Mt 26:26-28; Mr

CHAP. 20

Paul in Macedonia and Greece

- a 1Co 16:5, 6
2Co 2:12, 13
2Co 7:5-7
- b Ac 9:23
Ac 23:12, 16
Ac 25:2, 3
2Co 11:23, 26
- c Ac 19:29
Ac 27:2
- d Ac 16:1, 2
- e Eph 6:21
Col 4:7
2Ti 4:12
- f Ac 21:29
2Ti 4:20
- g Ac 16:11
- h Ex 12:15
Ex 23:15
- i 1Ki 17:21, 22
2Ki 4:32, 34
- j Mt 9:23, 24
Joh 11:39, 40
Ac 9:39, 40

20 When the uproar had subsided, Paul sent for the disciples, and after he had encouraged them and said farewell, he began his journey to Mac·e·do·ni·a.^a **2** After going through those regions and giving many words of encouragement to the ones there, he arrived in Greece. **3** He spent three months there, but because a plot was hatched against him by the Jews^b when he was about to set sail for Syria, he made up his mind to return through Mac·e·do·ni·a. **4** He was accompanied by Sop'a·ter the son of Pyr'rhus of Be·roe'a, Ar·is·tar'chus^c and Se·cun'dus of the Thes·sa·lo·ni·ans, Ga'ius of Der'be, Timothy^d and, from the province of Asia, Tych'i·cus^e and Troph'i·mus.^f **5** These men went on ahead and were waiting for us in Tro'as;^g **6** but we put out to sea from Phi·lip'pi after the days of the Unleavened Bread,^h and within five days we came to them in Tro'as, and there we spent seven days.

Eutychus Resurrected in Troas

7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to have a meal, Paul began addressing them, as he was going to depart the next day; and he prolonged his speech until midnight. **8** So there were quite a few lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. **9** Seated at the window, a young man named Eu'ty·chus sank into a deep sleep while Paul kept talking, and overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was picked up dead. **10** But Paul went downstairs, threw himself on him and embraced him,ⁱ and said: "Stop making a commotion, for he is alive."^j **11** He then went upstairs and began the meal and ate. He continued conversing for quite a while, until daybreak, and then he departed. **12** So they took the boy away alive and were comforted beyond measure.

STUDY NOTES

14:22-25; Lu 22:19, 20; 1Co 10:16-21; 11:23-26) The two actions are equally significant. So when breaking bread is mentioned without any reference to drinking from a cup, this is a reference, not to the Lord's Evening Meal, but to an ordinary meal. Moreover, there is nothing to indicate that Jesus intended the Memorial of his death to be observed more often than the festival it replaced, the Passover, which was observed just once a year.

20:10 for he is alive: Or "for his soul [that is, "his life"] is in him." In other words, the young man's life had been restored. As in many places in the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *psy·khe'* here means "life as a person."—Mt 6:25; 10:39; 16:25, 26; Lu 12:20; Joh 10:11, 15; 13:37, 38; 15:13; see  Glossary, "Soul."

20:11 began the meal: Lit., "broke the bread."—See study note on Ac 20:7.

From Troas to Miletus

13 We now went ahead to the ship and set sail for As'sos, where we were intending to take Paul aboard, for after giving instructions to this effect, he was intending to go there on foot. **14** So when he caught up with us in As'sos, we took him aboard and went to Mit-y-le'ne. **15** And sailing away from there the next day, we arrived off Chi'os, but the day after that, we touched at Sa'mos, and on the following day, we arrived at Mile'tus. **16** Paul had decided to sail past Eph'e-sus^a so as not to spend any time in the province of Asia, for he was hurrying to get to Jerusalem^b on the day of the Festival of Pentecost^c if he possibly could.

CHAP. 20

- a Ac 18:21
- b Ac 24:17
- c Le 23:16
De 16:9-11
- d Ac 19:9, 10
- e 1Co 15:9
1Th 2:6

Paul Meets With Ephesian Elders

17 However, from Mi-le'tus he sent word to Eph'e-sus and called for the elders of the congregation. **18** When they came to him, he said to them: "You well know how I conducted myself among you from the first day I stepped into the province of Asia,^d **19** slaving for the Lord with all humility^e and with tears and trials that befell me by the plots of the Jews, **20** while I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were

STUDY NOTES

20:17 elders: Lit., "older men." In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. Spiritually older, or mature, men shared the responsibility of leadership and administration in the cities of the ancient nation of Israel. Likewise, spiritually older, or mature, men served in the different Christian congregations in the first century C.E. This account about Paul meeting with the elders from Ephesus clearly shows that there was more than one elder in that congregation. The number of elders in each congregation depended on the number who qualified as spiritually mature men. (1Ti 3:1-7; Tit 1:5-8) When Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy, who likely lived in Ephesus at the time, he mentioned "the body of elders."—1Ti 1:3; 4:14.

20:19 humility: This quality involves freedom from pride or arrogance. Humility is manifested in the way a person views

himself in relation to God and others. It is not a weakness but a state of mind that is pleasing to God. Christians who are truly humble can work together in unity. (Eph 4:2; Php 2:3; Col 3:12; 1Pe 5:5) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the word *ta-pei-no-phro-sy'ne*, here translated "humility," is drawn from the words *ta-pei-no'o*, "to make low," and *phren*, "the mind." It could therefore literally be rendered "lowliness of mind." The related term *ta-pei-nos'* is rendered "lowly" (Mt 11:29) and "humble ones" (Jas 4:6; 1Pe 5:5).—See study note on Mt 11:29.

20:20 from house to house: Or "in different houses." The context shows that Paul had visited the houses of these men to teach them "about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus." (Ac 20:21) Therefore, he is not referring solely to social calls or visits to encourage fellow Christians after they became believers, since fellow believers would already have repented and exercised faith in Jesus. In his book *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Dr. A. T. Robertson comments

as follows on Ac 20:20: "It is worth noting that this greatest of preachers preached from house to house and did not make his visits merely social calls." (1930, Vol. III, pp. 349-350) In *The Acts of the Apostles With a Commentary* (1844), Abiel Abbot Livermore made this comment on Paul's words at Ac 20:20: "He was not content merely to deliver discourses in the public assembly . . . but zealously pursued his great work in private, from house to house, and literally carried *home* the truth of heaven to the hearths and hearts of the Ephesians." (p. 270)—For an explanation of rendering the Greek expression *kat'oi'kous* (lit., "according to houses"), see study note on Ac 5:42.

See  Gallery, image 129, Preaching From House to House.

CHAP. 20

a Mt 28:19, 20
2Ti 4:2

b Ac 5:42

c Mr 1:14, 15

d Lu 24:46, 47

e Ac 19:21

f Ac 9:15, 16
Ac 21:4, 11

g Ac 21:13
2Ti 4:7

h 2Co 4:1
2Co 5:18

i Eze 33:8
Ac 18:6

j Mt 28:19, 20

k 1Ti 4:16

profitable* nor from teaching you publicly^a and from house to house.^b **21** But I thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance^c toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus.^d **22** And now look! bound in the spirit, I am traveling to Jerusalem,^e although not knowing what will happen to me there, **23** except that from city to city the holy spirit repeatedly bears witness to me, saying that imprisonment and tribulations are waiting for me.^f **24** Nevertheless, I do not consider my own life of any importance to me,* if only I may finish my course^g and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus,^h to bear thorough witness to the good news of the undeserved kindness of God.

25 “And now look! I know that none of you among whom I preached the Kingdom will ever see my face again. **26** So I call you to witness this very day that I am clean from the blood of all men,ⁱ **27** for I have not held back from telling you all the counsel of God.^j **28** Pay attention to yourselves^k and to all the flock,

FOOTNOTES

20:20 *Or “for your good; for your benefit.” **20:24** *Or “of any value to me whatsoever.”

STUDY NOTES

20:22 bound in: Or “compelled by.” Paul felt both an obligation and a willingness to follow the direction of God’s spirit to go to Jerusalem.

20:24 my own life: Or “my soul.” The Greek word *psy-khe* here refers to a person’s life.—See  Glossary, “Soul,” and  App. A2.

20:25 preached: The Greek word basically means “to make proclamation as a public messenger” and stresses the *manner* of the proclamation, usually an open, public declaration rather than a sermon to a group. The theme of Christian preaching continued to be “the Kingdom of God.”—Ac 28:31.

the Kingdom: That is, God’s Kingdom. This overriding theme of the entire Bible runs through the book of Acts. (Ac 1:3; 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31) Some early translations into other languages, such as the Latin *Vulgate* and the Syriac *Peshitta*, read “the Kingdom of God.” One

translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁷ in  App. C4) uses the divine name, and the whole expression can be rendered “the Kingdom of Jehovah.”

20:26 I am clean from the blood of all men: Paul was free of bloodguilt before God because he had not failed to preach the good news of the Kingdom. He had not withheld the lifesaving information that this message contains. (Ac 18:6; compare Eze 33:6-8) Paul conveyed “all the counsel of God” to the disciples in Ephesus because he did not want anyone to lose his life in God’s day of judgment. (Ac 20:27) Other ways in which a Christian can become bloodguilty before God are by committing murder or bloodshed, which can include actively or tacitly supporting the activities of a bloodguilty organization, such as “Babylon the Great” (Re 17:6; 18:2, 4), or other organizations that have shed innocent blood (Re 16:5, 6; compare Isa 26:20, 21). Also, eating or drinking blood in any way would incur bloodguilt.—Ac 15:20.

20:27 all the counsel of God: Or “the whole purpose (will) of God.” Here referring to all that God has purposed to do by means of his Kingdom, including everything that he has decided is essential for

salvation. (Ac 20:25) The Greek word *bou·le* is rendered “counsel [or, “direction; guidance,” ftn.]” at Lu 7:30 and “purpose” at Heb 6:17.

20:28 Pay attention to: Or “Keep watch over.” The sheep in Jehovah’s **flock** are dear to him because he purchased them with the precious “blood of his own Son.” Jehovah could not have paid a higher price. Humble overseers, therefore, keep watch over the welfare of each member of the flock, bearing in mind how much Jehovah loves his sheep.—1Pe 5:1-3.

among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers,^a to shepherd the congregation of God,^b which he purchased with the blood of his own Son.^c **29** I know that after my going away oppressive wolves will enter in among you^d and will not treat the flock with tenderness, **30** and from among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves.^e

31 “Therefore keep awake, and bear in mind that for three years,^f night and day, I never stopped admonishing each one of you with tears. **32** And now I entrust you to God and to the word of his undeserved kindness, which word can build you up and give you the inheritance among all the sanctified ones.^g

33 I have desired no man’s silver or gold or clothing.^h **34** You yourselves know that these hands have provided for my own needsⁱ and the needs of those with me. **35** I have shown you in all things that by working hard in this way,^j you must assist those who are weak and must keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, when he himself said: ‘There is more happiness in giving^k than there is in receiving.’”

36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. **37** Indeed, quite a bit of weeping broke out among them all, and they embraced Paul and affectionate-

CHAP. 20

- a 1Ti 3:1-7
Tit 1:5-9
Heb 13:17
- b Pr 27:23
Joh 21:15
Eph 4:11
1Pe 5:2-4
- c Mt 26:27, 28
1Jo 1:7
- d Mt 7:15
2Th 2:3
2Pe 2:1
- e 1Ti 4:1
2Ti 4:3, 4
1Jo 2:18, 19
- f Ac 19:9, 10
- g Eph 1:18
Col 1:12
- h 1Sa 12:1, 3
Mt 10:8
1Co 9:11, 12
2Co 7:2
Tit 1:7
- i Ac 18:3
1Co 4:11, 12
1Th 2:9
- j Eph 4:28
1Th 4:11, 12
2Th 3:7, 8
- k Pr 19:17
Mt 10:8
Lu 6:38

 STUDY NOTES

20:28 overseers: The Greek word for overseer, *e-pi'sko-pos*, is related to the verb *e-pi-sko-pe'ō*, meaning “carefully watch” (Heb 12:15), and to the noun *e-pi-sko-pe'*, meaning “inspection” (Lu 19:44, *Kingdom Interlinear*; 1Pe 2:12), “to be an overseer” (1Ti 3:1), or “office of oversight” (Ac 1:20). Therefore, the overseer was one who visited, inspected, and directed members of the congregation. Protective supervision is a basic idea inherent in the Greek term. Overseers in the Christian congregation have the responsibility to care for spiritual concerns of their fellow believers. Paul here used the term “overseers” when speaking to the “elders” from the congregation in Ephesus. (Ac 20:17) And in his letter to Titus, he uses the term “overseer” when describing the qualifications for “elders” in the Christian congregation. (Tit 1:5, 7) The terms, therefore, refer to the same position, *pre-sby'te-ros* indicating the ma-

ture qualities of the one so appointed and *e-pi'sko-pos* indicating the duties inherent in the appointment. This account about Paul meeting with the elders from Ephesus clearly shows that there were several overseers in that congregation. There was no set number of overseers for any one congregation, but the number serving depended on the number of those qualifying as “elders,” or spiritually mature men, in that congregation. Likewise, in writing to the Philippian Christians, Paul referred to the “overseers” there (Php 1:1), indicating that they served as a body, overseeing the affairs of that congregation.—See study note on Ac 1:20.

God: Some ancient manuscripts read “the Lord” here, but the main text reading “God” has strong manuscript support and is viewed by many scholars as the original reading.

with the blood of his own Son: Lit., “through the blood of the own (one).” Grammatically, the Greek expression

could be translated “with the blood of his own” or “with his own blood,” so the context has to be taken into consideration. In Greek, the expression *ho i'di-os* (“his own”) could stand alone without a clarifying noun or pronoun, as seen by how it is rendered at Joh 1:11 (“his own home”); at Joh 13:1 (“his own”); at Ac 4:23 (“their own people”); and at Ac 24:23 (“his people”). In non-Biblical Greek papyri, the phrase is used as a term of endearment to refer to close relatives. A reader of this verse would logically understand from the context that a noun in the singular number is implied after the expression “his own” and that the noun referred to God’s only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed. Based on this, quite a number of scholars and translators acknowledge that the word “son” is to be understood here and render the phrase “with the blood of his own Son.”

20:29 See  Gallery, image 34, Wolf.

CHAP. 20

a Ac 20:25

CHAP. 21

b Ac 21:10-12

ly kissed him, **38** for they were especially pained at the word he had spoken that they would not see his face anymore.^a Then they accompanied him to the ship.

En Route to Jerusalem

21 After tearing ourselves away from them and putting out to sea, we ran with a straight course and came to Cos, on the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Pat'a-ra. **2** When we found a ship that was crossing to Phoe-ni'cia, we went aboard and sailed away. **3** After coming in sight of the island of Cyprus, we left it behind on the left side and sailed on to Syria and landed at Tyre, where the ship was to unload its cargo. **4** We searched for and found the disciples and remained there for seven days. But through the spirit they repeatedly told Paul not to set foot in Jerusalem.^b **5** So when our time there was over, we left and started on our way, but they all, together with the women and children, accompanied us until we were outside the city. And kneeling down on the beach, we prayed **6** and said good-bye to one another. Then we went aboard the ship, and they returned to their homes.

7 We then completed the voyage from Tyre and arrived at Ptol-e-ma'is, and we greeted the brothers and stayed one day

STUDY NOTES

20:32 God: A few manuscripts read “the Lord” here, but the majority of manuscripts read “God.”

20:35 the words of the Lord Jesus: The statement following these words is quoted by the apostle Paul only, although the sense of those words is found in the Gospels and in the rest of the inspired Scriptures. (Ps 41:1; Pr 11:25; 19:17; Mt 10:8; Lu 6:38) Paul may have been told this quote orally, either by someone who heard Jesus say it or by the resurrected Jesus himself or in a divine revelation.—Ac 22:6-15; 1Co 15:6, 8.

20:37 embraced Paul: Lit., “fell upon Paul’s neck.” In the Scriptures, to embrace someone along with kissing and tears was a sign of great affection, something that these elders certainly felt for Paul.—See also Ge 33:4; 45:14, 15; 46:29; Lu 15:20.

affectionately kissed him: Or “tenderly kissed him.” Paul’s genuine love for his

brothers had endeared him to them. In Bible times, such friendship was often expressed with a kiss. (Ge 27:26; 2Sa 19:39) At times, kissing was accompanied by a warm embrace along with tears. (Ge 33:4; 45:14, 15; Lu 15:20) The Greek term rendered “affectionately kissed” has been understood to be an intensive form of the verb *phi-le’o*, sometimes rendered “to kiss” (Mt 26:48; Mr 14:44; Lu 22:47) but more often meaning “to have affection for” (Joh 5:20; 11:3; 16:27).—Compare study note on Mt 26:49.

21:3 left side: Or “port side.” Apparently, the ship was passing the SW end of **the island of Cyprus** as it sailed eastward toward Tyre. On his first missionary journey about nine years earlier, Paul, along with Barnabas and John Mark, had encountered on Cyprus the sorcerer Elymas, who opposed their preaching. (Ac 13:4-12) Seeing Cyprus again and reflecting on what had occurred there may have encouraged Paul and strengthened him for what lay ahead.

with them. **8** The next day we left and came to Caes-a-re'a, and we entered the house of Philip the evangelizer,^a who was one of the seven men,^b and we stayed with him. **9** This man had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.^c **10** But after we had stayed there for quite a number of days, a prophet named Ag'a-bus^d came down from Ju-de'a. **11** And he came to us and took Paul's belt and tied his own feet and hands and said: "Thus says the holy spirit, 'The man to whom this belt belongs will be bound like this by the Jews in Jerusalem,^e and they will give him into the hands of people of the nations.'"^f **12** Now when we heard this, both we and those who were there began begging him not to go up to Jerusalem. **13** Then Paul answered: "What are you doing by weeping and trying to weaken my resolve? Rest assured, I am ready not only to be bound but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."^g **14** When he would not be dissuaded, we stopped objecting* and said: "Let the will of Jehovah take place."

CHAP. 21

- a Ac 8:40
- b Ac 6:3, 5
- c Joe 2:28
Ac 2:17
1Co 11:5
- d Ac 11:27, 28
- e Ac 20:22, 23
Ac 21:33
- f Ac 9:15, 16
- g Ac 20:24
2Co 4:10, 11
2Ti 4:6
- h Ac 12:17
Ac 15:13
Ga 1:19
Ga 2:9
Jas 1:1

Arrival in Jerusalem

15 Now after these days we prepared for the journey and started on our way to Jerusalem. **16** Some of the disciples from Caes-a-re'a also went with us, taking us to Mna'son of Cyprus, an early disciple at whose home we were to be guests. **17** When we got to Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us gladly. **18** But on the following day Paul went in with us to James,^h and all the elders were present.* **19** And he greeted them and began giving a detailed account of the things God did among the nations through his ministry.

FOOTNOTES

21:14 *Or "we let the matter rest." Lit., "we became silent." **21:18** *Or "came there."

STUDY NOTES

21:8 evangelizer: The basic meaning of the Greek term *eu-ag-ge-li-stes*, rendered "evangelizer," is "a proclaimer of good news." (See study note on Mt 4:23.) While all Christians are commissioned to proclaim the good news (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20; Ac 5:42; 8:4; Ro 10:9, 10), the context of the three scriptures where this Greek term occurs shows that "evangelizer" can be used in a special sense (Ac 21:8; Eph

4:11; ftn.; 2Ti 4:5; ftn.). For example, when it is used of a person opening up new fields where the good news had never been preached, the Greek term could also be rendered "missionary." After Pentecost, **Philip** pioneered the work in the city of Samaria with great success. He was also directed by an angel to preach the good news about Christ to the Ethiopian eunuch, whom he baptized. Then Philip was led away by the spirit to preach in Ashdod and all the cities on the way to Caesarea. (Ac 8:5, 12, 14, 26-40) Some 20 years later, when the events recorded at Ac 21:8 occurred, Philip is still referred to as "the evangelizer."

See  Gallery, map 7, Activities of Philip the Evangelizer.

21:9 unmarried daughters: Lit., "daughters, virgins." In the Bible, the Greek term *par-the'nos*, often rendered "virgin," refers to "one who has never engaged in sexual intercourse" and can apply both to single men and to single women. (Mt 25:1-12; Lu 1:27; 1Co 7:25, 36-38) In this context, the Greek term emphasizes the idea that Philip's four daughters had never been married.

prophesied: The prophet Joel foretold that both men and women would prophesy. (Joe 2:28, 29) The original-language words rendered "to prophesy" have the

CHAP. 21

Paul Follows the Elders' Counsel

- a Ac 15:1
 b Ac 6:14
 Ro 2:28, 29
 1Co 7:18-20

20 After hearing this, they began to glorify God, but they said to him: “You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and they are all zealous for the Law.^a **21** But they have heard it rumored about you that you have been teaching all the Jews among the nations an apostasy from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or to follow the customary practices.^b **22** What, then, is to be done about it? They are certainly going to hear that you have arrived. **23** So do what we tell you: We have four men who have put themselves under a vow. **24** Take these men with you and cleanse yourself ceremonially together with them and take care of their expenses, so that they may have their heads shaved. Then everyone will know that there is nothing to the rumors

 STUDY NOTES

basic meaning of making known messages from a divine source; they do not necessarily include the thought of foretelling the future. (See study note on Ac 2:17.) While all in the Christian congregation may speak about the fulfillment of the prophecies recorded in God’s Word, the “prophesying” mentioned at 1Co 12:4, 10 was among the miraculous gifts of the spirit granted to some of those in the newly formed Christian congregation. Some who had the miraculous gift of prophesying were able to foretell future events, as did Agabus. (Ac 11:27, 28) The women who were chosen by Jehovah to receive this gift no doubt demonstrated their deep respect for him by remaining subject to the headship of the male members of the congregation.—1Co 11:3-5.

21:13 trying to weaken my resolve:

Or “making me weak at heart.” The Greek verb used here literally means “to crush together; to break to pieces.” It is here used figuratively with the Greek word for “heart.”

21:14 the will of Jehovah: The Greek term for “will” (*the’le-ma*), as used in the Christian Greek Scriptures, is most often connected with God’s will. (Mt 7:21; 12:50; Mr 3:35; Ro 12:2; 1Co 1:1; Heb 10:36; 1Pe 2:15; 4:2; 1Jo 2:17) In the *Septuagint*, the Greek term *the’le-ma* is often used to translate Hebrew expressions for God’s

will, or delight, and can be found in passages where the divine name occurs. (Ps 40:8, 9 [39:9, 10, LXX]; 103:21 [102:21, LXX]; 143:9-11 [142:9-11, LXX]; Isa 44:24, 28; Jer 9:24 [9:23, LXX]; Mal 1:10) Jesus expressed a similar thought when he, according to Mt 26:42, prayed to his Father: “Let your will take place.”—See  App. C3 introduction; Ac 21:14.

21:18 James: Likely referring to Jesus’ half brother and the James mentioned at Ac 12:17; 15:13.—See study notes on Mt 13:55; Ac 12:17; 15:13.

and all the elders: See study notes on Ac 15:2; 16:4. None of the apostles are mentioned in connection with this meeting that took place in 56 C.E. The Bible does not explain why. However, regarding that time leading up to Jerusalem’s destruction, the historian Eusebius (born about 260 C.E.) said: “The remaining apostles, in constant danger from murderous plots, were driven out of Judea. But to teach their message they travelled into every land in the power of Christ.” (*Eusebius*, Book III, V, v. 2) Although Eusebius’ words are not part of the inspired record, they do harmonize with what the Bible says. For example, by 62 C.E., Peter was in Babylon—far from Jerusalem. (1Pe 5:13) However, **James** the brother of Jesus was still in Jerusalem, likely presiding at this meeting when “all the elders were present” with Paul.

21:20 thousands: Lit., “myriads; tens of thousands.” The Greek word literally refers to a group of 10,000, a myriad, but it can also be used of a very large, unspecified number.

21:21 an apostasy: The Greek noun *a-po-sta-si’a*, used here, comes from the verb *a-phi’ste-mi*, which literally means “to stand away from” and can be rendered, depending on the context, “to withdraw; to renounce.” (Ac 19:9; 2Ti 2:19) The noun has the sense of “desertion; abandonment; rebellion.” It appears twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures, here and at 2Th 2:3. In classical Greek, the noun was used to refer to political defection, and the verb is apparently employed in this sense at Ac 5:37 concerning Judas the Galilean, who “drew [a form of *a-phi’ste-mi*] followers after himself.” The *Septuagint* uses the verb at Ge 14:4 with reference to such a political rebellion, and the noun *a-po-sta-si’a* is used at Jos 22:22; 2Ch 29:19; and Jer 2:19 to translate Hebrew expressions for “rebellion” and “unfaithfulness.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the noun *a-po-sta-si’a* is used primarily with regard to religious defection, a withdrawal from or abandonment of the true worship and service of God, an abandonment of what one has previously professed, a total desertion of principles or faith.

they were told about you, but that you are walking orderly and you are also keeping the Law.^a **25** As for the believers from among the nations, we have sent them our decision in writing that they should keep away from what is sacrificed to idols^b as well as from blood,^c from what is strangled,^d and from sexual immorality.”^e

26 Then Paul took the men the next day and cleansed himself ceremonially along with them,^f and he went into the temple to give notice of when the days for the ceremonial cleansing would be completed and the offering should be presented for each one of them.

Riot in the Temple; Paul Arrested

27 Now when the seven days were about to end, the Jews from Asia, on seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd, and they seized him, **28** shouting: “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches everyone everywhere against our people and our Law and this place. And what is more, he even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.”^g **29** For they had previously seen Troph’i-mus^h the E-phe’sian in the city with him, and they assumed that Paul had brought him into the temple. **30** The whole city was in an uproar, and the people came running together and seized Paul and dragged him outside the temple, and immediately the doors were closed. **31** While they were trying to kill him, word reached the commander of the army unit that all Jerusalem was in confusion; **32** and he immediately took soldiers and army officers and ran down to them. When they caught sight of the military commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

CHAP. 21

a 1Co 9:20

b Ge 35:2
Ex 34:15

c Ge 9:4
Le 3:17
Le 17:10
1Sa 14:32, 33

d Le 17:13
De 12:23, 24

e Ac 15:28, 29
1Co 6:9
Col 3:5
1Th 4:3
1Pe 4:3

f 1Co 9:20

g Ac 24:5, 6

h Ac 20:4
2Ti 4:20

STUDY NOTES

21:25 what is strangled: See study note on Ac 15:20.

sexual immorality: See study note on Ac 15:20.

21:31 the commander: The Greek term *khi-li’ar-khos* (chiliarch) literally means “ruler of a thousand,” that is, soldiers. It refers to a Roman military commander called a tribune. (See study note on Joh 18:12.) In about 56 C.E., Claudius Lysias was the military commander of the Jerusalem garrison. (Ac 23:22, 26) As

recounted in Acts chapters 21 through 24, he was the one who rescued Paul both from the street mob and from the rioting Sanhedrin and who wrote a letter of explanation to Governor Felix when Paul was secretly taken to Caesarea.

21:32 army officers: Or “centurions.” A centurion was in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army.

21:34 the soldiers’ quarters: That is, a barracks for Roman troops, located in the Tower, or Fortress, of Antonia in Jerusalem. This fortress was situated at the

NW corner of the temple court, overlooking the whole temple area. It apparently occupied the site where Nehemiah earlier had constructed “the Fortress of the House,” mentioned at Ne 2:8. Herod the Great did extensive and costly repair work on it and increased its fortifications. Herod named it Antonia in honor of the Roman military commander Mark Antony. Prior to Herod’s time, the fortress primarily served to guard against incursions from the N. Later, it mainly served as a point of control over the Jews and as a means of policing activities in the temple

CHAP. 21

- a Ac 20:22, 23
Ac 21:10, 11
b Php 3:4, 5
c Ac 22:3
d Ac 22:2
Ac 26:14

CHAP. 22

- e Php 1:7
f Ro 11:1
g Ac 21:39
h Ac 5:34
i Ac 26:4, 5

33 Then the military commander came near and took him into custody and ordered that he be bound with two chains;^a then he inquired who he was and what he had done. **34** But some in the crowd began shouting out one thing, and others something else. So being unable himself to learn anything for certain because of the disturbance, he commanded him to be brought to the soldiers' quarters. **35** But when he reached the stairs, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd, **36** for a crowd of the people kept following, crying out: "Do away with him!"*

Paul Allowed to Address the Crowd

37 As he was about to be led into the soldiers' quarters, Paul said to the military commander: "Am I allowed to say something to you?" He said: "Can you speak Greek? **38** Are you not, then, the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a sedition and led the 4,000 dagger men out into the wilderness?" **39** Then Paul said: "I am, in fact, a Jew,^b of Tarsus^c in Ci-li'cia, a citizen of no obscure city. So I beg you, permit me to speak to the people." **40** After he gave permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned with his hand to the people. When a great silence fell, he addressed them in the Hebrew language,^d saying:

Paul's Defense Before the Crowd

22 "Men, brothers and fathers, hear my defense to you now."^e **2** Well, when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew language, they kept all the more silent, and he said: **3** "I am a Jew,^f born in Tarsus of Ci-li'cia,^g but educated in this city at the feet of Ga-ma'li-el,^h instructed according to the strictness of the ancestral Law,ⁱ and zealous for God

FOOTNOTES

21:36 * Or "Get rid of him!; Kill him!"

STUDY NOTES

area. It was connected with that location by means of a passageway. (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, XV, 424 [xi, 7]) The Roman garrison could thus gain quick access to the area around the temple, which is likely what happened when soldiers rescued Paul from a mob.—Ac 21:31, 32; see  App. B11 for the location of the Fortress of Antonia.

21:39 See  Gallery, image 132, Roman Road in Tarsus.

21:40; 22:2 in the Hebrew language:
See study note on Joh 5:2.

22:3 **Gamaliel:** A Law teacher mentioned twice in Acts, here and at Ac 5:34.—See study note on Ac 5:34.

just as all of you are this day.^a **4** I persecuted this Way to the point of death, binding and handing over to prisons both men and women,^b **5** as the high priest and all the assembly of elders can bear witness. From them I also obtained letters to the brothers in Damascus, and I was on my way to bring those who were there in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.

6 “But as I was traveling and getting near to Damascus, about midday, suddenly out of heaven a great light flashed all around me,^c **7** and I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me: ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ **8** I answered: ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said to me: ‘I am Jesus the Naz-a-rene’, whom you are persecuting.’ **9** Now the men who were with me did see the light, but they did not hear the voice of the one speaking to me.^d **10** At that I said: ‘What should* I do, Lord?’ The Lord said to me: ‘Rise, go into Damascus, and there you will be told about everything it is appointed for you to do.’^e **11** But since I could not see anything because of the glory of that light, I arrived in Damascus led by the hand of those who were with me.

12 “Then a man named An-a-ni’as,^f a devout man according to the Law, well-reported-on by all the Jews living there, **13** came to me. He stood by me and said to me: ‘Saul, brother, regain your sight!’ And that very moment I looked up and saw him.^g **14** He said: ‘The God of our forefathers has chosen you to come to know his will and to see the righteous one^h and to hear the voice of his mouth, **15** because you are to be a witness for him

CHAP. 22

- a Ga 1:14
Php 3:4-6
- b Ac 8:3
Ac 9:1, 2
Ac 26:9-11
1Ti 1:12, 13
- c Ac 9:3-8
Ac 26:13-15
- d Ac 9:7
- e Ac 26:16
- f Ac 9:10
- g Ac 9:17, 18
- h 1Co 9:1
1Co 15:8
Ga 1:15, 16

FOOTNOTES

22:10 *Or “must.”

STUDY NOTES

22:5 assembly of elders: Or “council (body) of elders.” The Greek word *pre-sby-te-ri-on* used here is related to the term *pre-sby-te-ros* (lit., “older man”), which in the Bible refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. Although the term sometimes refers to physical age (as at Lu 15:25 and Ac 2:17), it is not limited to those who are elderly. The expression “assembly of elders” here apparently refers to the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court in Jerusalem, which was made up of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. These three groups are of-

ten mentioned together.—Mt 16:21; 27:41; Mr 8:31; 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1; Lu 9:22; 20:1; see study note on Lu 22:66.

See  Gallery, image 131, Saul and Damascus.

22:8 the Nazarene: See study note on Mr 10:47.

22:9 they did not hear the voice: Or “they did not understand the voice.” At Ac 9:3-9, Luke describes Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus. These two accounts taken together give the full picture of what happened. As explained in the study note on Ac 9:7, the men accompanying Paul heard “the sound of a voice” but apparently did not understand the words spoken. Thus, they did not hear the voice the way Paul did. This is in agreement with how the Greek word for “hear”

is used at Ac 22:7, where Paul explains that he “heard a voice,” that is, he heard *and* understood the words. By contrast, those traveling with Paul did not understand the *message* being conveyed to Paul, perhaps because the voice was muffled or distorted in some way. It is apparently in this sense that “they did not hear the voice.”—Compare Mr 4:33; 1Co 14:2, where the same Greek word for “hear” could be rendered “to listen” or “to understand.”

22:13 regain your sight!: Lit., “look up!” The Greek word basically means “to direct one’s vision upward” (Mt 14:19; Lu 19:5), but it can also refer to gaining sight for the first time (Joh 9:11, 15, 18) or to having one’s sight restored (Mr 10:52; Lu 18:42; Ac 9:12).

CHAP. 22

a Ac 23:11
Ac 26:16

b 1Co 6:11
1Jo 1:7
Re 1:5

c Ac 10:43

d Ac 9:26
Ga 1:18

e Ac 9:28, 29

f Ac 8:3

g Ac 7:58
Ac 8:1
1Ti 1:13, 15

h Ac 9:15
Ac 13:2
Ro 1:5
Ro 11:13
Ga 2:7
1Ti 2:7

i 2Sa 16:13

to all men of the things you have seen and heard.^a **16** And now why are you delaying? Rise, get baptized, and wash your sins^b away by your calling on his name.^c

17 “But when I had returned to Jerusalem^d and was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance **18** and saw him saying to me: ‘Hurry up and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your witness concerning me.’^e **19** And I said: ‘Lord, they themselves well know that I used to imprison and flog in one synagogue after another those believing in you;^f **20** and when the blood of Stephen your witness was being spilled, I was standing by and approving and guarding the outer garments of those doing away with him.’^g **21** And yet he said to me: ‘Go, because I will send you out to nations far away.’”^h

Paul Takes Advantage of His Roman Citizenship; Sanhedrin Assembled

22 Now they kept listening to him down to this word. Then they raised their voices, saying: “Take such a man away from the earth, for he is not fit to live!” **23** Because they were crying out, throwing their outer garments about, and tossing dust into the air,ⁱ **24** the military commander ordered Paul to be brought into the soldiers’ quarters and said that he should be interrogated under scourging, so that he could learn exactly

STUDY NOTES

22:16 wash your sins away by your calling on his name: A person will have his sins washed away, not by the baptismal water itself, but by calling on the name of Jesus. Doing this involves putting faith in Jesus and demonstrating that faith by Christian works.—Ac 10:43; Jas 2:14, 18; see study note on Ro 10:13.

22:17 I fell into a trance: For a discussion of the Greek term *ek’sta-sis*, here rendered “a trance,” see study note on Ac 10:10. Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁴, 17, 22 in  App. C4) read: “Jehovah’s hand was upon me.” Another translation (referred to as J¹⁸) reads: “Jehovah’s spirit clothed me.”

22:20 your witness: The Greek term for “witness,” *mar’tys*, refers to one who observes a deed or an event. From first-hand knowledge, some first-century Christians could bear witness to, or con-

firm, historical facts about Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. (Ac 1:21, 22; 10:40, 41) Those who later put faith in Jesus could bear witness by proclaiming the significance of his life, death, and resurrection. (Ac 22:15) Speaking to Jesus, Paul used the word in this sense when he called **Stephen** “your witness.” Before the Sanhedrin, Stephen had given a powerful testimony about Jesus. Stephen was also the first to bear witness that he had seen, in a special vision, Jesus returned to heaven and standing at the right hand of God, as prophesied at Ps 110:1. (Ac 7:55, 56) Christian witnessing often meant facing opposition, arrest, beatings, and even death, as in the case of Stephen, James, and others. Accordingly, the Greek term *mar’tys* later came to signify “one who witnesses at the cost of his life, martyr,” that is, one who suffers death rather than renounce his faith. In this sense, Stephen became the first Christian martyr, whose **blood . . . was being spilled** because of

the testimony he gave about Christ.—See study note on Ac 1:8.

22:24 military commander: The Greek term *khi-li’ar-khos* (chiliarch) literally means “ruler of a thousand,” that is, soldiers. It refers to a Roman military commander called a tribune. (See study note on Joh 18:12.) In about 56 C.E., Claudius Lysias was the military commander of the Jerusalem garrison. (Ac 23:22, 26) As recounted in Acts chapters 21–24, he was the one who rescued Paul both from the street mob and from the rioting Sanhedrin and who wrote a letter of explanation to Governor Felix when Paul was secretly taken to Caesarea.

why they were shouting against Paul this way. **25** But when they had stretched him out for the whipping, Paul said to the army officer standing there: “Is it lawful for you to scourge a Roman who has not been condemned?”^a **26** Well, when the army officer heard this, he went to the military commander and reported it, saying: “What are you intending to do? For this man is a Roman.” **27** So the military commander approached and said to him: “Tell me, are you a Roman?” He said: “Yes.” **28** The military commander responded: “I purchased these rights as a citizen for a large sum of money.” Paul said: “But I have them by birth.”^b

29 Immediately, therefore, the men who were about to interrogate him under torture backed away from him; and the military commander became afraid when he realized that he was a Roman and that he had bound him in chains.^c

30 So the next day, because he wanted to know for sure just why he was being accused by the Jews, he released him and commanded the chief priests and all the San/he-drin to assemble. He then brought Paul down and had him stand among them.^d

CHAP. 22

- a Ac 16:37, 38
Ac 23:27
- b Ac 16:37
- c Ac 25:16
- d Mt 10:17, 18
Lu 21:12

FOOTNOTES

22:25 *Or “who has not had a trial?”

STUDY NOTES

22:25 the army officer: Or “the centurion.” A centurion was in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army.

a Roman: That is, a Roman citizen. This is the second of three recorded instances in which Paul made use of his rights as a Roman citizen. Roman authorities usually interfered little in Jewish affairs. However, the Romans got involved in Paul’s case not only because a riot erupted when he visited the temple but also because he was a Roman citizen. Citizenship afforded a person certain privileges that were recognized and honored throughout the empire. It was illegal, for example, to bind or beat an uncondemned Roman, since such treatment was considered fit for slaves only.—For the other two occasions, see study notes on Ac 16:37; 25:11.

22:28 purchased these rights as a citizen: Or “purchased this citizenship.” As this account shows, under certain cir-

cumstances, it was possible to obtain Roman citizenship for a sum of money. Paul told Claudius Lysias that he (Paul) had the rights as a citizen **by birth**, which indicates that one of Paul’s male ancestors must have acquired citizenship. There were other ways to acquire Roman citizenship. An individual or even the entire free population of a city or district could receive a form of it as an award from the emperor. A slave could gain it after he bought his freedom from or was set free by a Roman citizen. A veteran of the auxiliary forces who was discharged from the Roman army would be granted it. And a person could also inherit citizenship. It is unlikely that there were many Roman citizens who lived in Judea in the first century C.E. Only in the third century C.E. were all provincial subjects given Roman citizenship.

22:30 See  Gallery, image 91, The Sanhedrin.

23:1 I have behaved: Or “I have lived my life.” The form of the Greek verb *po-li-teu’o-mai* used here could be rendered “to behave as a citizen.” (*Kingdom*

Interlinear) Paul indicates that he has behaved in a proper way as a good citizen who followed the laws of his country. Roman citizens generally took an active part in the affairs of the State because Roman citizenship was highly prized and it carried with it responsibilities and privileges. (Ac 22:25-30) When Paul on this occasion described how he had “behaved **before God**,” it may have carried the implication that he was primarily a citizen of God’s Kingdom.—Php 3:20; compare the use of the same verb form at Php 1:27; ftn.

23:6 I am a Pharisee: Some of those in the audience knew Paul. (Ac 22:5) They would have understood that by calling himself **a son of Pharisees**, he was acknowledging his common heritage with them. They understood that Paul was not misrepresenting himself, since the Pharisees of the Sanhedrin knew that he had become a zealous Christian. But in this context, Paul’s statement about being a Pharisee could be understood in a relative sense; Paul was identifying himself with the Pharisees rather than the Sadducees

CHAP. 23

- a Ac 24:15, 16
2Co 1:12
2Ti 1:3
Heb 13:18
1Pe 3:16
- b Joh 18:22
- c Ex 22:28
- d Ac 26:4, 5
Php 3:4, 5
- e Ac 4:1, 2
- f Ac 22:6, 7
Ac 22:17, 18

Paul Speaks Before the Sanhedrin; Strengthened by the Lord

23 Looking intently at the San’he-drin, Paul said: “Men, brothers, I have behaved before God with a perfectly clear conscience^a down to this day.” **2** At this the high priest An-a-ni’as ordered those standing by him to strike him on the mouth.^b **3** Then Paul said to him: “God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall. Do you sit to judge me according to the Law and at the same time violate the Law by commanding me to be struck?” **4** Those standing by said: “Are you insulting the high priest of God?” **5** And Paul said: “Brothers, I did not know he was high priest. For it is written, ‘You must not speak injuriously of a ruler of your people.’”^c

6 Now Paul, knowing that the one part was made up of Sadducees but the other of Pharisees, cried out in the San’he-drin: “Men, brothers, I am a Pharisee,^d a son of Pharisees. Over the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am being judged.” **7** Because he said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was split. **8** For the Sadducees say that there is neither resurrection nor angel nor spirit, but the Pharisees accept* them all.^e **9** So a great uproar broke out, and some of the scribes of the party of the Pharisees rose and began arguing fiercely, saying: “We find nothing wrong in this man, but if a spirit or an angel spoke to him^f—.” **10** Now when the dissension grew great, the military commander feared that Paul would be torn apart by them, and he commanded the soldiers to go down and snatch him from their midst and bring him into the soldiers’ quarters.

FOOTNOTES

23:8 *Or “publicly declare.”

STUDY NOTES

because he shared the Pharisees’ belief in the resurrection. In so doing, he established a common ground with the Pharisees who were present. He apparently hoped that raising this controversial issue would cause some members of the Sanhedrin to sympathize with his argument, and the strategy worked. (Ac 23:7-9) Paul’s statement here at Ac 23:6 also harmonizes with how he described himself when he later defended himself

before King Agrippa. (Ac 26:5) And when writing from Rome to fellow Christians in Philippi, Paul again made reference to his heritage as a Pharisee. (Php 3:5) It is also worth noting how other Christians who were former Pharisees are described at Ac 15:5.—See study note on Ac 15:5.

11 But the following night the Lord stood by him and said: “Take courage!^a For just as you have been giving a thorough witness about me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness in Rome.”^b

CHAP. 23

a Ac 18:9
 b Ac 19:21
 Ac 27:23, 24
 Ac 28:23,
 30, 31
 c Ac 9:23
 d Ac 23:15

Conspiracy to Kill Paul

12 When it became day, the Jews formed a conspiracy^c and bound themselves with a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. **13** There were more than 40 men who formed this oath-bound conspiracy. **14** These men went to the chief priests and the elders and said: “We have solemnly bound ourselves with a curse not to eat anything at all until we have killed Paul. **15** So now you together with the San’he-drin should inform the military commander that he should bring him down to you as though you want to examine his case more thoroughly. But before he gets near, we will be ready to do away with him.”

16 However, the son of Paul’s sister heard of the ambush they were planning, and he entered the soldiers’ quarters and reported it to Paul. **17** Paul then called one of the army officers to him and said: “Take this young man to the military commander, for he has something to report to him.” **18** So he brought him and led him to the military commander and said: “The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you because he has something to tell you.” **19** The military commander took him by the hand and withdrew privately and asked him: “What do you have to report to me?” **20** He said: “The Jews have agreed to request you to bring Paul down to the San’he-drin tomorrow, as though they intend to learn more details about his case.^d **21** But do not let them persuade you, for more than 40 of their men are waiting to ambush him, and they have bound themselves with a curse neither to eat nor to

STUDY NOTES

23:12 bound themselves with a curse:

Or “bound themselves with an oath.” The Greek word *a-na-the-ma-ti’zo* is apparently used to refer to the declaring of an oath that if not carried out or if proved false would result in a curse against the one who took the oath.

23:14 the elders: Here referring to the leaders of the Jewish nation who are often

mentioned together with chief priests and scribes.—See study note on Mt 16:21.

bound ourselves with a curse: Or “bound ourselves with an oath.”—See study note on Ac 23:12.

23:21 bound themselves with a curse:

Or “bound themselves with an oath.”
 —See study note on Ac 23:12.

23:23 the third hour of the night: That is, about 9:00 p.m., counting from sunset.

The Christian Greek Scriptures usually refer to “watch” periods when counting time, following the Greek and Roman custom. (Mt 14:25; Mr 6:48; Lu 12:38) This is the only mention of a specific “hour” of the 12 hours that make up the nighttime. —Compare Ac 16:25, 33; see study note on Mr 13:35.

See  Gallery, image 126, Roman Spears.

23:26 Claudius Lysias to His Excellency, Governor Felix: Greetings! This was a

CHAP. 23

a Ac 23:12

b Ac 24:27

c Ac 21:31-33

d Ac 16:37

Ac 22:25

e Ac 22:30

f Ac 25:19

g Ac 25:25

Ac 26:31, 32

h Ac 23:16

i Ac 23:23, 24

j Ac 21:39

Ac 22:3

k Ac 24:1

drink until they have killed him;^a and they are now ready, waiting for the promise from you.” **22** So the military commander let the young man go, after ordering him: “Do not tell anyone that you have informed me of this.”

Paul Transferred to Caesarea

23 And he summoned two of the army officers and said: “Get 200 soldiers ready to march clear to Caes-a-re’a, also 70 horsemen and 200 spearmen, at the third hour of the night. **24** Also, provide horses for Paul to ride, to take him safely to Felix the governor.”^b **25** And he wrote a letter with this content:

26 “Claudius Lys’i-as to His Excellency, Governor Felix: Greetings! **27** This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them, but I came quickly with my soldiers and rescued him,^c because I learned that he is a Roman.^d **28** And wanting to find out the cause for which they were accusing him, I brought him down into their San’he-drin.^e **29** I found him to be accused about questions of their Law,^f but not charged with a single thing deserving of death or prison bonds.^g **30** But because a plot against the man has been made known to me,^h I am at once sending him to you and ordering the accusers to speak against him before you.”

31 So these soldiers took Paulⁱ according to their orders and brought him by night to An-tip’a-tris. **32** The next day they permitted the horsemen to go on with him, but they returned to the soldiers’ quarters. **33** The horsemen entered Caes-a-re’a and delivered the letter to the governor and also presented Paul to him. **34** So he read it and asked what province he was from and learned that he was from Ci-li’cia.^j **35** “I will give you a thorough hearing,” he said, “when your accusers arrive.”^k And he commanded that he be kept under guard in Herod’s palace.

STUDY NOTES

common introduction used in ancient letters. First the writer was mentioned, then the person was addressed, and third the common greeting was given using the Greek word *khai’ro*, which literally means “to rejoice.” It expressed the thought: “May things be well with you.” It commonly appears in non-Biblical papyrus letters. In this context, the Greek word can appropriately be rendered “Greetings!” A similar introduction to a letter can be found at Ac

15:23 and Jas 1:1.—See study note on Ac 15:23.

23:27 a Roman: That is, a Roman citizen.—See study notes on Ac 16:37; 22:25.

23:35 palace: Or “praetorium.” In the Gospels and Acts, the Greek word *prai-to’ri-on* (from Latin) is used with regard to a palace or a residence. The tent of an army commander had been known as the praetorium, so in time the term was applied to the residence of a provincial governor. Here the term refers to a palace

located in Caesarea and built by Herod the Great. At this time, about 56 C.E., it served as the residence of the Roman governor.—See study note on Mt 27:27.

Accusations Against Paul; Defense Before Felix

CHAP. 24

24 Five days later the high priest An·a·ni'as^a came down with some elders and a public speaker named Ter·tul'lus, and they presented their case against Paul to the governor.^b **2** When he was called, Ter·tul'lus started accusing him, saying:

“Seeing that we enjoy great peace through you and that through your forethought reforms are taking place in this nation, **3** at all times and also in all places we acknowledge this, Your Excellency Felix, with the greatest thankfulness. **4** But that I may not detain you any further, I beg you to hear us briefly in your kindness. **5** For we have found this man to be a pest,^c stirring up seditions^d among all the Jews throughout the inhabited earth, and he is a spearhead* of the sect of the Nazarenes'.^e **6** He also tried to profane the temple, so we seized him.^f **7** — **8** When you examine him yourself, you will find out about all these things of which we are accusing him.”

9 With that the Jews also joined in the attack, asserting that these things were true. **10** When the governor nodded to Paul to speak, he answered:

“Knowing well that this nation has had you as judge for many years, I readily speak in my own defense.^g **11** As you can verify for yourself, it has not been more than 12 days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem;^h **12** and they found me neither arguing with anyone in the temple nor stirring up a mob, either in

- a Ac 23:2
- b Ac 23:26
- c Mt 5:11
Ac 16:20, 21
Ac 17:6, 7
- d Lu 23:1, 2
- e Mt 2:23
Ac 28:22
- f Ac 21:27, 28
- g Php 1:7
- h Ac 21:17, 26

FOOTNOTES

24:5 * Or “chief leader.”

STUDY NOTES

24:1 elders: Here referring to leaders of the Jewish nation who are often mentioned together with chief priests and scribes.—See study note on Mt 16:21.

a public speaker: Or “a lawyer; an attorney.” The Greek word *rhetor* originally had the meaning “public speaker; orator” but also came to refer to “a speaker in court; an advocate; an attorney.” **Tertullus** presented the Jews’ case against Paul before Governor Felix in Caesarea.

24:5 a pest: Or “a troublemaker.” Lit., “a pestilence.” The only other occurrence of this Greek word in the Christian Greek

Scriptures is at Lu 21:11, where it is used about literal pestilences, or widespread diseases. Here at Ac 24:5, it is used figuratively about a person perceived to be “a pest,” one who causes problems, a troublemaker or public menace.

the inhabited earth: See study note on Lu 2:1.

sect: The Greek word here rendered “sect,” *hai're-sis* (from which the English word “heresy” is derived), apparently had the original meaning “a choice.” That is how the word is used at Le 22:18 in the *Septuagint*, which speaks about Israelites offering gifts “according to all their choice.” As used in the Christian Greek Scriptures, this term refers to a group of people holding to distinctive views or doctrines. It is used to describe

the two prominent branches of Judaism—the Pharisees and the Sadducees. (Ac 5:17; 15:5; 26:5) Non-Christians called Christianity “a sect” or “the sect of the Nazarenes,” possibly viewing it as a breakaway group from Judaism. (Ac 24:5, 14; 28:22) The Greek word *hai're-sis* was also applied to groups that developed within the Christian congregation. Jesus emphasized and prayed that unity would prevail among his followers (Joh 17:21), and the apostles sought to preserve the oneness of the Christian congregation (1Co 1:10; Jude 17-19). If the members of the congregation separated into groups or factions, this would disrupt the unity. Therefore, in describing such groups, the Greek word *hai're-sis* came to be used in the negative sense of a faction or a divisive group, a sect. Disunity in belief could

CHAP. 24

- a Ex 3:15
Ac 3:13
2Ti 1:3
- b Ac 26:22, 23
Ac 28:23
Ro 3:21
- c Isa 26:19
Mt 22:31, 32
Lu 14:13, 14
Joh 5:28, 29
Joh 11:25
Heb 11:35
Re 20:12
- d Lu 23:43
- e Ac 23:1
1Co 4:4
Heb 13:18
- f Ro 15:26
1Co 16:1
2Co 8:4
- g Ac 21:24, 26
- h Ac 21:27
- i Ac 25:16
- j Ac 23:6

the synagogues or throughout the city. **13** Nor can they prove to you the things they are accusing me of right now. **14** But I do admit this to you, that according to the way that they call a sect, in this manner I am rendering sacred service to the God of my forefathers,^a as I believe all the things set forth in the Law and written in the Prophets.^b **15** And I have hope toward God, which hope these men also look forward to, that there is going to be a resurrection^c of both the righteous and the unrighteous.^d **16** Because of this I always strive to maintain a clear* conscience before God and men.^e **17** Now after quite a number of years, I arrived to bring gifts of mercy^f to my nation and to make offerings. **18** While I was caring for these matters, they found me ceremonially cleansed in the temple,^g but not with a crowd or causing a disturbance. But there were some Jews from the province of Asia^h **19** who ought to be present before you to accuse me if they actually have anything against me.ⁱ **20** Or let the men here say for themselves what wrong they found as I stood before the San'he·drin, **21** except for this one thing that I cried out while standing among them: 'Over the resurrection of the dead I am today being judged before you!'"^j

FOOTNOTES

24:16 * Or "blameless."

STUDY NOTES

give rise to fierce disputing, dissension, and even enmity. (Compare Ac 23:7-10.) So sects were to be avoided and were considered a manifestation of "the works of the flesh."—Ga 5:19-21; 1Co 11:19; 2Pe 2:1.

the Nazarenes: See study note on Mr 10:47.

24:7 A few later Greek manuscripts and some ancient translations into other languages, with slight variations in wording, add the following as parts of verses 6-8: "and wanted to judge according to our Law. (7) But Lysias the military commander came up and with great force took him out of our hands, (8) commanding his accusers to come to you." However, these words do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and are apparently not part of the original text of Acts.—See  App. A3.

24:14 I am rendering sacred service

to: Or "I am worshipping." The Greek verb *la-treu'o* basically denotes serving but may be rendered "to worship" in some contexts. In Scriptural usage, the Greek word *la-treu'o* generally refers to serving God or to service connected with worship of him (Mt 4:10; Lu 1:74; 2:37; 4:8; Ro 1:9; Php 3:3; 2Ti 1:3; Heb 9:14; 12:28; Re 7:15; 22:3), including service at the sanctuary or temple (Heb 8:5; 9:9; 10:2; 13:10). In a few cases, it refers to false worship—rendering service to, or worshipping, created things.—Ac 7:42; Ro 1:25.

24:15 resurrection: The Greek word *a-na'sta-sis* literally means "raising up; standing up." It is used about 40 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures with reference to the resurrection of the dead. (Some examples are found at Mt 22:31; Ac 2:31; 4:2; 17:18, 32; 23:6; 1Co 15:12, 13.) In the *Septuagint* at Isa 26:19, the verb form of *a-na'sta-sis* is used to render the Hebrew verb "to live" in the expression "your dead *will live*."—See

 Glossary.

24:20 See  Gallery, image 91, The Sanhedrin.

Paul's Case Put on Hold for Two Years

22 However, Felix, knowing quite well the facts concerning this Way,^a began to put them off and say: “Whenever Lys’i-as the military commander comes down, I will decide these matters involving you.” **23** And he gave orders to the army officer that the man be kept under arrest but given some freedom, and that his people be allowed to attend to his needs.

24 Some days later Felix came with Dru-sil’la his wife, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and listened to him speak about the belief in Christ Jesus.^b **25** But as Paul talked about righteousness and self-control and the judgment to come,^c Felix became frightened and answered: “Go away for now, but when I have an opportunity I will send for you again.” **26** At the same time he was hoping that Paul would give him money. For that reason, he sent for him even more frequently and conversed with him. **27** But when two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and because Felix desired to gain favor with the Jews,^d he left Paul in custody.

Paul's Trial Before Festus

25 Therefore Festus,^e after arriving in the province and taking charge, went up three days later to Jerusalem from Caes-a-re’a. **2** And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews gave him information against Paul.^f So they began to beg Festus **3** as a favor* to send for Paul to come to Jerusalem. But they were planning to ambush Paul and kill him along the road.^g **4** However, Festus answered that Paul was to be kept in Caes-a-re’a and that he himself was about to go back there shortly. **5** “So let those who are in power among you,” he

CHAP. 24

- a Ac 9:1, 2
Ac 19:9
- b Mt 10:18
- c Ac 17:30, 31
2Co 5:10
- d Ac 25:9

CHAP. 25

- e Ac 24:27
- f Ac 24:1
- g Ac 23:20, 21

FOOTNOTES

25:3 *Lit., “asking a favor against him.”

STUDY NOTES

24:23 the army officer: Or “the centurion.” A centurion was in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army.

24:24 Drusilla: The third and youngest daughter of the Herod mentioned at Ac 12:1, that is, Herod Agrippa I. She was born about 38 C.E. and was a sister of Agrippa II and Bernice. (See study note on Ac 25:13 and  Glossary, “Herod.”) Governor **Felix** was her second husband. She was first married to Syrian King Azi-

zus of Emesa but divorced him and married Felix about the year 54 C.E., or when she was about 16 years old. It is possible that she was present when Paul spoke before Felix “about righteousness and self-control and the judgment to come.” (Ac 24:25) When Felix turned the governorship over to Festus, he left Paul in custody “to gain favor with the Jews,” which some think was done to please his youthful wife, **who was Jewish.**—Ac 24:27.

25:1 the province: That is, the Roman province of Judea, with Caesarea serving as the governor’s residence. The Greek expression rendered **arriving in . . . and**

taking charge is understood to refer to Festus’ taking up his office as governor in the province.

25:8 Caesar: Or “the Emperor.” The Roman emperor at this time was Nero. His rule began in 54 C.E. and ended in 68 C.E. when he committed suicide at about the age of 31. All references to Caesar in Acts chapters 25 through 28 apply to Nero.—See study notes on Mt 22:17; Ac 17:7 and  Glossary.

CHAP. 25

a Ac 25:16

b Mt 5:11
Lu 23:1, 2
Ac 24:5, 6

c Ac 24:11, 12

d Ac 24:27

e Ac 23:26, 29

f Ac 28:17-19

said, “come down with me and accuse him if, indeed, the man has done something wrong.”^a

6 So when he had spent not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caes-a-re’a, and the next day he sat down on the judgment seat and commanded Paul to be brought in. **7** When he came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing against him many serious charges that they were unable to prove.^b

8 But Paul said in defense: “Neither against the Law of the Jews nor against the temple nor against Caesar have I committed any sin.”^c **9** Festus, desiring to gain favor with the Jews,^d said in reply to Paul: “Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be judged before me there concerning these things?” **10** But Paul said: “I am standing before the judgment seat of Caesar, where I ought to be judged. I have done no wrong to the Jews, of which you are also becoming well-aware. **11** If I am really a wrongdoer and have committed anything deserving of death,^e I do not beg off from dying; but if there is no substance to the accusations these men have made against me, no man has the right to hand me over to them as a favor. I appeal to Caesar!”^f **12** Then Festus, after speaking with the assembly of counselors, replied: “To Caesar you have appealed; to Caesar you will go.”

Festus Consults With King Agrippa; Paul Brought Before Agrippa

13 After some days had passed, A-grip’pa the king and Bernice arrived in Caes-a-re’a for a courtesy visit to Festus. **14** Since they were spending a number of days there, Festus presented Paul’s case to the king, saying:

STUDY NOTES

25:11 I appeal to Caesar!: In the Bible record, this is the third time that Paul made use of his rights as a Roman citizen. (For the other two occasions, see study notes on Ac 16:37; 22:25.) Such an appeal to Caesar could be made either after the pronouncement of judgment or at any earlier point in the trial. Festus gave evidence of not wanting to decide the matter himself, and a trial in Jerusalem held virtually no hope of justice. So Paul made this formal petition to be judged by the highest court of the empire. It appears that in some cases the appeal could be denied, for example, in the case

of a thief, a pirate, or a seditionist caught in the act. Likely for this reason, Festus conferred with “the assembly of counselors” before admitting the appeal. (Ac 25:12) The subsequent hearing with the visiting Herod Agrippa II was held in order that Festus might have clearer information to submit when transmitting Paul’s case to “the August One,” Nero. (Ac 25:12-27; 26:32; 28:19) Paul’s appeal also served the purpose of taking him to Rome, fulfilling an intention expressed earlier. (Ac 19:21) Jesus’ prophetic promise to Paul as well as the angelic message that he later received shows divine direction in the matter.—Ac 23:11; 27:23, 24.

See  Gallery, image 149, Caesar Nero.

25:13 Agrippa: That is, Herod Agrippa II. He was the great-grandson of Herod the Great and the son of Herod Agrippa I and his wife Cypros.—Ac 12:1; see  Glossary, “Herod.”

Bernice: The sister of Herod Agrippa II but living incestuously with him. She later became the mistress of Titus before he became Roman emperor.

“There is a man who was left as a prisoner by Felix,^a **15** and when I was in Jerusalem the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought information about him,^b asking for a judgment of condemnation against him. **16** But I replied to them that it is not Roman procedure to hand any man over as a favor before the accused man meets his accusers face-to-face and gets a chance to speak in his defense concerning the complaint.^c **17** So when they arrived here, I did not delay, but the next day I sat down on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in. **18** Taking the stand, the accusers did not charge him with any of the wicked things I had expected concerning him.^d **19** They simply had certain disputes with him concerning their own worship of the deity^{*e} and concerning a man named Jesus, who was dead but who Paul kept asserting was alive.^f **20** Being at a loss as to how to handle this dispute, I asked if he would like to go to Jerusalem and be judged there concerning these matters.^g **21** But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody for the decision by the August One,^h I commanded him to be held until I should send him on to Caesar.”

22 A-grip’pa then said to Festus: “I would like to hear the man myself.”ⁱ “Tomorrow,” he said, “you will hear him.” **23** So the next day A-grip’pa and Bernice came with much pompous show and entered the audience chamber together with military commanders as well as the prominent men in the city; and when Festus gave the command, Paul was brought in. **24** And Festus said: “King A-grip’pa and all you who are present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish populace have petitioned me both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer.^j **25** But I perceived that he had done nothing deserving of death.^k So when this man himself appealed to the August One, I decided to send him. **26** But I have nothing certain to write about him to my Lord. So I brought

CHAP. 25

- a Ac 24:27
- b Ac 25:2, 3
- c Ac 25:5
- d Ac 25:7
- e Ac 18:14, 15
Ac 23:26, 29
- f Ac 22:6-8
- g Ac 25:9
- h Ac 25:11, 12
- i Ac 9:15
- j Ac 22:22
- k Ac 23:26, 29

FOOTNOTES

25:19 *Or “their own religion.”

STUDY NOTES

25:15 elders: Here referring to leaders of the Jewish nation who are often mentioned together with chief priests and scribes.—See study note on Mt 16:21.

25:21 the August One: A title for the Roman emperor. The Greek word *Se-ba-stos*’ means “worthy of reverence; revered; august” and is a translation of the Latin title *Augustus*. Some translations use such expressions as “His Majesty the Emperor” or “His Imperial Majesty.” In this case, it is the title of Caesar Nero (54-68 C.E.), the fourth in succession from Octavian (Octavius), who first held this title.—See study note on Lu 2:1.

26:5 sect of our form of worship: Or “sect of our religion.”—See study note on Ac 24:5.

26:7 rendering him sacred service: The Greek verb *la-treu’o* basically denotes serving. As used in the Scriptures, it usually refers to rendering service to God or in connection with the worship of him (Mt 4:10; Lu 2:37; 4:8; Ac 7:7; Ro 1:9; Php 3:3; 2Ti 1:3; Heb 9:14; 12:28; Re 7:15; 22:3), including service at the sanc-

CHAP. 26

- a Ac 25:13
 b Ac 24:5, 9
 c Ga 1:13, 14
 d Ac 22:3
 e Ac 23:6
 Php 3:4, 5
 f Ac 24:15
 g Ac 24:20, 21
 h Joh 16:2
 Ac 8:3
 1Co 15:9
 Ga 1:13, 23
 1Ti 1:13
 i Ac 9:1, 2, 14

him before all of you, and especially before you, King A-grip'-pa, so that after the judicial examination has taken place, I might have something to write. **27** For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner and not also to indicate the charges against him."

Paul's Defense Before Agrippa

26 A-grip'pa^a said to Paul: "You are permitted to speak in your own behalf." Then Paul stretched out his hand and proceeded to say in his defense:

2 "Concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews,^b King A-grip'pa, I consider myself happy that it is before you I am to make my defense this day, **3** especially because you are an expert on all the customs as well as the controversies among the Jews. Therefore, I beg you to hear me patiently.

4 "Indeed, the manner of life I led from youth up among my people* and in Jerusalem is well-known by all the Jews^c **5** who were previously acquainted with me, if they would be willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our form of worship,^d I lived as a Pharisee.^e **6** But now for the hope of the promise that was made by God to our forefathers,^f I stand on trial; **7** this is the same promise our 12 tribes are hoping to see fulfilled by intensely rendering him sacred service night and day. Concerning this hope I am accused by Jews,^g O King.

8 "Why is it considered* unbelievable among you that God raises up the dead? **9** I, for one, was convinced that I should commit many acts of opposition against the name of Jesus the Naz'a-rene'. **10** This is exactly what I did in Jerusalem, and I locked up many of the holy ones in prisons,^h for I had received authority from the chief priests;ⁱ and when they were to be executed, I cast my vote against them. **11** By punishing them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to recant; and

FOOTNOTES

26:4 *Or "my nation." **26:8** *Lit., "judged."

STUDY NOTES

tuary or temple (Heb 8:5; 9:9; 10:2; 13:10). Thus, in some contexts the expression can also be rendered "to worship." In a few cases, it is used in connection with false worship—rendering service to, or

worshipping, created things. (Ac 7:42; Ro 1:25) Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J14-17 in  App. C4) read "serving (worshipping) Jehovah."

26:9 **the Nazarene:** See study note on Mr 10:47.

26:10 **cast my vote:** Lit., "cast down a pebble," that is, a pebble used in voting. The Greek word *pse'phos* refers to a small stone and is rendered "pebble" at Re 2:17.

Pebbles were used in courts of justice in rendering judgment or voicing an opinion of either innocence or guilt. White pebbles were used for pronouncing innocence, acquittal; black ones for pronouncing guilt, condemnation.

since I was extremely furious with them, I went so far as to persecute them even in outlying cities.

Paul Describes His Conversion

12 “While doing this as I was traveling to Damascus with authority and a commission from the chief priests, **13** I saw at midday on the road, O King, a light beyond the brilliance of the sun flash from heaven around me and around those traveling with me.^a **14** And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice say to me in the Hebrew language: ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? To keep kicking against the goads makes it hard for you.’ **15** But I said: ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord said: ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. **16** But rise and stand on your feet. This is why I have appeared to you, to choose you as a servant and a witness both of things you have seen and things I will make you see respecting me.^b **17** And I will rescue you from this people and from the nations, to whom I am sending you^c **18** to open their eyes,^d to turn them from darkness^e to light^f and from the authority of Satan^g to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins^h and an inheritance among those sanctified by their faith in me.’

19 “Therefore, King A-grip’pa, I did not become disobedient to the heavenly vision, **20** but to those in Damascusⁱ first and then to those in Jerusalem,^j and over all the country of Ju-de’a, and also to the nations, I was bringing the message that they should repent and turn to God by doing works that befit repentance.^k **21** This is why the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.^l **22** However, because I have experienced the help that is from God, I continue to this day bearing witness to both small and great, saying nothing except what the Prophets as well as Moses stated was going to take place^m— **23** that the Christ was to sufferⁿ and that as the first to be resurrect-

CHAP. 26

- a Ac 9:3-5
Ac 22:6-8
- b Ac 22:14, 15
Ga 1:11, 12
1Ti 1:12
- c Ac 22:21
Ro 11:13
- d Isa 61:1
- e Col 1:13
- f Isa 42:7
Joh 8:12
2Co 4:6
- g Joh 12:31
Joh 14:30
Joh 16:11
Eph 2:1, 2
- h 1Jo 3:5
- i Ac 9:22
- j Ac 9:28
- k Mt 3:8
- l Ac 21:30, 31
- m Lu 24:27, 44
Ac 24:14
Ro 3:21
- n Ps 22:7
Ps 35:19
Isa 50:6
Isa 53:5

STUDY NOTES

26:14 in the Hebrew language: See study note on Joh 5:2.

kicking against the goads: A goad is a pointed rod used to urge on an animal. (Jg 3:31) The expression “to kick against the goads” is a proverb found in Greek literature. It is based on the image of a stubborn bull that resists the prodding of the goad by kicking against it, resulting in injury to the animal. Saul behaved in a

similar manner before becoming a Christian. By fighting against Jesus’ followers, who had the backing of Jehovah God, Paul risked causing serious injury to himself. (Compare Ac 5:38, 39; 1Ti 1:13, 14.) At Ec 12:11, “oxgoads” are mentioned in a figurative sense, referring to a wise person’s words that move a listener to follow counsel.

26:20 **repent:** The Greek word used here could literally be rendered “to change

one’s mind,” signifying a change in thinking, attitude, or purpose. In this context, the admonition to “repent” is connected with the expression **and turn to God** and is therefore referring to a person’s relationship with God. For a person to be genuinely repentant, he must do **works that befit repentance**. In other words, his actions would give evidence that a real change of mind or attitude had taken place.—See study notes on Mt 3:2, 8; Lu 3:8 and  Glossary, “Repentance.”

CHAP. 26

a Ps 16:10

b Ps 18:49
Isa 11:10
Lu 2:30–32

c Joh 18:20

d Ac 23:26, 29
Ac 25:24, 25

e Ac 25:11, 12

CHAP. 27

f Ac 25:12

g Ac 19:29
Ac 20:4
Col 4:10

ed* from the dead,^a he was going to proclaim light both to this people and to the nations.”^b

Festus' and Agrippa's Responses

24 Now as Paul was saying these things in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice: “You are going out of your mind, Paul! Great learning is driving you out of your mind!” **25** But Paul said: “I am not going out of my mind, Your Excellency Festus, but I am speaking words of truth and of a sound mind. **26** For a fact, the king to whom I am speaking so freely well knows about these things; I am convinced that not one of these things escapes his notice, for none of this has been done in a corner.^c **27** Do you, King A-grip'pa, believe the Prophets? I know that you believe.” **28** But A-grip'pa said to Paul: “In a short time you would persuade me to become a Christian.” **29** At this Paul said: “I wish to God that whether in a short time or in a long time, not only you but also all those who hear me today would become men such as I am, with the exception of these prison bonds.”

30 Then the king rose and so did the governor and Bernice and the men seated with them. **31** But as they were leaving, they began saying to one another: “This man is doing nothing deserving of death or prison bonds.”^d **32** A-grip'pa then said to Festus: “This man could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar.”^e

Paul Sails for Rome

27 Now as it was decided for us to sail away to Italy,^f they handed Paul and some other prisoners over to an army officer named Julius, of the unit of Au-gus'tus. **2** Going aboard a ship from Ad-ra-myt'ti-um that was about to sail to ports along the coast of the province of Asia, we set sail; Ar-is-tar'chus,^g a

FOOTNOTES

26:23 * Lit., “first out of resurrection.”

STUDY NOTES

26:28 **a Christian:** See study note on Ac 11:26.

26:32 **Caesar:** Or “the Emperor.” The Roman emperor at this time was Nero, who ruled from 54 to 68 C.E. when he committed suicide at about the age of 31. All references to Caesar in Acts chapters 25

through 28 apply to Nero.—See study notes on Mt 22:17; Ac 17:7 and  Glossary.

27:1 **us:** As mentioned in the study notes on Ac 16:10 and 20:5, the book of Acts contains sections where Luke, the writer of the book, uses first person pronouns such as “we,” “us,” and “our” (Ac 27:20) when describing what happened. This indicates that Luke accompanied Paul for portions of some of his many journeys. The section of Acts that starts here and

continues to Ac 28:16 includes such references, showing that Luke traveled with Paul to Rome.

an army officer: Or “a centurion.” A centurion was in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army.

See  Gallery, map 11, Acts of Apostles—Paul's Trip to Rome and His First Imprisonment There (Ac 27:1–28:31) c. 58–59 C.E.

Mac-e-do'ni-an from Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, was with us. **3** The next day we landed at Si'don, and Julius treated Paul with kindness and permitted him to go to his friends and enjoy their care.

CHAP. 27
a Le 16:29, 30
Le 23:27

4 And putting out to sea from there, we sailed under the shelter of Cy'prus, because the winds were against us. **5** Then we navigated through the open sea along Ci-li'cia and Pam-phyl'i-a and put into port at My'ra in Ly'ci-a. **6** There the army officer found a ship from Alexandria that was sailing for Italy, and he made us board it. **7** Then after sailing on slowly quite a number of days, we came to Cni'dus with difficulty. Because the wind did not let us make headway, we sailed under the shelter of Crete off Sal-mo'ne. **8** And sailing with difficulty along the coast, we came to a place called Fair Havens, which was near the city of La-se'a.

9 A considerable time had passed and by now it was hazardous to navigate, because even the fast of Atonement Day^a was already over, so Paul made a recommendation **10** to them: "Men, I can see that this voyage is going to result in damage and great loss not only of the cargo and the ship but also of our lives." **11** However, the army officer listened to the pilot and the shipowner rather than to what Paul was saying. **12** Since the harbor was unsuitable for wintering, the majority advised setting sail from there to see if they could somehow make it to spend the winter in Phoenix, a harbor of Crete that opens toward the northeast and toward the southeast.

STUDY NOTES

27:3 with kindness: Or "with human kindness (affection)." The Greek word *phi-lan-thro'pos* and the related word *phi-lan-thro-pi'a* denote showing an affectionate concern for and interest in humans. After spending one day at sea and traveling about 110 km (70 mi) N, the ship docked at Sidon, on the Syrian coast. Apparently, the army officer Julius did not treat Paul as an ordinary criminal, possibly because Paul was a Roman citizen who had not been proved guilty.—Ac 22:27, 28; 26:31, 32.

27:5 See  Gallery, image 150, First-Century Merchant Ship.

27:6 a ship: A grain ship. (Ac 27:37, 38) In those days, Egypt was the chief granary for Rome. Egyptian grain ships docked at Myra, a major city situated near the

coast of SW Asia Minor. The army officer Julius located such a ship and had the soldiers and prisoners board. This vessel must have been much larger than the ship that carried them on the first part of the journey. (Ac 27:1-3) It carried a valuable cargo of wheat as well as 276 people—the crew, the soldiers, the prisoners, and likely others heading to Rome. Myra was due N of **Alexandria** and may therefore have been on the regular route of ships from that Egyptian city. Or it may be that contrary winds (Ac 27:4, 7) forced the Alexandrian vessel to change its course and drop anchor at Myra.—See  App. B13.

27:9 the fast of Atonement Day: Or "the autumn fast." Lit., "the fast." The Greek term for "the fast" refers to the only fast commanded under the Mosaic Law, that is, the fast in connection with the yearly Atonement Day, also called Yom Kippur

(Hebrew, *yohm hak-kip-pu-rim'*, "day of the coverings"). (Le 16:29-31; 23:26-32; Nu 29:7; see  Glossary, "Day of Atonement.") The expression "to afflict oneself," used in connection with the Atonement Day, is generally understood to mean to engage in various forms of self-denial, including fasting. (Le 16:29, fn.) The use of the term "the fast" at Ac 27:9 supports the idea that a primary form of self-denial practiced on Atonement Day involved fasting. The Atonement Day fast fell in late September or early October.

27:10 lives: Or "souls." The Greek word *psy-khe'* used here refers to a person or the life that a person has.—See  Glossary, "Soul," and  App. A2.

27:13 See  Gallery, image 151, An Anchor of Wood and Metal.

CHAP. 27

Storm Strikes the Ship

- a Jon 1:5
 b Ac 27:9, 10
 c Ac 5:18, 19
 Heb 1:7, 14

13 When the south wind blew softly, they thought they had achieved their purpose, and they lifted anchor and began sailing along Crete close to the shore. **14** After a short time, however, a violent wind called Eu-ro-aq'ui-lo rushed down on it. **15** As the ship was violently seized and was not able to keep its head against the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. **16** Then we ran under the shelter of a small island called Cau'da, and yet we were hardly able to get the skiff at the stern of the ship under control. **17** But after hoisting it aboard, they used supports to undergird the ship, and fearing that they would run aground on the Syr'tis, they lowered the gear and so were driven along. **18** Because we were being violently tossed by the storm, they began to lighten the ship^a the following day. **19** And on the third day, they threw away the tackling of the ship with their own hands.

20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and a violent storm was battering us, all hope of our being saved finally began to fade. **21** After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up in their midst and said: "Men, you certainly should have taken my advice and not have put out to sea from Crete and as a result suffered this damage and loss.^b **22** Still, I now urge you to take courage, for not one of you will be lost, only the ship will. **23** This night an angel^c of the God to whom I belong and to whom I render sacred service stood by me **24** and said: 'Have no fear, Paul. You must stand before

STUDY NOTES

27:14 Euroaquilo: Greek, *Eu-ra-ky'lon*; Latin, *euroaquilo*. That is, a NE wind known to Maltese mariners as the gregale. It is the most violent wind on the Mediterranean. It would be extremely dangerous to a ship with large sails, which could easily capsize during such a storm.

27:16 the skiff: The Greek word *ska'phe* refers to a small auxiliary boat that was pulled behind a ship or kept aboard a larger ship. It could be used to get to shore when the ship was anchored near a coast, to unload cargo, or to pull the ship in order to turn it. In an emergency, it could also be used as a lifeboat. To prevent the skiff from being swamped or crushed during storms, it was hauled up out of the water and secured to the ship.

27:17 the Syrtis: The Greek name *Syr'tis* comes from a root meaning "to drag." Syrtis was the name of two gulfs located within the large indentation on the coast of northern Africa (on the coast of modern-day Libya). The western gulf (between Tunis and Tripoli) was called Syrtis Minor (now the Gulf of Gabès). Just to the E was Syrtis Major, the modern-day Gulf of Sidra. Ancient sailors dreaded both gulfs because of the treacherous sandbanks that were constantly being shifted by the tides. Strabo, a first-century C.E. Greek geographer, said regarding vessels that got caught in the shoals: "The safe escape of a boat is rare." (*Geography*, 17, III, 20) Josephus (*Jewish Wars* 2.16.4 [2.381]) says that the name Syrtis alone caused terror in those who heard it.—See  App. B13.

27:20 a violent storm: Lit., "no small storm." The Greek expression refers to a severe storm. In Paul's day, sailors navigated by using the **sun** or the **stars** as reference points, so cloudy weather would make navigation very difficult for them.

27:22 for not one of you will be lost: Or "for there will be no loss of life among you; not a single life (soul) will be lost." The Greek word *psy-khe'* used in this phrase refers to a person or the life that a person has.—See  Glossary, "Soul," and  App. A2.

27:23 to whom I render sacred service: Or "whom I serve (worship)."—See study note on Ac 26:7.

Caesar,^a and look! God has granted to you all those sailing with you.’ **25** So take courage, men, for I believe God that it will be exactly as I was told. **26** However, we must be cast ashore on some island.”^b

27 Now when the 14th night fell and we were being tossed about on the Sea of A’dri-a, at midnight the sailors began to suspect that they were getting near to some land. **28** They sounded the depth and found it 20 fathoms, so they proceeded a short distance and again made a sounding and found it 15 fathoms. **29** And fearing that we might run aground on the rocks, they cast out four anchors from the stern and began wishing for it to become day. **30** But when the sailors began trying to escape from the ship and were lowering the skiff into the sea under the pretense of intending to let down anchors from the bow, **31** Paul said to the army officer and the soldiers: “Unless these men remain in the ship, you cannot be saved.”^c **32** Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off.

33 Now close to daybreak, Paul encouraged them all to take some food, saying: “Today is the 14th day you have been waiting anxiously, and you have gone without taking any food at all. **34** So I encourage you to eat some food; this is in the interests of your safety, for not a hair of the head of any one of you will perish.” **35** After he said this, he took bread, gave thanks to God before them all, broke it, and started eating. **36** So they all took courage and began taking some food themselves. **37** In all we were 276 persons in the ship. **38** When they had eaten enough food to be satisfied, they lightened the ship by throwing the wheat overboard into the sea.”^d

CHAP. 27

^a Ac 23:11
Ac 25:11, 12

^b Ac 28:1

^c Ac 27:22

^d Jon 1:5

STUDY NOTES

27:27 the Sea of Adria: In Paul’s day, this term applied to an area larger than the present Adriatic Sea. Greek geographer Strabo said that this name was derived from the city of Atria, located at the mouth of the Po River on what is now called the Gulf of Venice. (*Geography*, 5, 1, 8) The present Italian city of Adria lies somewhat away from the coast. It appears that the name Adria came to apply to the waters in the vicinity of the ancient city and was progressively extended to include all the present Adriatic Sea, the Ionian Sea, and those waters of the Medi-

terranean E of Sicily (and Malta) and W of Crete.—See  App. B13.

27:28 20 fathoms: About 36 m (120 ft). A fathom is a unit for measuring the depth of water. The fathom is commonly viewed as being four cubits (c. 1.8 m; 6 ft) and approximately corresponds to the distance between the fingertips of a man’s two hands when his arms are stretched in opposite directions. Appropriately, the Greek word for “fathom” (*or-gui-a*) comes from a word meaning “to stretch out; to reach.”—See  App. B14.

15 fathoms: About 27 m (90 ft).—See study note on **20 fathoms** in this verse and  App. B14.

See  Gallery, image 152, Sounding Weights.

27:37 276: Although a few manuscripts give different numbers regarding how many people were on board, the number 276 has strong manuscript support and is accepted by most scholars. Ships of the period could carry that many passengers. Josephus recounts that a ship with about 600 people on board experienced shipwreck on its way to Rome.

persons: Or “souls.” The Greek word *psy-khe*, traditionally rendered “soul,” here refers to a living person.—See  Glossary, “Soul,” and  App. A2.

CHAP. 27

- a Ac 28:1
 b Ac 27:22
 2Co 11:25
 c Ac 27:23, 24

Shipwreck

39 When daylight came, they could not recognize the land,^a but they saw a bay with a beach and were determined to beach the ship there if they could. **40** So they cut away the anchors and let them fall into the sea, at the same time loosening the lashings of the rudder oars; and after hoisting the foresail to the wind, they made for the beach. **41** When they struck a shoal washed on each side by the sea, they ran the ship aground and the bow got stuck and stayed immovable, but the stern began to be violently broken to pieces by the waves.^b **42** At this the soldiers decided to kill the prisoners so that no one might swim away and escape. **43** But the army officer was determined to bring Paul safely through and prevented them from carrying out their plan. He commanded those able to swim to jump into the sea and make it to land first, **44** and the rest were to follow, some on planks and some on pieces of the ship. So all were brought safely to land.^c

CHAP. 28

- d Ac 27:26

Ashore on Malta; Paul Survives a Snakebite

28 After we made it to safety, we learned that the island was called Malta.^d **2** And the foreign-speaking people showed us extraordinary kindness. They kindled a fire and received all of us kindly because of the rain that was falling

STUDY NOTES

28:1 Malta: The Greek text uses the term *Me-li'te*, which for centuries has been identified with the modern-day island of Malta. The ship on which Paul traveled was forced southward by strong winds, from Cnidus on the SW tip of Asia Minor to below Crete. (Ac 27:7, 12, 13, 21) At Ac 27:27, the record says that the ship was “being tossed about on the Sea of Adria,” which in Paul’s day applied to an area larger than the present-day Adriatic Sea. It included the Ionian Sea and waters E of Sicily and W of Crete, thus encompassing the sea near modern-day Malta. (See study note on Ac 27:27.) In view of the prevailing winds of the storm called Euroaquilo (Ac 27:14), it is likely that the ship was driven W and shipwrecked on the island of Malta, S of Sicily. Over the years, some scholars have suggested other islands as the Biblical *Me-li'te*. One theory singled out an island near Corfu, off the western coast of Greece. Another sugges-

tion is based on the Greek word *Me-li'te* and points to Melite Illyria, now known as Mljet, located off the coast of Croatia in the present-day Adriatic Sea. However, in view of the Bible’s description of the route, it is unlikely that the ship turned and sailed as far northward as Corfu or Mljet.—See  App. B13.

28:2 the foreign-speaking people: Or “the local inhabitants.” Some older Bible translations render the Greek word *bar'ba-ros* used here as “Barbarians.” The repetition of “*bar bar*” in this Greek word conveyed the idea of stammering, babble, or unintelligible speech, so the Greeks originally used the term to refer to a foreigner who spoke a different language. At that time, the term did not denote lack of civilization, refinement, or good manners; nor did it convey contempt. The word *bar'ba-ros* simply distinguished non-Greeks from Greeks. Some Jewish writers, including Josephus, recognized themselves as being designated by the term.

(*Jewish Antiquities*, XIV, 187 [x, 1]; *Against Apion*, I, 58 [11]) In fact, Romans called themselves barbarians until they adopted Greek culture. So the term was applied here to the inhabitants of Malta, who apparently spoke their native, unrelated language, likely Punic.—See study note on Ro 1:14.

kindness: Or “human kindness.” The Greek word *phi-lan-thro-pi'a* literally means “affection (love) for mankind.” Such kindness could include the idea of having genuine interest in others and showing hospitality in caring for human needs and comforts. As shown here, people may display this godly quality even before they come to know Jehovah. A similar example is recorded at Ac 27:3, where the related word *phi-lan-thro'pos* is used to describe the way that the army officer Julius treated Paul. At Tit 3:4, the Greek word *phi-lan-thro-pi'a* is used to describe Jehovah’s feelings and is rendered “love for mankind.”

and because of the cold.^a **3** But when Paul collected a bundle of sticks and laid it on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand. **4** When the foreign-speaking people caught sight of the venomous creature hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another: “Surely this man is a murderer, and although he made it to safety from the sea, Justice did not permit him to keep on living.” **5** However, he shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm. **6** But they were expecting him to swell up or suddenly to drop dead. After they waited for a long time and saw that nothing bad happened to him, they changed their mind and began saying he was a god.^b

CHAP. 28

a 2Co 11:27
 b Ac 14:11
 c Lu 4:38, 39
 d Mt 10:8

Paul Cures Publius' Father and Others

7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the principal man of the island, whose name was Publius, and he welcomed us and entertained us hospitably for three days. **8** It so happened that the father of Publius was lying in bed sick with fever and dysentery, and Paul went in to him and prayed, laid his hands on him, and healed him.^c **9** After this occurred, the rest of the people on the island who were sick also began to come to him and be cured.^d **10** They also honored us with many gifts, and when we were setting sail, they loaded us up with whatever we needed.

STUDY NOTES

28:3 a viper: In modern times, vipers are not found on the island of Malta. But as this account shows, the first-century inhabitants knew of these snakes. Over the centuries, environmental changes or the increase in human population may have eradicated this species from Malta.

28:4 Justice: The Greek term for “Justice” here is *di’ke*. It may refer to a goddess who personifies avenging justice or to the concept of justice. In Greek mythology, Dike was the name of the goddess of justice. It was thought that she had oversight of human affairs and reported undisclosed injustices to Zeus so that the guilty would be punished. The inhabitants of Malta may have thought that, although he had survived the shipwreck, Paul was now overtaken by some sort of divine justice and punished by means of a snake.

28:11 Sons of Zeus: According to Greek and Roman mythology, the “Sons of Zeus” (Greek, *Di-o’skou-roi*) were Castor and Pollux, twin sons of the god Zeus (Jupiter) and the Spartan Queen Leda. Among other things, they were regarded as the protectors of mariners, able to save sailors imperiled at sea. This detail regarding the ship’s figurehead is another testimony that the account was written by an eyewitness.

28:12 Syracuse: A city with a fine harbor, located on the SE coast of the island of Sicily, today called Siracusa. According to Greek historian Thucydides, it was founded by the Corinthians in 734 B.C.E. Syracuse was the birthplace of some well-known figures of ancient times. For example, the mathematician Archimedes was born there. In 212 B.C.E., the Romans conquered Syracuse.—See  App. B13.

28:13 Puteoli: Now called Pozzuoli, this chief port SE of Rome was located about 10 km (6 mi) WSW of Naples. Extensive ruins of an ancient breakwater, or mole, are still visible. Josephus calls the site by its older name, Dicaearchia, and says that a Jewish colony was located there. (*Jewish Antiquities*, XVII, 328, xii, 1) Paul, on his way to stand before Caesar in Rome, arrived at Puteoli about the year 59 C.E. The ship arrived from **Rhegium** (now called Reggio di Calabria), a port city at the southern tip of Italy across from Sicily, some 320 km (200 mi) to the SSE of Puteoli. Christian brothers in Puteoli entreated Paul and those accompanying him to spend a week with them. (Ac 28:14) This indicates that, although he was a prisoner, Paul enjoyed some freedom.—See  App. B13.

28:14 so we went toward Rome: It would have taken up to a week to make the jour-

CHAP. 28

- a 2Co 1:3, 4
 b Ac 24:11, 12
 Ac 25:8
 c Ac 21:33

On to Rome

11 Three months later we set sail in a ship with the figure-head “Sons of Zeus.” The ship was from Alexandria and had wintered in the island. **12** Putting into port at Syracuse, we remained there for three days; **13** from there we went along and arrived at Rhe’gi-um. A day later a south wind sprang up and we made it into Pu-te’o-li on the second day. **14** Here we found brothers and were urged to remain with them for seven days, and so we went toward Rome. **15** From there the brothers, when they heard the news about us, came as far as the Marketplace of Ap’pi-us and Three Taverns to meet us. On catching sight of them, Paul thanked God and took courage.^a **16** When finally we entered Rome, Paul was permitted to stay by himself with the soldier guarding him.

Paul Speaks to Jews in Rome

17 However, three days later he called together the principal men of the Jews. When they had assembled, he said to them: “Men, brothers, although I had done nothing contrary to the people or the customs of our forefathers,^b I was handed over as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.^c

STUDY NOTES

ney from Puteoli to Rome, which was 245 km (152 mi) away. Paul and his companions likely went from Puteoli to Capua and from there traveled 212 km (132 mi) to Rome on the Appian Way (Latin, *Via Appia*). The Appian Way was named after Appius Claudius Caecus, the Roman statesman who began building it in 312 B.C.E. It eventually linked Rome with the port of Brundisium (modern-day Brindisi), a gateway to the E. Much of the road was paved with large blocks of volcanic rock. The road varied greatly in width—some portions were less than 3 m (10 ft) wide and other portions were more than 6 m (20 ft) wide. The general criterion was that two vehicles traveling in opposite directions could pass at the same time without hindering each other. At certain points, the Mediterranean Sea was visible. The road crossed the Pontine Marshes, a swampy area that caused one Roman writer to complain about the mosquitoes and foul smell. A canal was built along the road, so when the road was flooded, trav-

elers used canal boats to travel through the area. Located just N of those marshes were the Marketplace of Appius, about 65 km (40 mi) from Rome, and Three Taverns, a rest stop some 50 km (30 mi) from the city.

See  Gallery, image 133, Construction of a Roman Road.

28:15 the Marketplace of Appius:

Or “Forum of Appius.” Latin, *Appii Forum*. A marketplace about 65 km (40 mi) SE of Rome. It was a well-known station on the famous Roman highway Via Appia, running from Rome to Brundisium (now Brindisi) by way of Capua. Both the road and the marketplace draw their names from the founder, Appius Claudius Caecus, of the fourth century B.C.E. As the usual point at which travelers halted at the close of the first day’s journey out of Rome, this post station became a busy trading center and market town. Adding to its importance was its location on a canal that ran alongside the road, traversing the Pontine Marshes. Travelers reportedly

were conveyed over this canal by night in barges pulled by mules. The Roman poet Horace describes the discomforts of the journey, complaining of the frogs and gnats and depicting the Marketplace of Appius as “crammed with boatmen and stingy tavern-keepers.” (*Satires*, I, V, 1-6) Despite all the discomforts, however, the delegation from Rome happily waited for Paul and his companions in order to escort them safely along the final leg of their journey. Today the site of the Foro Appio, or Forum of Appius, is marked by the small village of Borgo Faiti, located on the Appian Way.—See  App. B13.

Three Taverns: Or “Tres Tabernae.” Latin, *Tres Tabernae*. This place, which is also mentioned in other ancient writings, was situated on the Appian Way. The site is some 50 km (31 mi) SE of Rome, about 15 km (9.5 mi) from the Marketplace of Appius. Today, a few Roman ruins remain at this site.—See  App. B13.

See  Gallery, image 153, The Appian Way.

18 And after making an examination,^a they wanted to release me, for there were no grounds for putting me to death.^b **19** But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar,^c but not because I had any accusation to make against my nation. **20** So for this reason I asked to see and speak to you, for it is because of the hope of Israel that I have this chain around me.”^d **21** They said to him: “We have not received letters about you from Ju-de’a, nor have any of the brothers who came from there reported or spoken anything bad about you. **22** But we think it proper to hear from you what your thoughts are, for truly as regards this sect,^e we know that it is spoken against everywhere.”^f

23 They now arranged for a day to meet with him, and they came in even greater numbers to him in his lodging place. And from morning to evening, he explained the matter to them by bearing thorough witness concerning the Kingdom of God, to persuade them about Jesus^g from both the Law of Moses^h and the Prophets.ⁱ **24** Some began to believe the things he said; others would not believe. **25** So because they disagreed with one another, they began to leave, and Paul made this one comment:

CHAP. 28

- a Ac 24:10
- b Ac 23:26, 29
Ac 25:24, 25
Ac 26:31, 32
- c Ac 25:11, 12
- d Ac 23:6
Ac 26:6
Eph 6:19, 20
2Ti 1:16
- e Ac 24:14
- f Lu 2:34
Joh 15:19
- g Ac 17:2, 3
- h Joh 5:46
- i Ac 26:22, 23

STUDY NOTES

28:19 Caesar: See study note on Ac 26:32.

See  Gallery, image 149, Caesar Nero.

28:22 this sect: See study note on Ac 24:5.

28:23 by bearing thorough witness concerning the Kingdom of God: With the exception of the book of John, Acts contains the Greek words rendered “witness” (*mar’tys*), “to bear witness” (*mar-ty-re’o*), “to bear thorough witness” (*di-a-mar-ty’-ro-mai*), and related words more times than any other Bible book. (See study notes on Joh 1:7; Ac 1:8.) The idea of being a witness and bearing thorough witness about God’s purposes, including his Kingdom and Jesus’ vital role, is the theme that runs through the book of Acts.—Ac 2:32, 40; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; 8:25; 10:39; 13:31; 18:5; 20:21, 24; 22:20; 23:11; 26:16.

28:28 this salvation from God: Or “this, the means by which God saves.” The

Greek word *so-te’ri-on* may refer not only to salvation but also to the means by which salvation or deliverance is brought about. (Lu 2:30; 3:6; ftns.) By extension, it may include the message about how God will save mankind.

28:29 Some later Greek manuscripts and some ancient translations into other languages add: “And when he had said this, the Jews went away, having a great deal of disputing among themselves.” However, these words do not appear in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and are apparently not part of the original text of Acts.—See  App. A3.

28:30 he remained there for an entire two years: During this two-year period, Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians (Eph 4:1; 6:20), to the Philippians (Php 1:7, 12-14), to the Colossians (Col 4:18), to Philemon (Phm 9), and apparently also to the Hebrews. His house arrest seems to have ended in about the year 61 C.E. when he apparently was tried—perhaps before Emperor Nero or one of his representa-

tives—and pronounced innocent. After his release, Paul characteristically remained active. It could have been during this period that he made his planned trip to Spain. (Ro 15:28) According to Clement of Rome, who wrote in about the year 95 C.E., Paul traveled “to the extreme limit of the W[est],” that is, of the Roman Empire. Paul’s three letters dated to the years after his release (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus) reveal that he probably visited Crete, Ephesus, Macedonia, Miletus, Nicopolis, and Troas. (1Ti 1:3; 2Ti 4:13; Tit 1:5; 3:12) Some suggest that it was in Nicopolis, Greece, that Paul was again arrested and that he was back in prison in Rome in about the year 65 C.E. This time, it seems that Nero showed no mercy. A fire had devastated Rome the year before, and according to Roman historian Tacitus, Nero falsely blamed the Christians. Nero then initiated a brutal campaign of persecution against them. When Paul wrote his second and final letter to Timothy, he expected to be executed soon, so he asked Timothy and Mark to come

CHAP. 28

- a Ro 11:8
 b Isa 6:9, 10
 Mt 13:14, 15
 c Lu 3:4, 6
 Ac 13:45, 46
 Ac 22:21
 Ro 11:11
 d Ps 67:2
 Ps 98:3
 Isa 11:10
 Ac 13:48
 Ac 14:27
 e Ac 28:16
 f Ac 1:3
 Ac 19:8
 g Eph 6:19

“The holy spirit aptly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your forefathers, **26** saying, ‘Go to this people and say: “You will indeed hear but by no means understand, and you will indeed look but by no means see.”^a **27** For the heart of this people has grown unreceptive,^{*} and with their ears they have heard without response, and they have shut their eyes, so that they might never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn back and I heal them.”^b **28** So let it be known to you that this salvation from God has been sent out to the nations;^c they will certainly listen to it.”^d **29** —

Paul Preaches With Boldness for Two Years

30 So he remained there for an entire two years in his own rented house,^e and he would kindly receive all those who came to him, **31** preaching the Kingdom of God^f to them and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with the greatest freeness of speech,^g without hindrance.

FOOTNOTES

28:27 *Lit., “was thickened (fattened).”

STUDY NOTES

quickly. During this time, Luke and Onesiphorus showed great courage and risked their lives to visit Paul and comfort him. (2Ti 1:16, 17; 4:6-9, 11) It was likely in about the year 65 C.E. that Paul was executed. In both life and death, Paul was an outstanding witness to “all the things Jesus started to do and to teach.”—Ac 1:1.

28:31 preaching: The Greek word basically means “to make proclamation as a public messenger.” It stresses the *manner* of the proclamation: usually an open, public declaration rather than a sermon to a group. The theme of this preaching was **the Kingdom of God**. In the book of Acts, the expression “the Kingdom of God” occurs six times. The first occurrence is at Ac 1:3, describing Jesus’ speaking about this Kingdom during the 40 days between his resurrection and his ascension. The Kingdom of God continued to be the theme that dominated the preaching of the apostles.—Ac 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 28:23.

with the greatest freeness of speech:

Or “with all boldness (fearlessness).” The Greek word *par-re-si’a* has also been rendered “outspokenness.” (Ac 4:13) This noun and the related verb *par-re-si-a’zo-mai*, often rendered “speak boldly [with boldness],” occur several times in the book of Acts. Boldness was, from the beginning of Luke’s account to the end, an identifying mark of the preaching done by the early Christians.—Ac 4:29, 31; 9:27, 28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26.

without hindrance: Or “freely.” The book of Acts ends on this positive note. Although under house arrest, Paul continued to preach and teach openly. Nothing could stop the spread of the Kingdom message in Rome. This is an appropriate finish to the book of Acts. It describes how the holy spirit empowered first-century Christians to begin the greatest preaching campaign in history, spreading the good news of God’s Kingdom “to the most distant part of the earth.”—Ac 1:8.



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1 Jesus Invites Matthew to Be His Follower. After teaching a crowd in Capernaum, Jesus catches sight of the tax collector Matthew sitting at a tax office. Tax collectors were despised because many of them unjustly enriched themselves at the expense of the people. But Jesus sees something good in Matthew and invites him to be his follower. Matthew responds immediately, becoming the fifth disciple to join Jesus in his ministry. (Lu 5:1-11, 27, 28) Later, Jesus chose him

to be one of the 12 apostles. (Mt 10:2-4; Mr 3:16-19) Matthew's Gospel often reflects his background. For example, he is explicit in his mention of money, figures, and values. (Mt 17:27; 26:15; 27:3) He also highlights the mercy of God, who allowed him, a despised tax collector, to repent and become a minister of the good news. —Mt 9:9-13; 12:7; 18:21-35.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 9:9



2

2 Jesus Calms the Storm. A fierce windstorm batters the boat, and the disciples get soaked as they cross the Sea of Galilee. The men are terrified that they will drown, and they cry for help. Jesus, who was sleeping, wakes up and commands the sea: “Hush! Be quiet!” Immediately, the storm abated, and “a great calm set in.” (Mr 4:35-41) This miracle indicates that when Jesus rules the earth, he and his Father will never allow severe weather to harm sub-

jects of God’s Kingdom. (Re 21:4) Mark is not present on this occasion, but he still records the event in the action-packed and fast-moving style of writing that is characteristic of his Gospel. The vivid description and the details mentioned in this account may indicate that he obtained the information from someone who was onboard, possibly Peter.

Related Scripture(s): [Mr 4:39](#)



3 Jesus Heals a Woman. The frightened woman gazes up at Jesus. Trembling, she confesses to touching Jesus' garment in order to be healed of an illness she has suffered from for 12 years. Jesus does not condemn her; rather, he kindly says: "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace." (Lu 8:48) Jesus performed this miracle while on his way to heal Jairus' daughter. (Lu 8:41, 42) These miracles show that Jesus has the power to heal all kinds of illnesses

and that when he rules over mankind, none of his subjects will say: "I am sick."—Isa 33:24.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 8:47



4

4 Jesus Resurrects Lazarus. Jesus commands the dead man: “Lazarus, come out!” (Joh 11:43) Instantly, Lazarus becomes conscious. Although restrained by cloth wrappings, he stands up and walks. His astonished sisters, Martha and Mary, can hardly believe their eyes, but it’s true! Because of this miracle, many onlookers begin to exercise faith in Jesus. While this account gives us a portrait of Jesus’ unselfish love, it also provides a preview of Jesus’ miracles to be per-

formed on a much larger scale in the new world. (Joh 5:28) The account of Lazarus’ resurrection appears only in John’s Gospel.

Related Scripture(s): [Joh 11:44](#)



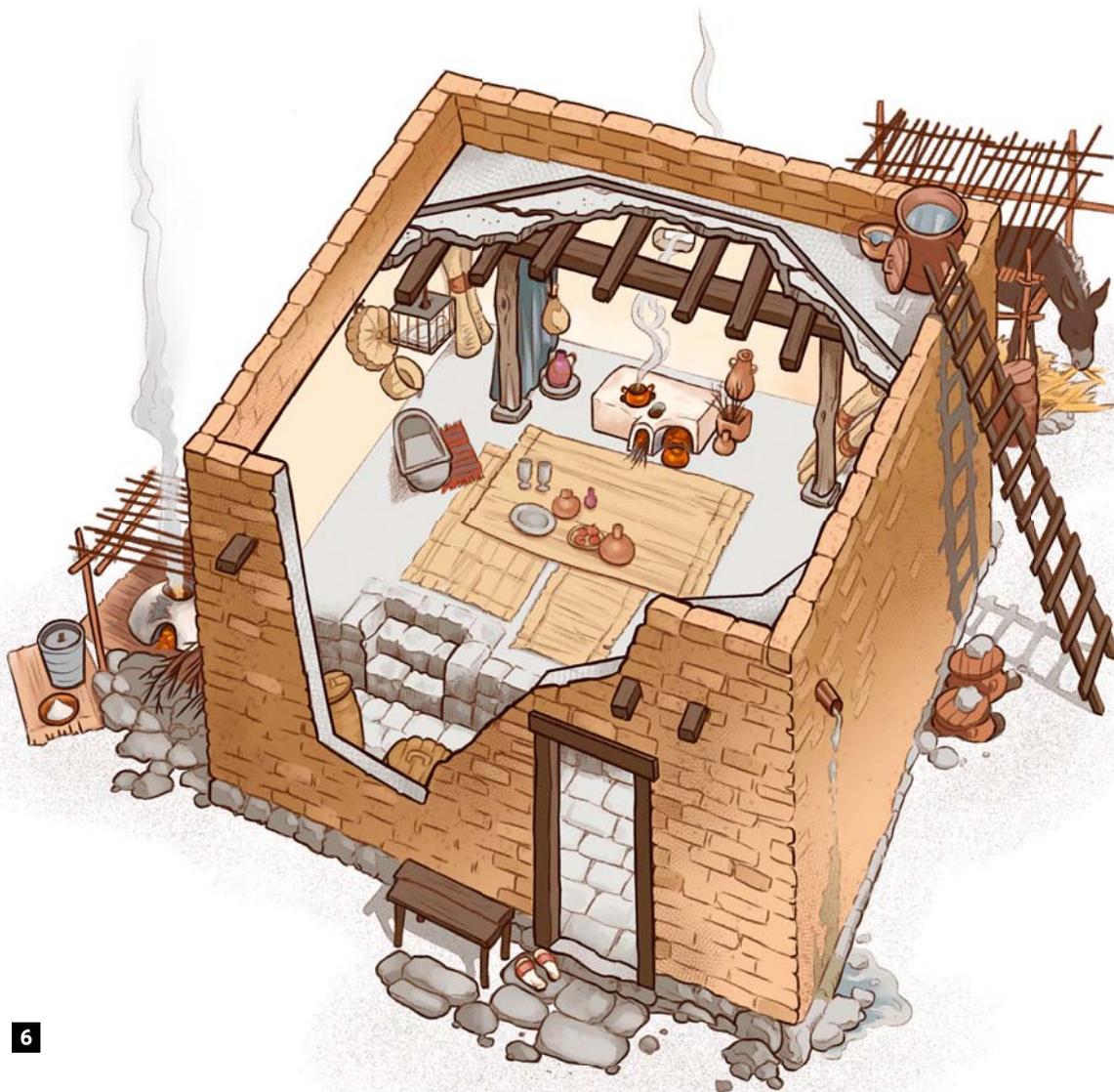
5

5 Saul on the Road to Damascus.

Saul falls to the ground near Damascus, blinded by a flash of light. He hears a voice say: “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” (Ac 9:3, 4; 22:6-8; 26:13, 14) Jesus has interrupted Saul’s plan to arrest Jesus’ disciples in Damascus and take them bound to Jerusalem for trial. Saul’s journey of some 240 km (150 mi) from Jerusalem turns out completely different from what he expected. Jesus’ message transforms Saul (later

known by his Roman name, Paul) from a determined persecutor of Christians to one of Christianity’s boldest defenders. Paul’s zealous ministry is described in detail in the book of Acts.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 9:3, 4](#)



6

6 A First-Century House. In first-century Israel, construction techniques varied according to the economic circumstances of the builder and the availability of materials. Many small houses were built of sun-dried mud bricks or of rough-hewn stones. Often the interior walls were plastered. The floors were typically of beaten earth, though some were paved. A dirt roof rested on

branches, reeds, and rafters, which overlaid wooden beams that were supported by posts. The dirt was pressed down, forming a plaster that made a reasonably waterproof ceiling. Occupants could access the roof by means of stairs or, in poorer homes, an outside ladder. Poor people had very little furniture.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 1:20



7

7 Winter in Bethlehem. Jesus could not have been born in December because the weather in Bethlehem is typically cold and rainy from November to March. In winter, snow may fall in this region. During this time of the year, shepherds would not be living out of doors, keeping watch over their flocks in the fields at night. (Lu 2:8) Bethlehem is located some 780 m (2,560 ft) above sea level in the Judean highlands.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 2:1; Lu 2:4, 6](#)



8



9

8 The Wilderness of Judea, West of the Jordan River. In this barren region, John the Baptist began his ministry and Jesus was tempted by the Devil.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 3:1; 4:1; Mr 1:12; Lu 4:1

9 The Wilderness. The original-language words rendered “wilderness” in the Bible (Hebrew, *midh-bar* and Greek, *e’re-mos*) generally refer to a sparsely settled, uncultivated land, often steppelands with brush and grass, even pastures.

Those words may also apply to waterless regions that could be called true deserts. In the Gospels, the wilderness generally referred to is the wilderness of Judea. This wilderness is where John lived and preached and where Jesus was tempted by the Devil.—Mr 1:12.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 3:1; 4:1; Mr 1:4; Lu 3:2; 4:1

10 John the Baptizer’s Clothing and Appearance. John wore a garment that was woven from camel’s hair and was secured at the waist by a leather



10

belt, or girdle, that could be used to carry small items. Similar clothing was worn by the prophet Elijah. (2Ki 1:8) Camel’s haircloth was a rough fabric commonly worn by the poor. By contrast, soft garments made of silk or linen were worn by the rich. (Mt 11:7-9) Because John was a Nazirite from birth, it is possible that his hair had never been cut. His dress and appearance likely made it immediately apparent that he lived a simple life, completely devoted to doing God’s will.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 3:4; Mr 1:6



11



12

11 Locusts. As used in the Bible, the term “locusts” can refer to any of a variety of grasshoppers with short antennae, or feelers, especially grasshoppers that migrate in great swarms. According to an analysis made in Jerusalem, desert locusts consist of 75 percent protein. When used for food today, the head, legs, wings, and abdomen are removed. The remaining portion, the thorax, is eaten raw or cooked. These insects are said to taste something like shrimp or crab and are rich in protein. [Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 3:4; Mr 1:6](#)

12 Wild Honey. Pictured here are a hive built by wild honey bees (A) and a honey-filled comb (B). The honey that John ate may have been produced by a wild species of bee known as *Apis mellifera syriaca*, which is native to the area. This aggressive species is well-adapted to living in the hot, dry climate of the Judean wilderness but is not suited to being farmed by man. However, as early as the ninth century B.C.E., people living in Israel kept honey bees in clay cylinders. A large number of the remains of these hives were discovered in the

middle of what was an urban area (now known as Tel Rehov), located in the Jordan Valley. Honey from these hives was produced by a species of bee that seems to have been imported from what is now known as Turkey. [Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 3:4; Mr 1:6](#)



13

13 Garments Worn by a Pharisee in Jesus' Day. The Pharisees took the statements found at De 6:6-8 and 11:18 literally. Motivated by self-righteousness and superstition, they strapped a scripture-containing case to their left arm and, at times, bound one to their forehead. In addition, the Pharisees not only wore fringes on their garments, as directed in the Law, but also lengthened the fringes so that they were more conspicuous. —Nu 15:38; Mt 23:5.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 3:7

14 Horned Viper. Both John the Baptist and Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees “offspring of vipers” because they inflicted spiritual harm



15



14

that was like deadly poison to unsuspecting people. (Mt 3:7; 12:34) Here pictured is the horned viper, distinguished by a small pointed horn above each eye. Other dangerous vipers native to Israel are the sand viper (*Vipera ammodytes*) of the Jordan Valley and the Palestine viper (*Vipera palaestina*).

Related Scripture(s): Mt 3:7; 12:34; 23:33

15 Sandals. In Bible times, sandals consisted of flat soles made of leather, wood, or other fibrous material strapped to the foot by leather laces. Sandals were used as symbols in some types of transactions and as a word picture. For example, a widow

under the Law removed a sandal from the man who refused to perform brother-in-law marriage with her, and his name was reproachfully called “The house of the one who had his sandal removed.” (De 25:9, 10) The transfer of property or of right of repurchase was represented by a person’s handing his sandal to another. (Ru 4:7) To untie another’s sandal laces or to carry his sandals was considered a menial task often done by slaves. John the Baptist referred to this practice to denote his inferiority to the Christ.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 3:11; Mr 1:7; Lu 3:16



16 Winnowing Grain. A farmer used a winnowing shovel to hurl threshed grain into the air. The heavy grain fell to the floor, and the lighter chaff blew away in the breeze. He repeated the action over and over until all the grain was separated.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 3:12; 25:24

17 Threshing Tools. Two of the replica threshing sledges (A) shown here are turned upside down, exposing

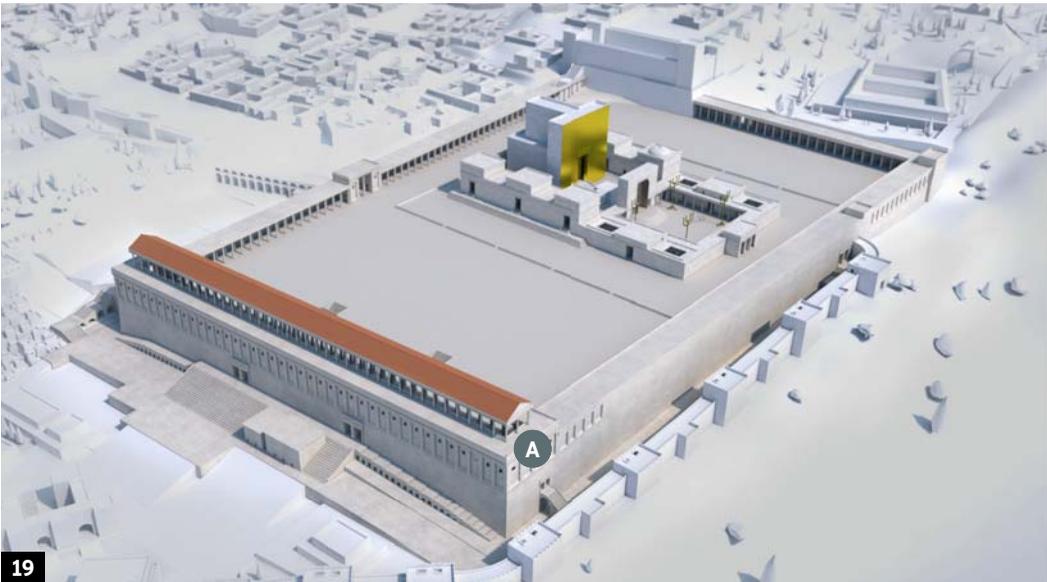
the sharp stones that were embedded in the underside of the sledge. (Isa 41:15) As shown in the second photo (B), a farmer would spread sheaves of grain on a threshing floor, stand on the sledge, and have an animal, such as a bull, pull him across the grain. The hooves of the animal and the sharp stones on the underside of the sledge would cut and break down the grain stalks, releasing the grain. The farmer would then use a win-

nowing fork, or shovel (C), to throw the threshed grain into the air. The wind would carry off the chaff, leaving the heavier grain to fall to the ground. Threshing is used in the Bible as a fitting symbol of how Jehovah's enemies will be beaten and cut to pieces. (Jer 51:33; Mic 4:12, 13) John the Baptist used threshing to illustrate how the righteous would be separated from the wicked.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 3:12; Lu 3:17



18



19

18 The Jordan River. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River; the exact location of the baptism is unknown. *Related Scripture(s):* Mt 3:13; Mr 1:9

19 Battlement of the Temple. Satan may literally have stationed Jesus “on the battlement [or “highest point”] of the temple” and told him to throw

himself down, but the specific location where Jesus might have stood is not known. Since the term for “temple” used here may refer to the entire temple complex, Jesus may have been standing on the southeastern corner (A) of the temple area. Or he may have stood on another corner of the temple complex. A fall from any of

these locations would have resulted in certain death unless Jehovah had intervened. *Related Scripture(s):* Mt 4:5, 6; Lu 4:9



20 North Shore of the Sea of Galilee, Looking Northwest.

(A) Plain of Gennesaret. This was a fertile triangle of land, measuring about 5 by 2.5 km (3 by 1.5 mi). It was along the shoreline in this area that Jesus invited the fishermen Peter, Andrew, James, and John to join him in his ministry.—Mt 4:18-22.

(B) Tradition locates Jesus' Sermon on the Mount here.—Mt 5:1; Lu 6:17, 20. (C) Capernaum. Jesus took up residence in this city, and it was in or near Capernaum that he found Matthew.—Mt 4:13; 9:1, 9.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 4:12-25; 5:1; 9:1; Lu 6:17, 20



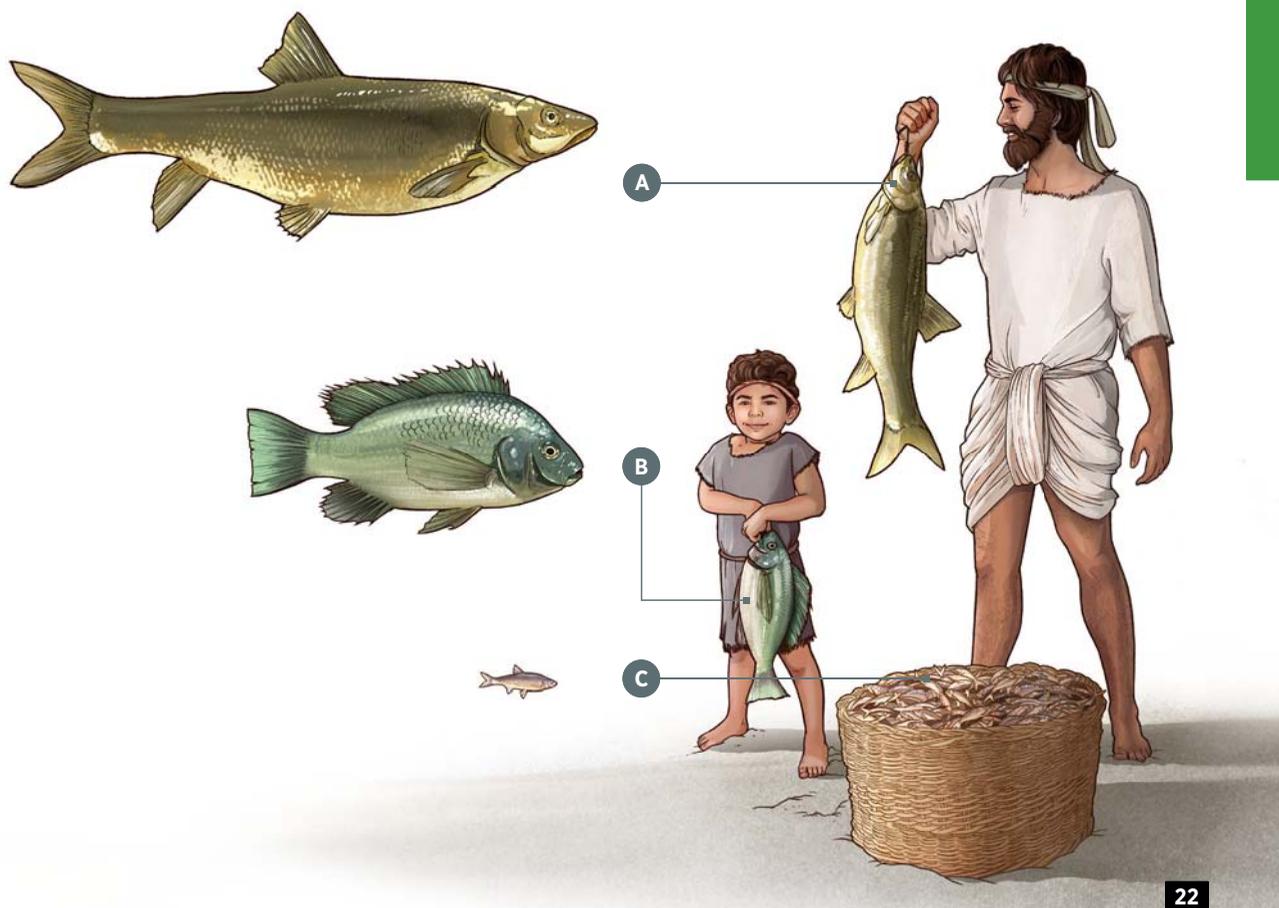
21

21 Casting a Net. Fishermen on the Sea of Galilee used two types of casting nets; one was made of finely woven mesh to catch small fish and the other was made of larger mesh to catch bigger ones. Unlike a dragnet, which usually required the use of at least one boat and took a team of men to maneuver, a casting net could be handled by one person in a boat or standing on or near the shore. A cast-

ing net might have been 6 m (18 ft) or more in diameter and had stones or lead weights fastened to its perimeter. If thrown correctly, it hit the water as a flat disc. The weighted rim sank first, and fish were trapped as the net drifted to the sea floor. A fisherman might dive in and retrieve fish from the submerged net, or he might carefully draw the net to the shore.

It took great skill and strenuous effort to use the net effectively.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 4:18; Mr 1:16



22 Fish of the Sea of Galilee. The Bible contains many references to fish, fishing, and fishermen in connection with the Sea of Galilee. About 18 species of fish live in the Sea of Galilee. Of that number, only about ten have been sought by fishermen. These ten can be divided into three commercially important groups. One group is the binny, also known as the barbel (*Barbus longiceps* is shown) (A). Its three

species display barbs at the corners of the mouth; hence, its Semitic name *biny*, meaning “hair.” It feeds on mollusks, snails, and small fish. The longheaded barbel reaches a length of 75 cm (30 in.) and can weigh over 7 kg (15 lb). The second group is called musht (*Tilapia galilea* is shown) (B), which means “comb” in Arabic, because its five species display a comblike dorsal fin. One variety of

musht reaches a length of about 45 cm (18 in.) and can weigh some 2 kg (4.5 lb). The third group is the Kinneret sardine (*Acanthobrama terreae sanctae* is shown) (C), which resembles a small herring. From ancient times, this fish has been preserved by pickling.
 Related Scripture(s): Mt 4:18; Mr 1:16; Lu 5:6; Joh 21:9, 10



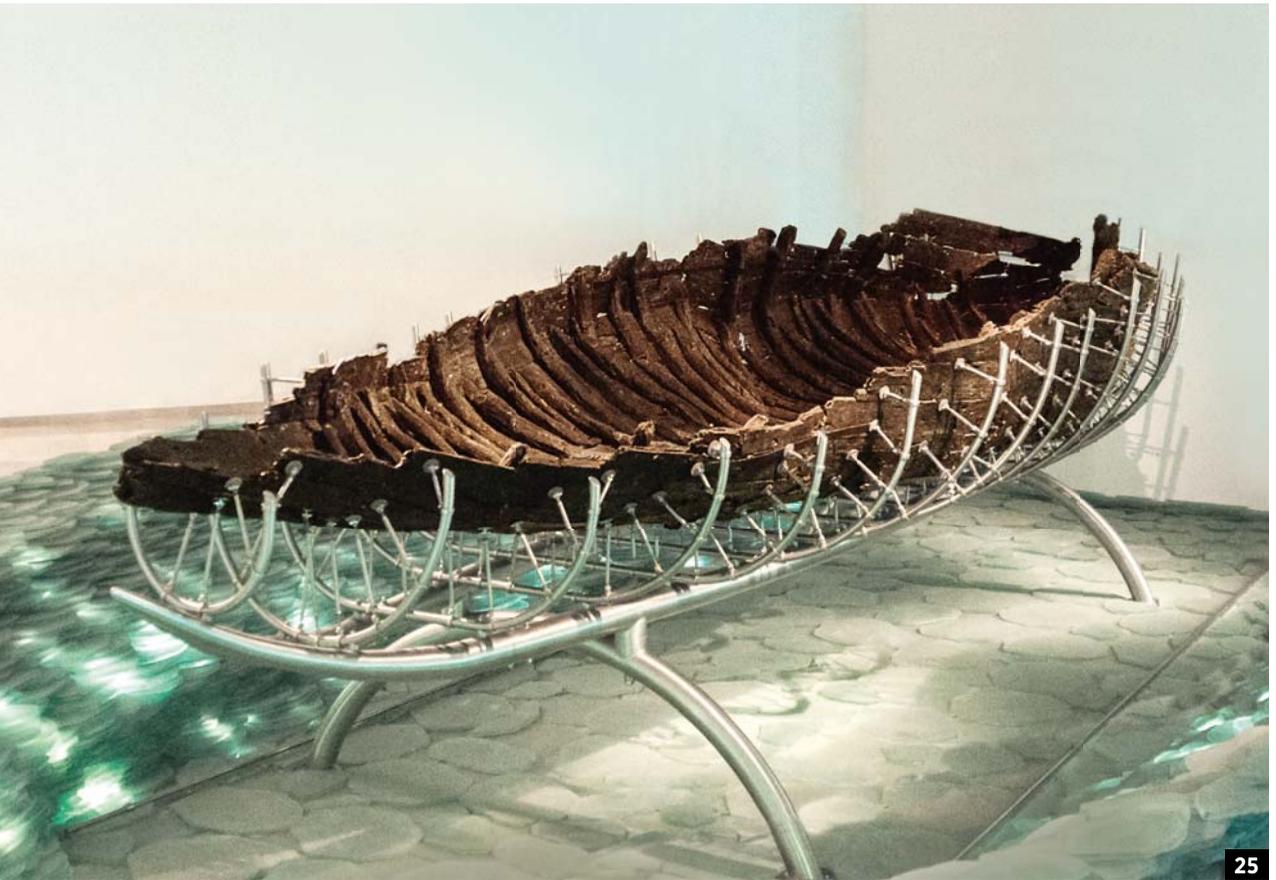
23 Mending a Fishing Net. Fishing nets were expensive, and maintaining them required hard work. Much of a fisherman's time was spent mending, washing, and drying nets—chores he did at the end of every fishing trip. (Lu 5:2) Matthew used three Greek terms to describe fishing nets. The general term, *di'kty-on*, can evidently embrace various types of nets. (Mt 4:21) The term *sa-ge'ne* refers to a large dragnet that was let down from a boat. (Mt 13:47, 48) A small-

er net, *am-phi'ble-stron*, which means "something thrown," was evidently cast into shallow water by fishermen who were on or near the shore. —Mt 4:18.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 4:21

24 First-Century Fishing Boat. This rendering is based on the remains of a first-century fishing boat found buried in mud near the shores of the Sea of Galilee and on a mosaic discovered in a first-century home in the seaside

town of Migdal. This kind of boat may have been rigged with a mast and sail(s) and may have had a crew of five—four oarsmen and one helmsman, who stood on a small deck at the stern. The boat was approximately 8 m (26.5 ft) long and at midpoint was about 2.5 m (8 ft) wide and 1.25 m (4 ft) deep. It seems that it could carry 13 or more men. **Related Scripture(s):** Mt 4:21; Mr 4:37; Lu 5:7; 8:22, 23; Joh 21:3

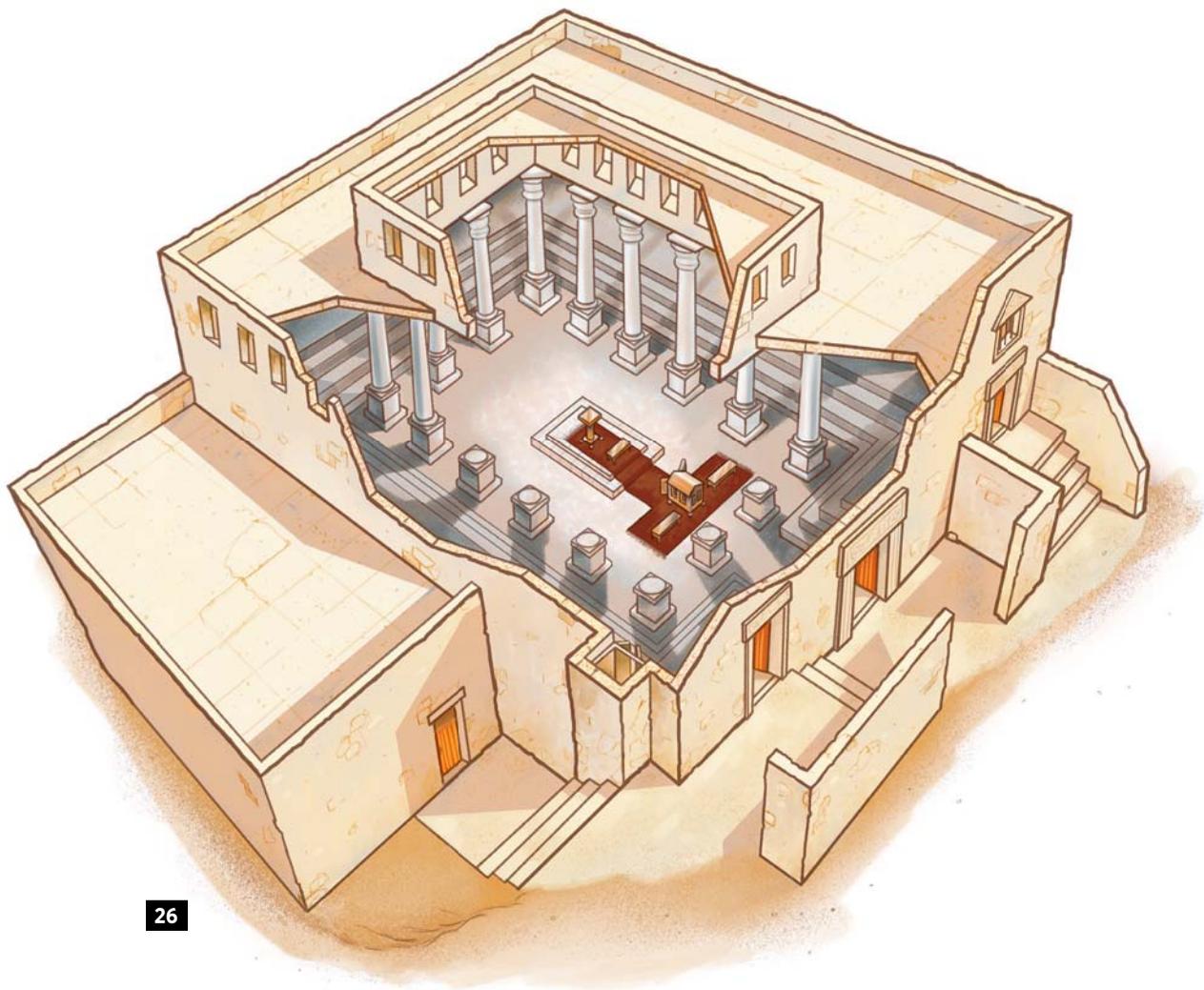


25

25 Remains of a Galilean Fishing

Boat. A 1985/1986 drought caused the water level in the Sea of Galilee to fall, exposing part of the hull of an ancient boat that was buried in the mud. The remains of the boat, which are now displayed in a museum in Israel, are 8.2 m (27 ft) long and 2.3 m (7.5 ft) wide and have a maximum height of 1.3 m (4.3 ft). Archaeologists say that the boat was built sometime between the first century B.C.E. and the first century C.E.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 4:21;
Mr 4:37; Lu 5:3; 8:22; Joh 21:3



26

26 First-Century Synagogue. This reconstruction, which incorporates some features of the first-century synagogue found at Gamla, located about 10 km (6 mi) northeast of the Sea of Galilee, gives an idea of what an ancient synagogue may have looked like.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 4:23; 6:2; 9:35; 12:9; 23:6



27 Salt on the Shore of the Dead

Sea. Today, the water in the Dead Sea (Salt Sea) is about nine times as salty as the water in the world's oceans. (Ge 14:3) Evaporation of the Dead Sea waters produced an ample supply of salt for the Israelites, although this salt was of poor quality because it was contaminated with other minerals. The Israelites may

also have acquired salt from the Phoenicians, who, it is said, obtained it from the Mediterranean by means of evaporation. The Bible mentions salt as a seasoning for food. (Job 6:6) Jesus was a master at using illustrations based on things related to the everyday lives of the people, so he used salt to illustrate important spiritual lessons. For example, in the

Sermon on the Mount, he told his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth," having a preserving influence on others, preventing spiritual corruption and moral decay.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 5:13;
Mr 9:50; Lu 14:34, 35



28 First-Century Oil Lamp. The common clay lamps used in homes and other buildings were filled with olive oil. A wick was used to draw up the oil to feed the flame. Lamps were often set on clay, wood, or metal lampstands to provide indoor light. They were also placed in wall niches or on shelves, or they were suspend-

ed from the ceiling by means of a cord.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 5:15

29 Domestic Lampstand. This domestic lampstand (A) is an artist's concept based on first-century artifacts found in Ephesus and Italy. A lampstand of this kind was likely used

in a wealthy household. In poorer homes, a lamp was hung from the ceiling, placed in a niche in the wall (B), or put on a stand made of earthenware or wood.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 5:15; Mr 4:21; Lu 8:16; 11:33



30

30 The Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna).

The Valley of Hinnom, called Gehenna in Greek, is a ravine to the south and southwest of ancient Jerusalem. In Jesus' day, it was a place for the burning of refuse, making it a fitting symbol of complete destruction.

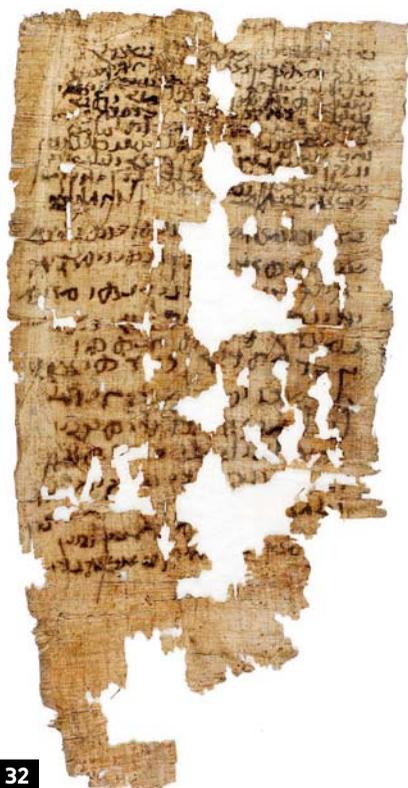
Related Scripture(s): Mt 5:22; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15



31 Modern-Day Valley of Hinnom.

The Valley of Hinnom (A), called Gehenna in the Christian Greek Scriptures. The Temple Mount (B). The first-century Jewish temple complex was located here. The most prominent present-day structure on the temple mount is the Muslim shrine known as the Dome of the Rock.—See  Appendix B12, map “Jerusalem and Surrounding Area.”

Related Scripture(s): Mt 5:22; 23:15; Mr 9:43; Lu 12:5



32

32 Certificate of Divorce. This certificate of divorce, dated 71 or 72 C.E., was written in Aramaic. It was found on the north side of Wadi Murabbaat, a dry riverbed in the Judean Desert. It states that in the sixth year of the Jewish revolt, Joseph, son of Naqsan, divorced Miriam, daughter of Jonathan who was living in the city of Masada.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 5:31; 19:7



33

33 Lilies of the Field. Jesus encouraged his disciples to “consider how the lilies grow” and to “take a lesson” from them. The original-language word often rendered “lilies” in Bible translations may have embraced a great variety of flowers, such as tulips, anemones, hyacinths, irises, and gladiolus. Some scholars suggest that Jesus probably had the anemone in mind. However, Jesus may simply have been referring to lilylike flowers in general. Shown here are scarlet

crown anemones (*Anemone coronaria*). These flowers are common in Israel and can also be found in blue, pink, purple, or white.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 6:28-30; Lu 12:27, 28



34

34 Wolf. The wolves of Israel are primarily nighttime predators. (Hab 1:8) Wolves are fierce, voracious, bold, and greedy, frequently killing more sheep than they can eat or drag away. In the Bible, animals and their characteristics and habits are often applied in a figurative sense, picturing both desirable and undesirable traits. For example, in Jacob's deathbed prophecy, the tribe of Benjamin is described figuratively as a fighter like a wolf (*Canis lupus*). (Ge 49:27) But in most occurrences, the wolf is

used to picture such undesirable qualities as ferocity, greed, viciousness, and craftiness. Those compared to wolves include false prophets (Mt 7:15), vicious opposers of the Christian ministry (Mt 10:16; Lu 10:3), and false teachers who would endanger the Christian congregation from within (Ac 20:29, 30). Shepherds were well-aware of the danger posed by wolves. Jesus spoke of "the hired man" who "sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and flees." Unlike the hired man, who "does not

care for the sheep," Jesus is "the fine shepherd," who surrendered "his life in behalf of the sheep."—Joh 10:11-13. [Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 7:15; 10:16; Lu 10:3; Joh 10:12; Ac 20:29](#)



35 Fig Tree, Grapevine, and Thornbush. Jesus no doubt carefully selected the plants he used in illustrations. For example, the fig tree (A) and the grapevine (B) are mentioned jointly in many texts, and Jesus' words at Lu 13:6 show that fig trees were often planted in vineyards. (2Ki 18:31; Joe 2:22) The expression 'sitting under one's own vine and fig tree' symbolized peaceful, prosperous, secure conditions. (1Ki 4:25; Mic 4:4; Zec 3:10) By contrast, thorns and thistles are specifically men-

tioned when Jehovah cursed the ground after Adam sinned. (Ge 3:17, 18) The type of thornbush that Jesus referred to at Mt 7:16 cannot be identified with certainty, but the one shown here (*Centaurea iberica*) (C), a type of thistle, grows wild in Israel. **Related Scripture(s):** Mt 7:16; Lu 6:44

36 A Roman Centurion, or Army Officer, Dressed for Battle. The office of centurion was the highest rank that the common soldier could reach. He drilled the soldiers; inspect-



ed their arms, supplies, and food; and regulated their conduct. For the most part, the readiness and efficiency of the Roman army depended on centurions more than on anyone else. They were, generally speaking, the most experienced and valuable men in the Roman army. This made the humility and faith of the centurion who approached Jesus all the more impressive.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 8:5



37



37 Foxes' Dens and Birds' Nests. Jesus contrasted his own situation of not having a permanent home with foxes that have dens and birds that have nests. The type of foxes shown here (*Vulpes vulpes*) inhabit not only the Middle East but also Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America and have been introduced into Australia. Unless foxes use a natural crevice or the deserted or usurped burrow of another animal, they commonly dig holes in the ground to form their dens. The bird, a Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*), is

one of an estimated 470 varieties that may be found in Israel at some time during the course of a year. Bird's nests likewise are diverse, located in trees, in hollow tree trunks, and on cliffs, and are made of such materials as twigs, leaves, seaweed, wool, straw, moss, and feathers. The diverse topography of the country, ranging from cool mountain peaks to deep sweltering valleys and from arid deserts to maritime plains all lying together near the southeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea, makes it an

attractive habitat for birds that either live here permanently or migrate throughout the region.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 8:20;
Lu 9:58



38

38 Cliffs on the Eastern Side of the Sea of Galilee. It was along the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee that Jesus expelled demons from two men and sent the demons into a herd of swine.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 8:28; Mr 5:1, 2; Lu 8:26, 27



39

39 Animal Skins Used to Store Wine.

Skin bottles were often made of the complete hides of sheep, goats, or cattle. A dead animal's head and feet were cut off, and the carcass was carefully removed from the skin to avoid opening its belly. After the hide was tanned, the openings were sewed up. The neck or a leg of the animal was left unsewed to serve as the bottle's opening, which was closed with a stopper or tied with a string. Skin bottles were used to hold not only wine but also milk, butter, cheese, oil, or water.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 9:17



40

40 Staff and Food Pouch.

Rods or staffs were common among the ancient Hebrews and were used in a variety of ways: for support (Ex 12:11; Zec 8:4; Heb 11:21), for defense or protection (2Sa 23:21), for threshing (Isa 28:27), and for reaping olives (De 24:20; Isa 24:13), to name just a few. A food pouch was a bag, usually made of leather, carried over the shoulder by travelers, shepherds, farmers, and others. It was used to hold food, clothing, and other items. When sending out his apostles on a preaching tour, Jesus gave them instructions regarding, among other

things, staffs and food pouches. The apostles were to go as they were and not be distracted by procuring anything extra; Jehovah would provide for them.—See study notes on Lu 9:3 and 10:4 for a discussion of how the details of Jesus' instructions were to be understood.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 10:9, 10; Mr 6:8; Lu 9:3; 10:4



41



42

41 Whip for Scourging. The most terrible instrument for scourging was known as a flagellum. It consisted of a handle into which several cords or leather thongs were fixed. These thongs were weighted with jagged pieces of bone or metal to make the blows more painful.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 10:17; 20:19; 23:34

42 Typical Flat-Roofed Houses. The roof of a family home was a center of activity. A father might gather his household there to talk about Jehovah. During the Festival of Ingathering, for example, booths were erected on the rooftops. (Le 23:41, 42; De 16:13-15) Such chores as the drying of flax were done there. (Jos 2:6) Sometimes people slept on the

roof. (1Sa 9:25, 26) Any activity on a roof would easily be seen by others. (2Sa 16:22) And an announcement made from a rooftop would quickly be heard by neighbors and those passing by on the street.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 10:27



43

43 Bone Flute. In Bible times, flutes might be made of reed, cane, or even bone or ivory. The flute was one of the most popular of all musical instruments. It was played on joyous occasions, such as at banquets and weddings (1Ki 1:40; Isa 5:12; 30:29), a custom imitated by children in public places. It was also played at times of sadness. Professional mourners were often accompanied by flutists playing mournful tunes. The piece of

a flute shown here was found in Jerusalem in a layer of rubble that dates to when the temple was destroyed by the Romans. It is about 15 cm (6 in.) long and is likely made from a bone that was part of the leg of a cow or an ox.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 11:16, 17; Lu 7:32



44 Sparrow. Sparrows were the cheapest of all birds sold as food. Two of them could be purchased with the amount a man earned working for 45 minutes. The Greek term could embrace a variety of small birds, including a common house sparrow (*Passer domesticus biblicus*) and the Spanish sparrow (*Passer hispaniolensis*), which are still abundant in Israel. **Related Scripture(s):** Mt 10:29

45 Royal Houses. When Jesus referred to those living in “royal houses” (Lu 7:25) or “houses of kings” (Mt 11:8), his listeners may have been reminded of the many luxurious palaces built by Herod the Great. Shown in the photograph are remains of just one part of a winter palace complex that he built in Jericho. This building included a colonnaded reception hall measuring 29 by 19 m (95 by 62 ft),

colonnaded courtyards surrounded by many rooms, and a bathhouse that incorporated heating and cooling systems. Connected to the palace was a multitiered garden. This palace may have been burned during an uprising that occurred a few decades before John the Baptist began his ministry, and it was rebuilt by Herod’s son, Archelaus. **Related Scripture(s):** Mt 11:8; Lu 7:25



46

46 The Marketplace. Some marketplaces, like the one depicted here, were located along a road. Vendors often placed so much merchandise in the street that it blocked traffic. Local residents could buy common household goods, pottery, and expensive glassware, as well as fresh produce. Because there was no refrigeration, people needed to visit the market each day to buy supplies. Here a shopper could hear news brought in

by traders or other visitors, children could play, and the unemployed could wait to be hired. In the marketplace, Jesus healed the sick and Paul preached. (Ac 17:17) By contrast, the proud scribes and Pharisees loved to be noticed and greeted in these public areas.

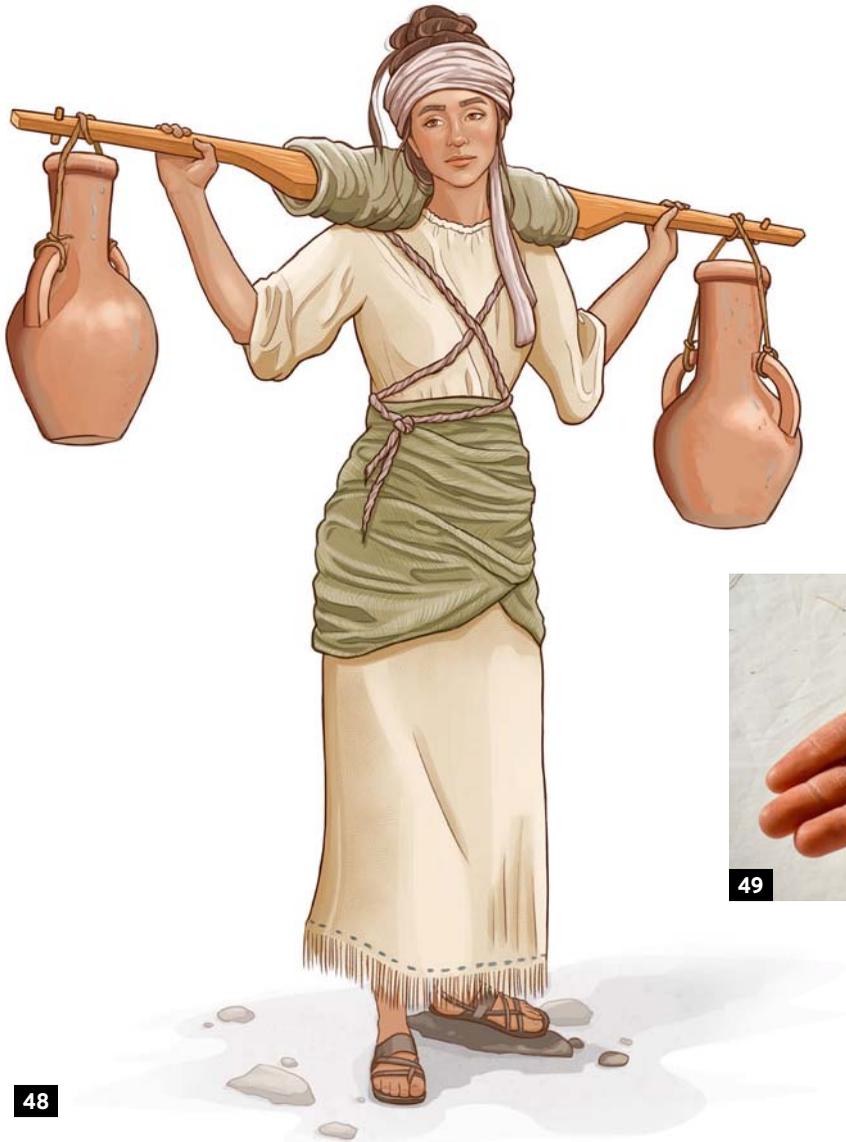
Related Scripture(s): Mt 11:16; 20:3; Mr 6:56; 12:38; Lu 7:32; 11:43



47

47 Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida. This panoramic view is from Ofir Lookout, which is located near the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. Chorazin (B) was only about 3 km (2 mi) from the suggested site of ancient Capernaum (A), the city that Jesus apparently used as a base of operations during his great Galilean ministry of over two years' duration. The apostles Peter and Andrew lived in Capernaum, and Matthew's tax

office was located there or nearby. (Mr 1:21, 29; 2:1, 13, 14; 3:16; Lu 4:31, 38) Peter and Andrew, along with Philip, originally came from the nearby city of Bethsaida (C). (Joh 1:44) Jesus performed many miracles in or near these three cities.—See  Appendix A7, Map 3B and Map 4.
Related Scripture(s): Mt 11:21; Lu 10:13



48

48 Yoke. One type of wooden yoke was a bar or frame fitted to a person's shoulders, and loads were suspended from it on each side of the body. Another type of yoke was a wooden bar or frame that was placed over the

necks of two draft animals when they pulled a load.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 11:29, 30

49 Kernels of Grain. Jesus' disciples may have plucked and eaten wheat kernels such as those pictured here.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 12:1



49



50 The Sea of Galilee Near Capernaum. The water level and topography of the Sea of Galilee have changed over the centuries since Jesus' day. But it may have been in this area that Jesus spoke from a boat to the crowds. Jesus' voice would have been

amplified as it bounced off the surface of the water.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 13:1, 2](#)



51

51 Sowing Seed. In Bible times, various means of sowing seed were used. Sowers might carry a bag of seed tied across the shoulder and around the waist; others would form a pouch for the seed in a part of their outer garment. They would then disperse the seed by hand, using long sweeping motions. Because the fields were cut through with hard-packed foot-



52

paths, the sower had to make sure that the seed landed on good soil. Seed was covered as soon as possible so that the birds did not eat it.
[Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 13:3](#)

52 Remains of Ancient Storehouses at Masada. Storehouses could be found throughout Israel and were used to hold threshed grain. Some

facilities might also be used to hold oil and wine or even precious metals or stones.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 13:30](#)



54



53

53 Reapers. In Bible times, reapers sometimes simply pulled the stalks of grain from the ground. Typically, however, they would harvest the grain by cutting the stalks with a sickle. (De 16:9; Mr 4:29) Harvesting was usually a communal work, with groups of reapers collecting ripe grain from a field. (Ru 2:3; 2Ki 4:18) A number of Bible writers, such as King Solomon, the prophet Hosea, and the apostle

Paul, used the work of reaping to illustrate important truths. (Pr 22:8; Ho 8:7; Ga 6:7-9) Jesus also used this familiar occupation to illustrate the role that the angels and his disciples would play in the disciple-making work.—Mt 13:24-30, 39; Joh 4:35-38.
 Related Scripture(s): Mt 13:30; Joh 4:36

54 Mustard Grain. Of the various types of seeds that were gathered and sown by Galilean farmers, the mustard seed was evidently the tiniest. This seed was used in ancient Jewish writings as a figure of speech for the very smallest measure of size.
 Related Scripture(s): Mt 13:31, 32



55

55 Fishermen Hauling in a Dragnet.

Dragnets in Jesus' day were likely made from the fibers of the flax plant. According to some sources, a dragnet might have been up to 300 m (about 1,000 ft) long with weights attached to the bottom edge and floats attached to the top. Fishermen used a boat to drop the dragnet into the water. Sometimes they would take the long ropes attached to the ends of

the net ashore, where several men on each rope gradually pulled the net onto the beach. The net gathered everything in its path.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 13:47, 48](#)



56 Coin Made by Herod Antipas.

These photos show both sides of a copper alloy coin that was minted about the time that Jesus was engaged in his ministry. The coin was commissioned by Herod Antipas, who was tetrarch, or district ruler, of Galilee and Perea. Jesus was likely passing through Herod's territory of Perea on his way to Jerusalem when the Pharisees told Jesus that Herod

wanted to kill him. Jesus responded by calling Herod "that fox." (See study note on Lu 13:32.) Since most of Herod's subjects were Jewish, the coins he made depicted such emblems as a palm branch (A) and a wreath (B), images that would not offend the Jews.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 14:3; Mr 8:15; Lu 3:1; 9:7; 13:31, 32

57 Northeast Portion of the Sea of Galilee. Overlooking the Sea of Galilee and the plain where Jesus is thought to have fed about 5,000 men, as well as women and children.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 14:13-22



58



59



58 Fish and Loaves. Among the fish found in Israel are varieties of bream, carp, perch, and tilapia. Fish were commonly broiled or salted and dried. Bread made with freshly ground wheat or barley flour was baked daily. Often the bread was unleavened (Hebrew, *mats-tsah'*), made by simply mixing flour and water without adding leaven before kneading the dough.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 14:17-19

59 Baskets. In the Bible, a number of different words are used to describe various types of baskets. For example, the Greek word identifying the 12 vessels used to gather leftovers after Jesus miraculously fed about 5,000 men indicates that they may have been relatively small wicker handbaskets. However, a different Greek word is used to describe the seven baskets that contained the leftovers after

Jesus fed about 4,000 men. (Mr 8: 8, 9) This word denotes a large basket or hamper, and the same Greek word is used to describe the kind of basket in which Paul was lowered to the ground through an opening in the wall of Damascus.—Ac 9:25.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 14:20; 15:37; 16:9, 10; Mr 6:43; Lu 9:17; Joh 6:13



60 Mount Hermon. Reaching a height of 2,814 m (9,232 ft) and located near Caesarea Philippi, Mount Hermon is the highest mountain in the vicinity of Israel. Its snowcapped peaks condense water vapor, producing abundant dew that preserves vegetation during the long dry season. (Ps 133:3) Its melting snow is the main source of the Jordan River. Mount Hermon is one possible loca-

tion of Jesus' transfiguration.
—Mt 17:2.

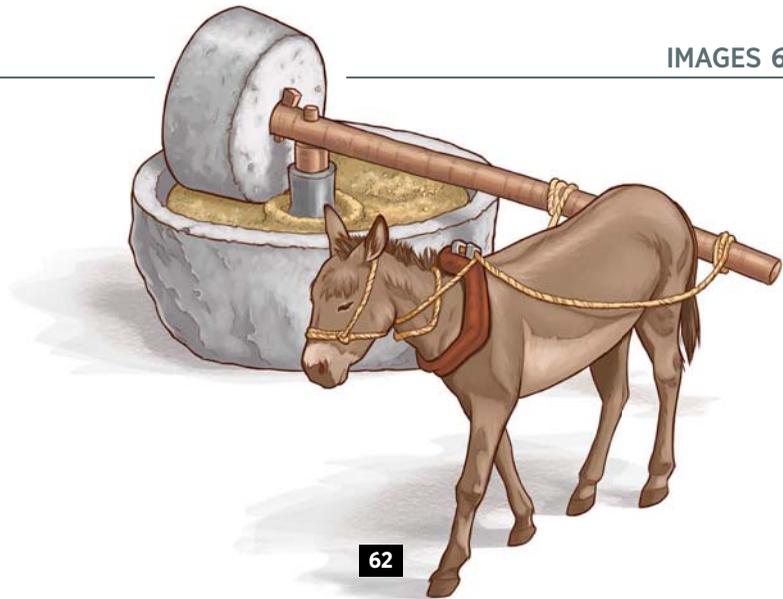
Related Scripture(s): Mt 17:1-9; Mr 9:2, 3; Lu 9:28, 29



61 Mount Hermon As Seen From the Hula Valley Nature Reserve. Located at the northern limit of the Promised Land, Mount Hermon is made up of several distinct peaks, the tallest of which rises 2,814 m (9,232 ft) above sea level. These peaks form the southern part of the Anti-Lebanon range. It may have been on

Mount Hermon that Jesus was transfigured.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 17:1; Mr 9:2; Lu 9:28](#)



62



63

62 Millstone. Millstones were used for grinding grain and pressing oil out of olives. Some were small enough to be turned by hand, but others were so huge that they had to be turned by an animal. It may have been a large millstone similar to this one that Samson was forced to turn for the Philistines. (Jg 16:21) The animal-powered mill

was common not only in Israel but also throughout much of the Roman Empire.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 18:6

63 Upper and Lower Millstones. A large millstone like the one depicted here would be turned by a domestic animal, such as a donkey, and be

used to grind grain or crush olives. An upper millstone might be as much as 1.5 m (5 ft) in diameter and would be turned on an even larger lower stone. **Related Scripture(s):** Mt 18:6; Mr 9:42; Lu 17:2



64

64 The Shepherd and His Sheep.

A shepherd's life could be difficult. He was exposed to heat and cold as well as to sleepless nights. (Ge 31:40; Lu 2:8) He protected the flock from predators, such as lions, wolves, and bears, and safeguarded them from thieves. (Ge 31:39; 1Sa 17:34-36; Isa 31:4; Am 3:12; Joh 10:10-12) The shepherd kept the flock

from scattering (1Ki 22:17), looked for lost sheep (Lu 15:4), carried feeble or weary lambs in his bosom (Isa 40:11) or on his shoulders, and cared for the sick and injured (Eze 34:3, 4; Zec 11:16). The Bible often speaks of shepherds and their work in a figurative way. For example, Jehovah is likened to a Shepherd who lovingly cares for his sheep, that is, his peo-

ple. (Ps 23:1-6; 80:1; Jer 31:10; Eze 34:11-16; 1Pe 2:25) Jesus is called "the great shepherd" (Heb 13:20) and "the chief shepherd," under whose direction the overseers in the Christian congregation shepherd the flock of God willingly, unselfishly, and eagerly. —1 Pe 5:2-4.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 18:12, 13; Lu 15:4, 5



65 East of the Jordan—Perea. This photograph shows part of the area known as Perea. This region was located east of the Jordan River. It extended to Pella in the north and to east of the Dead Sea in the south. The term “Perea” does not appear in the Bible. However, the term comes from a Greek word meaning “the other side; across; beyond.” This Greek

word is used several times in the Bible and sometimes with reference to the region of Perea. (Mt 4:25; Mr 3:8) People from Galilee at times traveled through Perea on their way to Jerusalem. Toward the end of his ministry, Jesus spent some time teaching in Perea. (Lu 13:22) Later, Jesus again traveled through Perea on his way to Jerusalem. (Mt 19:1; 20:17-19;

Mr 10:1, 32, 46) (A) Jordan River. (B) Plains east of the Jordan River. (C) Mountains of Gilead.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Mt 19:1; Mr 10:1](#)



66 Camel. In Jesus' day, the camel was the largest domesticated animal in the region. The Arabian camel (*Camelus dromedarius*), thought to be the one generally referred to in the Bible, has only one hump. The first mention of the camel in the Bible relates to Abraham's temporary residence in Egypt, where he acquired a number of these beasts of burden. —Ge 12:16.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 19:24; 23:24



67

67 Bethphage, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem. This picture shows a path approaching Jerusalem from the east, from the village of modern-day et-Tur—thought to correspond to the Biblical Bethphage—to one of the higher points on the Mount of Olives. Bethany lies east of Bethphage on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. When in Jerusalem, Jesus and his disciples customarily spent the night at Bethany, today marked by the town of el-'Azariyeh (El 'Eizariya), an Arabic

name meaning “The Place of Lazarus.” Jesus undoubtedly stayed at the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. (Mt 21:17; Mr 11:11; Lu 21:37; Joh 11:1) When traveling from their home to Jerusalem, Jesus may have followed a route similar to the one shown in the picture. On Nisan 9, 33 C.E., when Jesus rode the colt of a donkey over the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, he may well have done so from Bethphage, following the road to Jerusalem. (A) Road from Bethphage.

(B) Bethphage. (C) Mount of Olives. (D) Kidron Valley. (E) Temple Mount.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 21:1; Mr 11:1; Lu 19:29; Ac 1:12



68

68 Colt, or Young Donkey. The donkey is a hard-hoofed animal of the horse family, distinguished from the horse by its smaller size, shorter mane, longer ears, and shorter tail-hair, with only the end half of the tail having a brush. Although the donkey's stupidity and stubbornness are proverbial, its intelligence is actually

considered to be superior to that of the horse, and it is usually a patient creature. Both men and women, even prominent Israelites, rode donkeys. (Jos 15:18; Jg 5:10; 10:3, 4; 12:14; 1Sa 25:42) Solomon, the son of David, rode to his anointing on his father's she-mule, a hybrid offspring of a male donkey. (1Ki 1:33-40) It

was therefore most appropriate that Jesus, the one greater than Solomon, fulfill the prophecy of Zec 9:9 by riding, not on a horse, but on a young donkey.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 21:5, 7; Mr 11:7; Lu 19:30; Joh 12:14



69 Winepress. In Israel, grapes were gathered during August and September, depending on the type of grapes and the climate of the region. They were usually placed in limestone vats or troughs cut into rock. Men normally crushed the grapes barefoot, singing songs as they trod the winepress. (Isa 16:10; Jer 25:30;

48:33) (A) Freshly picked grapes. (B) Winepress. (C) Drainage channel. (D) Lower collecting basin. (E) Earthenware wine jars.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 21:33; Mr 12:1



70

70 Tiberius Caesar. Tiberius was born in 42 B.C.E. In 14 C.E., he became the second emperor of Rome. Tiberius lived until March 37 C.E. He was emperor throughout Jesus' ministry, so Tiberius was the ruling Caesar when Jesus said regarding the tax coin: "Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar." —Mr 12:14-17; Mt 22:17-21; Lu 20:22-25.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 22:21; Mr 12:17; Lu 3:1



71



71 Scripture-Containing Case, or Phylactery. A phylactery is a small leather case containing strips of parchment on which four passages of Scripture are written, namely, Ex 13:1-10, 11-16; De 6:4-9; 11:13-21. Some time after the Jews returned from exile in Babylon, the custom arose for males to wear Scripture-containing cases during morning prayer, except on festival days and the Sabbath. The photo shows an

actual phylactery dating from the first century C.E. It was found in one of the Qumran caves. The drawing shows what such a phylactery may have looked like when new.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 23:5

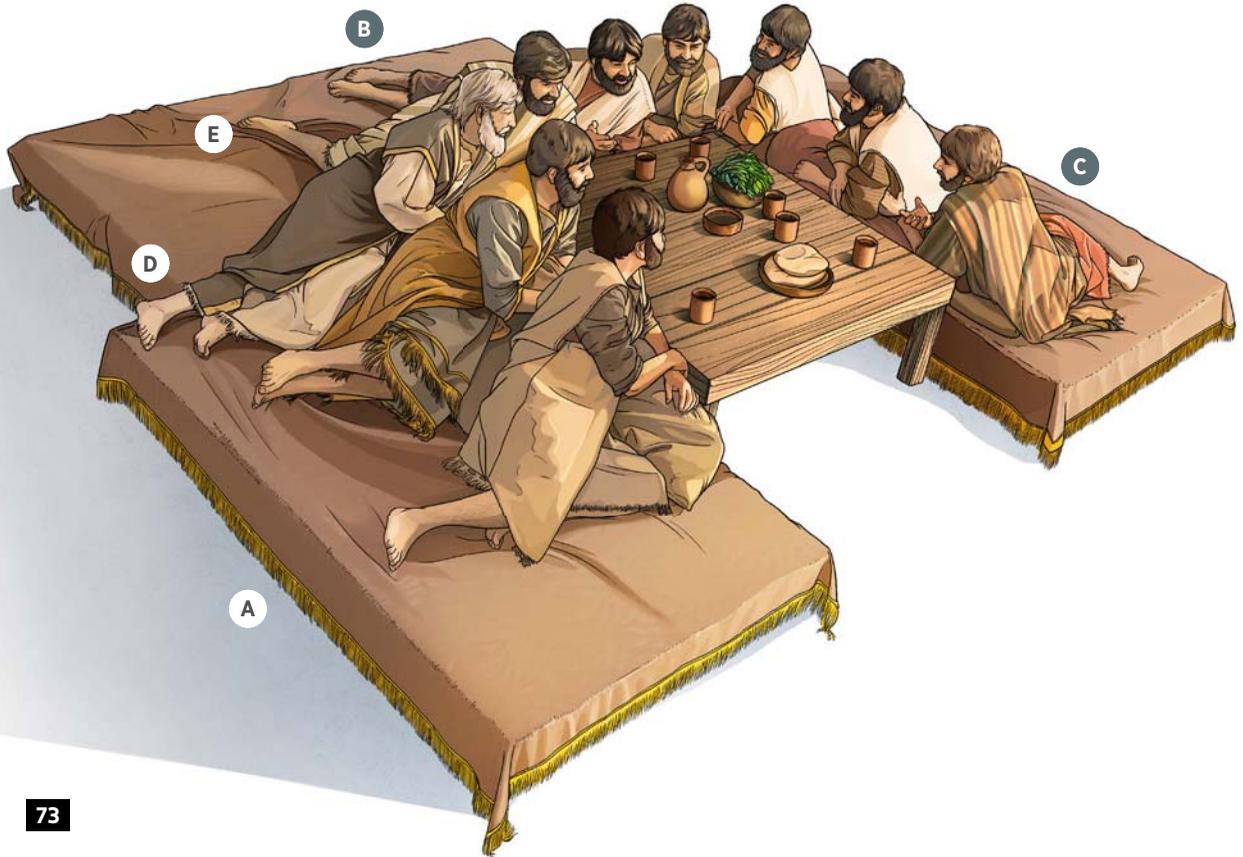


72

72 The Front Seats in the Synagogue. The reconstruction shown in this picture is partly based on the ruins of a first-century synagogue in Gamla, a city located about 10 km (6 mi) northeast of the Sea of Galilee. No synagogues from the first century have survived intact, so the exact features are uncertain. This depiction includes some of the features that were likely present in many synagogues of that time. (A) The front, or

best, seats in the synagogue may have been located on or near the speaker's platform. (B) The platform from which the Scriptures would be read. The exact location of the platform may have varied from one synagogue to the next. (C) Seating along the wall may have been occupied by people with status in the community. Others might have sat on mats on the floor. The synagogue in Gamla seems to have had four rows

of seats. (D) An ark, or chest, in which sacred scrolls were kept may have been located on the back wall. The seating arrangements in the synagogue were a constant reminder to those in attendance that some had greater status than others, a topic often debated by Jesus' disciples. —Mt 18:1-4; 20:20, 21; Mr 9:33, 34; Lu 9:46-48.
 Related Scripture(s): Mt 23:6; Mr 12:39; Lu 20:46



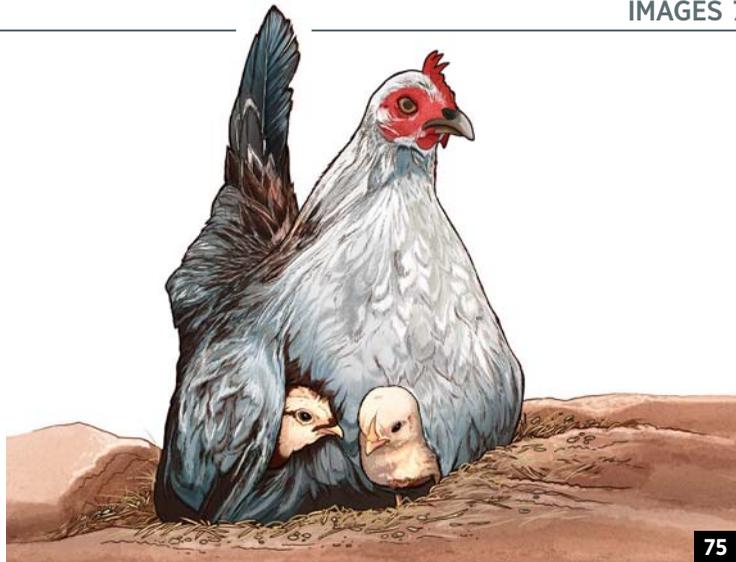
73

73 Prominent Places at Evening Meals. In the first century, a common way of dining was to recline at the table. Each person would rest his left elbow on a cushion and eat using his right hand. According to the Greco-Roman custom, a typical dining room had three couches set around a low dining table. The Romans called this kind of dining room a *triclinium* (Latin from a Greek word meaning “room with three couches”). Although this arrangement traditionally accommodated nine people, three to a

couch, it became common to use longer couches to accommodate even more people. Each position in the dining room was traditionally viewed as having a different degree of honor. One couch was the lowest place of honor (A), one was the middle (B), and one was the highest (C). The positions on the couch differed in importance. The person dining was considered to be above the one to his right and below the one to his left. At a formal banquet, the host typically sat at the first position (D) on the

lowest couch. The place of honor was the third position (E) on the middle couch. Although it is not clear to what extent the Jews adopted this custom, it appears that Jesus alluded to it when teaching his followers the need for humility.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 23:6; Mr 12:39; Lu 14:7-9; 20:46



75



74

74 Mint, Dill, and Cumin. From ancient times, mint has been used in medicine and for flavoring food. The Greek word *he-dy'o-smon*, "mint," (literally, sweet-smelling) likely embraced the various known kinds of mint found in Israel and Syria, including the common horsemint (*Mentha longifolia*). Dill (*Anethum graveolens*) is cultivated for its aromatic seeds, which are valued as a spice for flavoring foods and as a medicine for treating stomach ailments. The cumin plant (*Cuminum cyminum*) is of

the carrot or parsley family and is best known for its pungently aromatic seeds, used in Middle Eastern and other countries as a spice for flavoring bread, cakes, stews, and even liquors.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 23:23

75 A Hen Gathering Her Chicks.

Jesus painted a touching word picture, likening his concern for the people of Jerusalem to the protectiveness of a hen that is sheltering her young with her wings. This illustra-

tion, as well as Jesus' reference to a son who asks his father for an egg (Lu 11:11, 12), indicates that the domestic hen was common in first-century Israel. Though the Greek word *or'nis*, used at Mt 23:37 and Lu 13:34, could refer to any bird, wild or domesticated, in this context it is understood to refer to a hen, the most common and useful of the domestic fowl.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 23:37; Lu 13:34



76

76 Stones From the Temple Mount.

These stones, found on the southern part of the Western Wall, are believed to have been part of the structures on the first-century temple mount. They have been left here as a grim reminder of the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by the Romans.

[Related Scripture\(s\):](#) [Mt 24:2;](#)
[Mr 13:2;](#) [Lu 19:44;](#) [21:6](#)



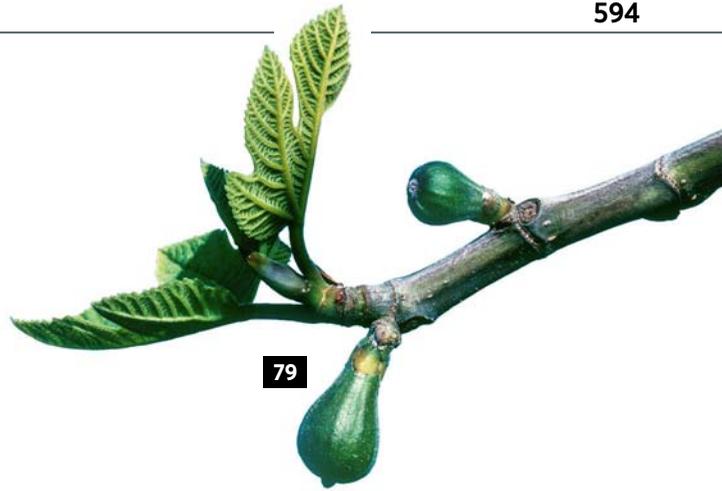
77 Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives (A) is a chain of rounded limestone hills located on the eastern side of Jerusalem and separated from the city by the Kidron Valley. The summit across from the temple mount (B) is about 812 m (2,664 ft) at its highest point and is the one generally referred to in the Bible as the Mount of Olives. It was from a location on

the Mount of Olives that Jesus explained the sign of his presence to his disciples.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 24:3; Mr 13:3, 4



78



79



80

78 Outer Garments. The Greek word *hi-ma'ti-on*, for “outer garment,” probably corresponds to the Hebrew word *sim-lah'*. In some cases, it appears to have been a loose robe, but more often it was a rectangular piece of material. It was easily put on and thrown off.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 24:18

79 Fig Tree. A fig tree branch in the springtime with leaves and early figs sprouting together. In Israel, the first fruit buds typically appear on the branches of the fig tree in February and the leaves appear in the final part

of April or in May, indicating the approach of summer. (Mt 24:32) The trees produced two crops a year: the first ripe figs, or early figs, which mature in June or early July (Isa 28:4; Jer 24:2; Ho 9:10), and the later figs, which grow on the new wood and make up the main crop, generally maturing from August onward.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 24:32

80 Hand Mill. Two women generally operated this kind of rotary hand mill, which was one type of mill used in Bible times. (Lu 17:35) They sat facing each other, each placing one hand

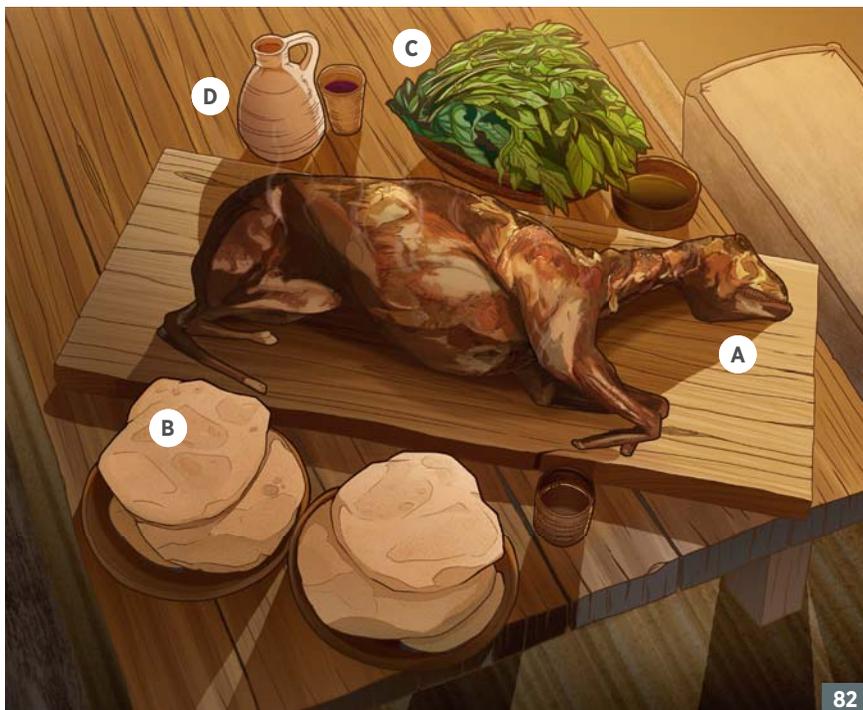
on the handle to turn the upper stone. With her free hand, one woman fed grain in small amounts into the filler hole of the upper stone while the other woman gathered the flour as it emerged from the rim of the mill and fell to the tray or the cloth spread beneath the mill. Women ground grain each day, rising early in the morning to prepare the flour needed for bread for the day.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 24:41



81

10.75 cm



82

81 Alabaster Jar. These small vaselike vessels for perfume were originally made of stone found near Alabastron, Egypt. The stone itself, a form of calcium carbonate, came to be known by the name Alabastron. The jar shown here was discovered in Egypt and dates from somewhere between 150 B.C.E. and 100 C.E. A less costly material, such as gypsum, was used to make similar-looking jars; these too were called alabasters, simply because of the use to which they were put. However, cases made of genuine alabaster were used for the more costly ointments and perfumes,

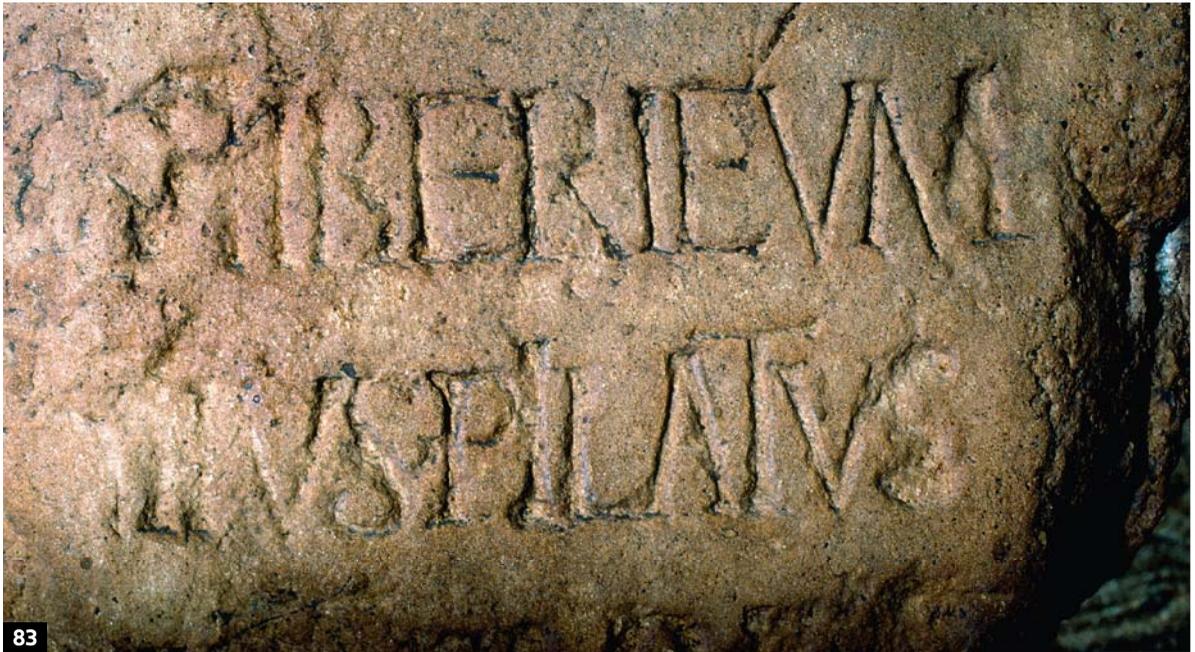
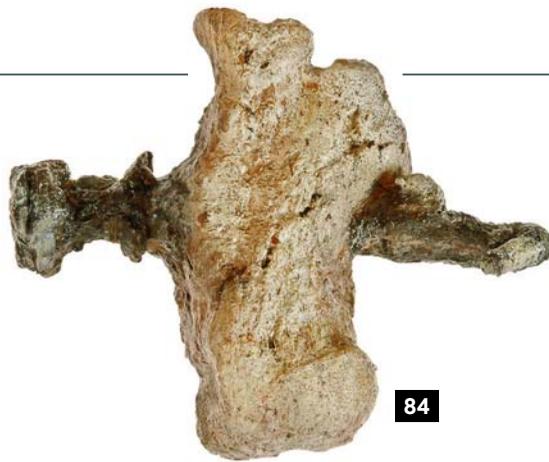
like those with which Jesus was anointed on two occasions—once at the house of a Pharisee in Galilee and once at the house of Simon the leper in Bethany.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 26:7; Mr 14:3; Lu 7:37

82 The Passover Meal. Essential items at the Passover meal were: roast lamb (no bones in the animal were to be broken) (A); unleavened bread (B); and bitter greens (C). (Ex 12:5, 8; Nu 9:11) The bitter greens, which according to the Mishnah might have been lettuce, chicory,

pepperwort, endive, or dandelion, evidently reminded the Israelites of their bitter slavery in Egypt. Jesus used the unleavened bread as a symbol of his perfect human body. (Mt 26:26) And the apostle Paul called Jesus “our Passover lamb.” (1Co 5:7) By the first century, wine (D) was also served as part of the Passover meal. Jesus used the wine to symbolize his blood, which would be poured out as a sacrifice.—Mt 26:27, 28.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 26:18; Mr 14:12



83 Inscription Bearing the Name Pontius Pilate. In 1961, archaeologists working in the ancient Roman theater in Caesarea, Israel, found that a reused stone slab clearly bore Pilate's name in Latin (replica shown here). His name also appears a number of times in other contemporary historical records.
 Related Scripture(s): Mt 27:2, 18

84 Nail in a Heel Bone. This is a photograph of a replica of a human heel bone pierced by an iron nail that was 11.5 cm (4.5 in.) long. The original

artifact was found in 1968, during excavations in northern Jerusalem, and dates to Roman times. It provides archaeological evidence that nails were likely used in executions to fasten the person to a wooden stake. This nail may be similar to the nails employed by the Roman soldiers to fasten Jesus Christ to the stake. The artifact was found in a stone box, called an ossuary, into which the dried bones of a deceased person were placed after the flesh had decomposed. This indicates that someone executed on a stake could be given a burial.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 27:35; Mr 15:24; Lu 23:33; 24:39; Joh 19:18



85

85 Tomb Chamber. The Jews usually buried their dead in caves or vaults cut into the rock. These tombs were customarily located outside the cities, an exception being the tombs of the kings. Jewish tombs that have been found are notable for their simplicity. This was evidently because the Jews' worship allowed no veneration of the dead and did not foster any ideas of a conscious existence in a spirit world after death.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 27:52, 53; 28:8; Mr 15:46; Lu 23:53; Joh 19:41, 42



86 Wild Beasts of the Wilderness.

Among the animals inhabiting the wilderness in which Jesus spent some 40 days and nights were the lion (A), the leopard (B), and the striped hyena (C). Lions have not been found in this area for hundreds of years, but leopards and hyenas continue to inhabit the region. In recent years, though, they have rarely been seen.

Related Scripture(s): [Mr 1:13](#)



87

87 View of the Valley of Jezreel.

The view shown here is from a cliff near Nazareth, looking south. The fertile Valley of Jezreel, prominent in various Bible accounts, is here shown extending eastward and westward. (Jos 17:16; Jg 6:33; Ho 1:5) To the left in the distance, the most prominent feature is the hill of Moreh, with the city of Nain on its slope. It was in Nain that Jesus resurrected a widow's son. (Jg 7:1; Lu 7:11-15) In the middle

of the horizon, Mount Gilboa is visible. (1Sa 31:1, 8) Jesus grew up in nearby Nazareth and may have come to this spot that overlooks a number of important locations in Israel's history. —Lu 2:39, 40.

Related Scripture(s): Mt 2:23; Mr 1:9; Lu 2:51; Joh 1:45



88

88 Synagogue in Capernaum. The white limestone walls in this photograph are part of a synagogue built sometime between the late second and early fifth centuries C.E. Parts of the black basalt structure beneath the limestone are believed by some to be the remains of a first-century synagogue. If that is true, this is possibly one of the locations where Jesus taught and where he cured the demon-possessed man mentioned at Mr 1:23-27 and Lu 4:33-36.

Related Scripture(s): Mr 1:21; Lu 4:31

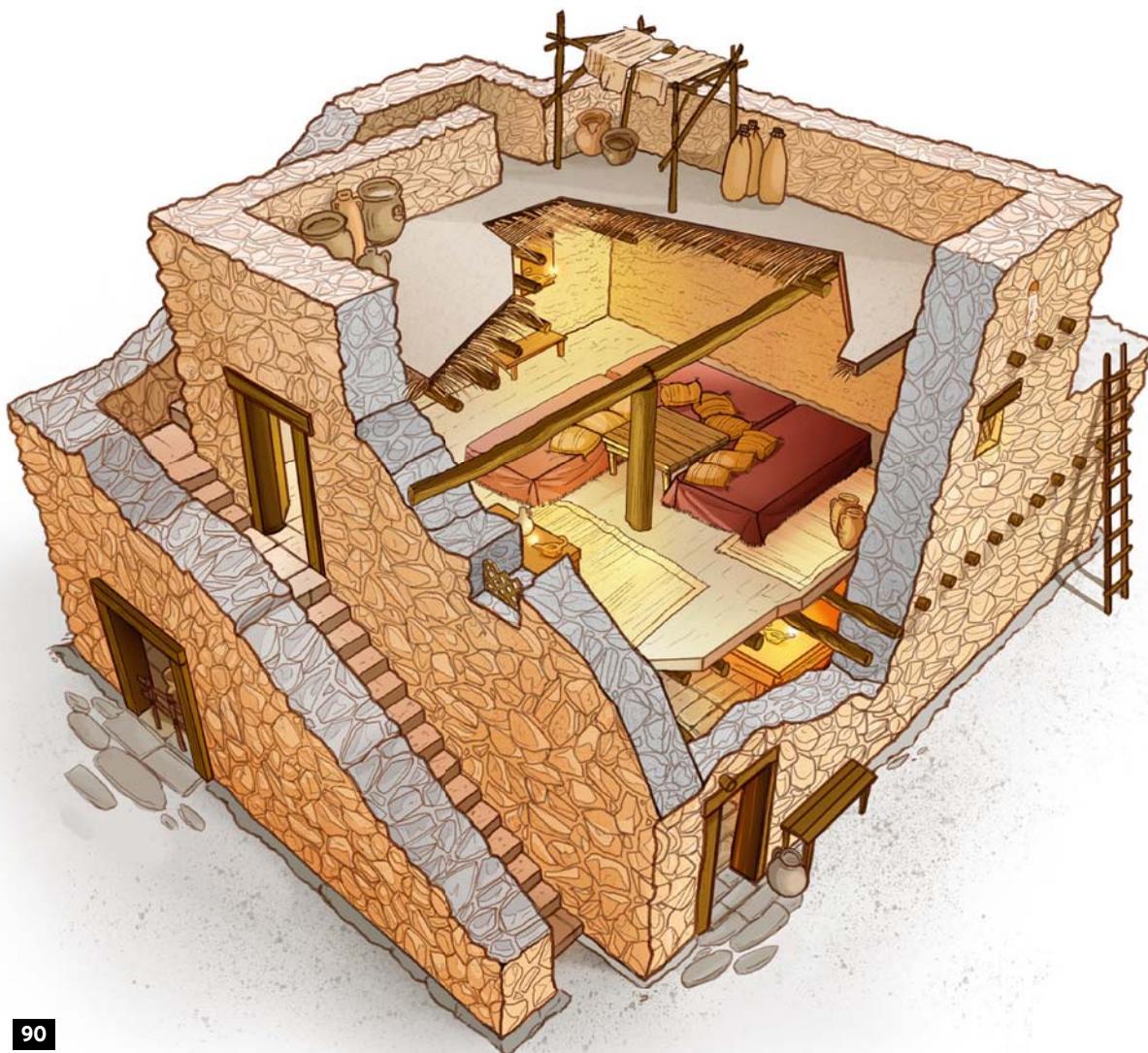


89

89 The Treasury Chests and the Widow. According to rabbinic sources, the temple built by Herod contained 13 treasury chests, called shofar chests. The Hebrew word *shoh·phar'* means "ram's horn," indicating that at least part of the chest might have been shaped like a horn, or trumpet. Those who heard Jesus condemn people who symbolically blew a trumpet when giving gifts of mercy may have been reminded of the noise that coins made as they were dropped into these trumpet-shaped treasury

chests. (Mt 6:2) The two small coins donated by the widow might not have made much noise when she deposited them, but Jesus showed that both the widow and her contribution were valuable to Jehovah.

Related Scripture(s): Mr 12:41-44; Lu 21:1-4

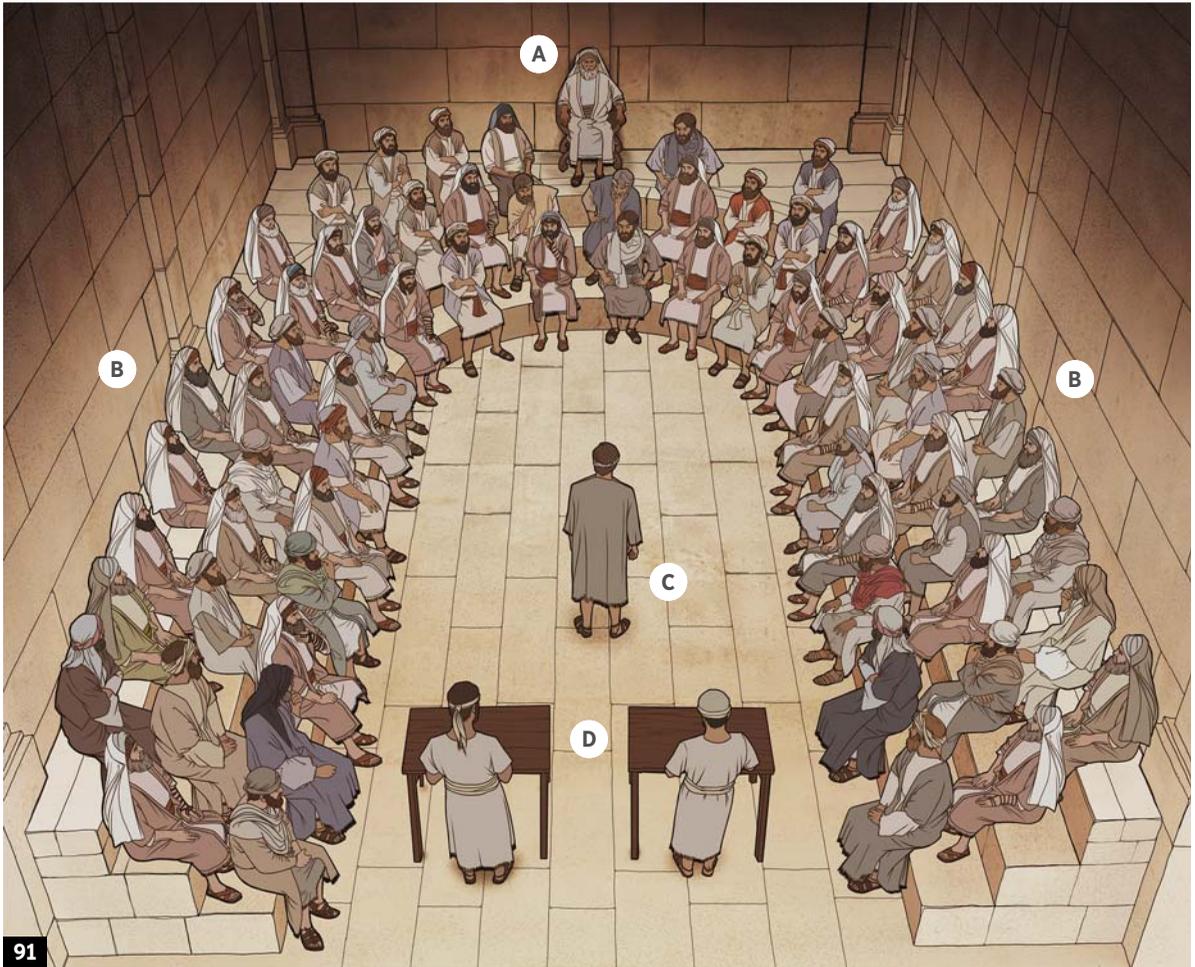


90

90 Upper Room. Some homes in Israel had an upper story. That room was accessed by means of an inside ladder or wooden staircase or an outside stone staircase or a ladder. In a large upper chamber, possibly similar to the one depicted here, Jesus celebrated the last Passover with his disciples and instituted the commem-

oration of the Lord's Evening Meal. (Lu 22:12, 19, 20) On the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., about 120 disciples were apparently in an upper chamber of a house in Jerusalem when God's spirit was poured out on them.—Ac 1:15; 2:1-4.

Related Scripture(s): Mr 14:15; Lu 22:12; Ac 1:13; 9:37

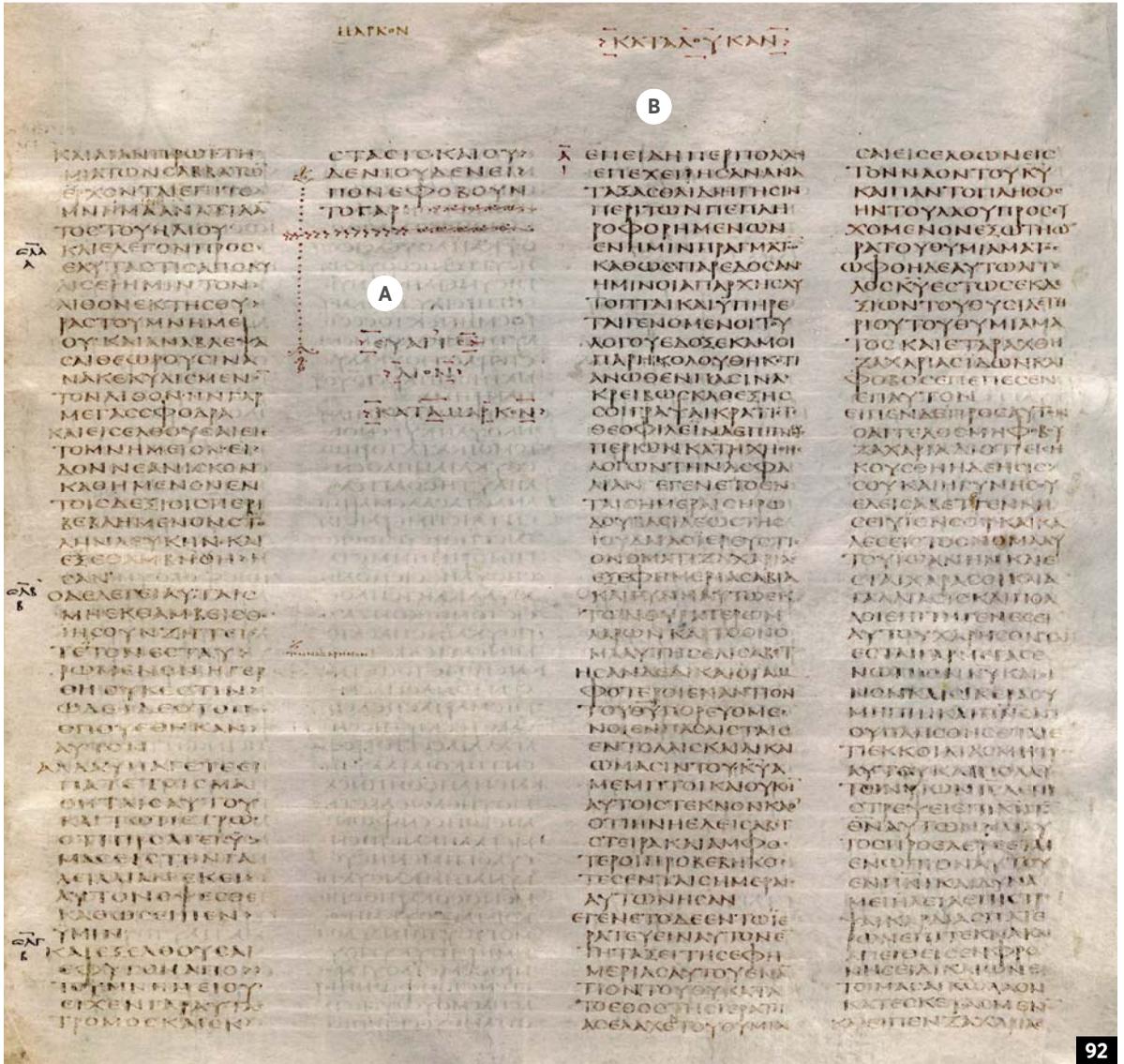


91

91 The Sanhedrin. Seventy-one members constituted the Jewish high court called the Great Sanhedrin. It was located in Jerusalem. (See [Glossary](#), “Sanhedrin.”) According to the Mishnah, the seating was arranged in a semicircle three rows deep, and two scribes were present to record the court’s rulings. Some of the architectural features shown here

are based on a structure discovered in Jerusalem that is considered by some to be the Council Chamber from the first century. (See [Appendix B12](#), map “Jerusalem and Surrounding Area.”) (A) High priest. (B) Members of the Sanhedrin. (C) A defendant. (D) Clerks.

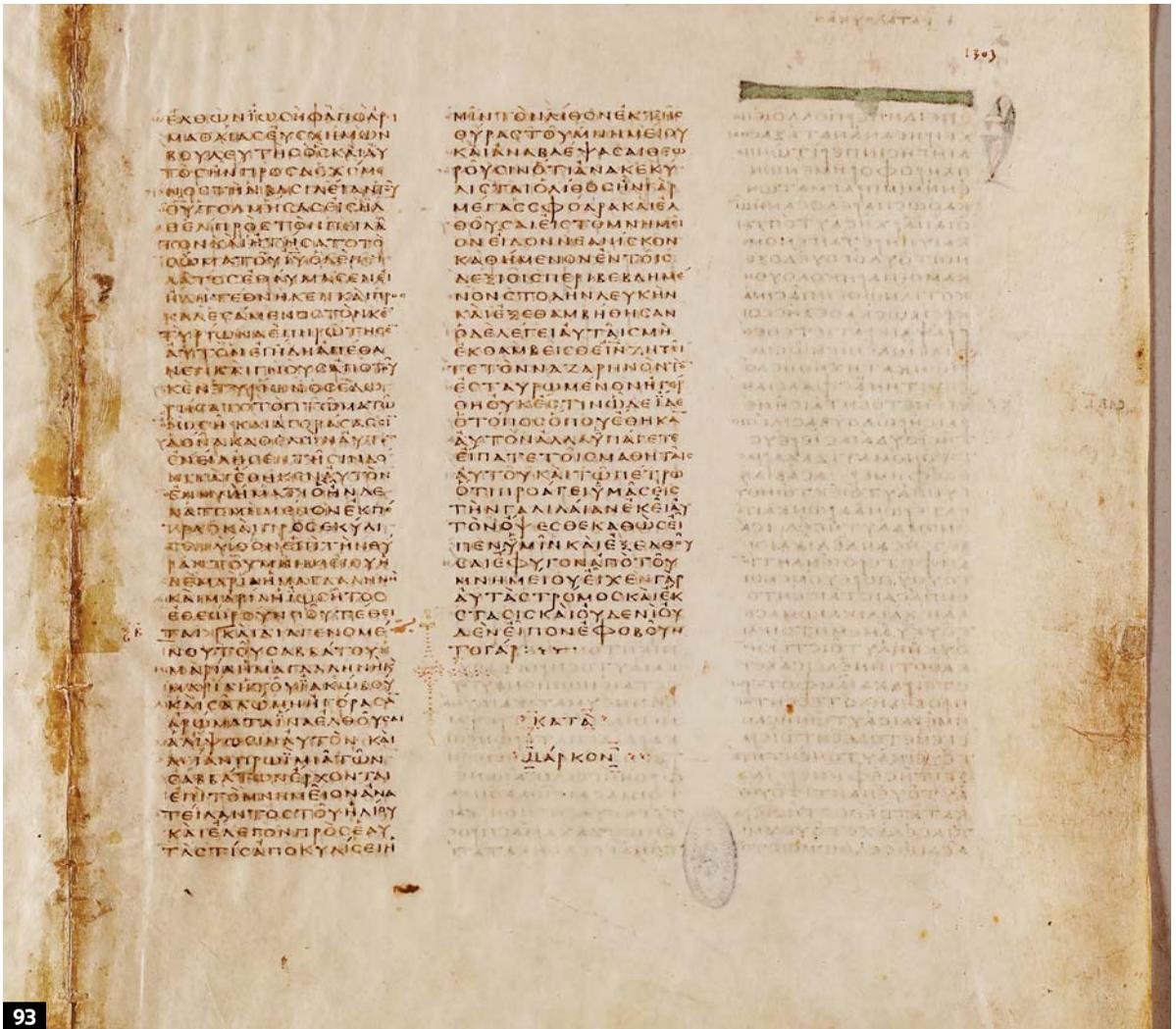
Related Scripture(s): [Mr 15:1](#); [Lu 22:66](#); [Joh 11:47](#); [Ac 4:15](#); [22:30](#); [24:20](#)



92 Codex Sinaiticus—End of Mark's Gospel. The Codex Sinaiticus is a vellum manuscript written in Greek and dating from the fourth century C.E. It contains all of the Christian Greek Scriptures and portions of the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures known as the *Septuagint*. Scholars consider Codex Sinaiticus to be one of the authoritative sources for the

Greek Bible text. Until the mid-1800's, the manuscript was located in St. Catherine's Monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai. Today, a major part of this manuscript, including the section shown here, is preserved at the British Library in London, England. This photo shows the end of the Gospel of Mark (A) and the beginning of Luke's account (B). In both this

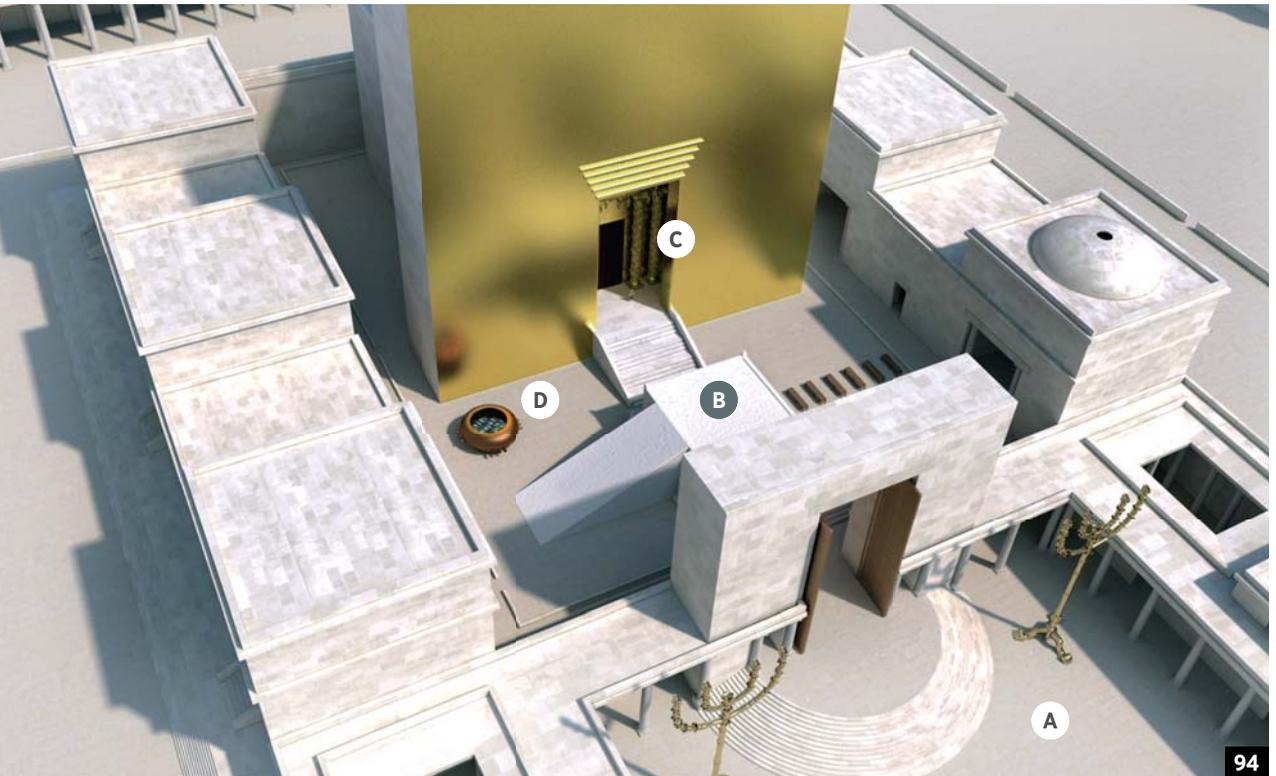
manuscript and the equally important fourth-century manuscript known as the Codex Vaticanus, Mark's account clearly concludes with the words that appear in modern Bibles at Mark 16:8.—See study note on Mr 16:8. [Related Scripture\(s\): Mr 16:8](#)



93 Codex Vaticanus—End of Mark’s Gospel. The Vatican Manuscript No. 1209, also known as Codex Vaticanus, dates to the fourth century C.E. Scholars consider it to be one of the authoritative sources for the Greek Bible text. This image shows the end of the Gospel of Mark. In both this manuscript and the equally important fourth-century manuscript known as Codex Sinaiticus, Mark’s account clearly concludes

with the words that appear in modern-day Bibles at Mark 16:8. (See study note on Mr 16:8.) The codex was possibly produced in Alexandria, Egypt, and the faded writing seems to show that the copyist used parchment that had been used before. This codex originally contained the entire Bible in Greek and probably had approximately 820 leaves, 759 of which remain. Most of Genesis is missing, as well as a part of Psalms, Hebrews

9:14 to 13:25, and all of 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Revelation. Codex Vaticanus is preserved at the Vatican Library in Rome, Italy, and is known to have been there from as early as the 15th century. [Related Scripture\(s\): Mr 16:8](#)

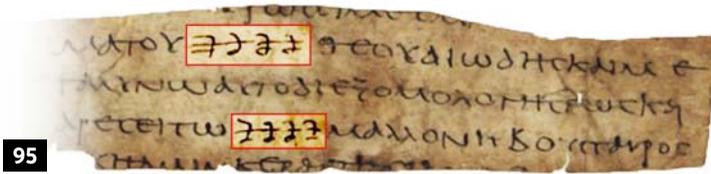


94 Entrance to Herod's Temple.

Some sources say that the temple built by Herod was 15 stories high. Apparently, the facade surrounding the front doors was plated with gold. The entrance faced east, so light from the rising sun would have been reflected with dazzling brilliance.

(A) Court of Women. (B) Altar of Burnt Offering. (C) Entrance to the Holy. (D) Sea of Cast Metal.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Lu 1:5-11](#)



95



96

95 Symmachus' Greek Translation Containing the Hebrew Tetragrammaton. Shown here is a portion of a third or fourth century C.E. parchment fragment of Symmachus' Greek translation of Ps 69:30, 31 (Ps 68:31, 32, *Septuagint*). Symmachus produced the original translation in the second century C.E. This fragment is known as P. Vindobonensis Greek 39777 and is now in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. The part shown here contains two occurrences of the divine name written in archaic Hebrew characters (𐤅𐤆𐤇𐤈 or 𐤅𐤆𐤇𐤈) within the Greek text. The words of Mary at Lu 1:46 may echo the thought of Ps 69:30, 31, where the di-

vine name also occurs in the original Hebrew text. The Hebrew Scripture background of Mary's expression of praise as well as the use of the Tetragrammaton in this Greek translation provides support for using the divine name in the main text of Lu 1:46. —See study note on Lu 1:46 and Appendix C.
Related Scripture(s): Lu 1:46

96 Writing Tablets. Zechariah, who wrote in Hebrew "John is his name," may have used a wooden tablet similar to the one shown here. Such tablets were in use for centuries throughout the ancient Middle East. The recessed portion of this type of

tablet was filled with a thin layer of wax. Using a stylus made of iron, bronze, or ivory, a writer made notes on the soft surface. A typical stylus was pointed on one end and flattened into a chisel shape on the other. The flattened end was used to erase the writing and smooth the wax. Two or more tablets were sometimes held together by small strips of leather. Businessmen, scholars, students, and tax collectors used tablets for records that needed to be kept only temporarily. The tablets shown in the photo date from the second or third century C.E. and were discovered in Egypt.
Related Scripture(s): Lu 1:63



97

97 Caesar Augustus. Octavius was the first emperor of the Roman Empire. His full name was Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus (Octavius or Octavian). He was the adoptive son of the Roman dictator Julius Caesar, who was murdered in 44 B.C.E. In September of 31 B.C.E., Octavius emerged as the undisputed ruler of

the Roman Empire, and on January 16, 27 B.C.E., the Roman Senate gave him the title Augustus. In 2 B.C.E., Augustus issued a decree requiring all inhabitants of the empire to be registered, each one in "his own city." (Lu 2:1-7) This decree resulted in Jesus' being born in Bethlehem, in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. (Da 11:

20; Mic 5:2) Augustus died on August 17, 14 C.E. (August 19, Julian calendar), in the month he had named after himself. The bronze sculpture shown here dates from 27 to 25 B.C.E. and is now kept in the British Museum.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 2:1



98 Jesus in the Manger. The Greek word for “manger” used at Lu 2:7 is *phat’ne*, meaning “feeding place.” In Palestine, archaeologists have found large troughs cut out of single pieces of limestone and measuring about 0.9 m (3 ft) in length, 0.5 m (1.5 ft) in width, and 0.6 m (2 ft) in depth. These are thought to have served as mangers. It may also be that as in more recent times, mangers were cut in the rock walls of caves that were used for sheltering animals.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 2:7



99 Turtledove and Pigeon. Under the Mosaic Law, a woman who had given birth was to offer a young ram as a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering. If the family could not afford a ram, as was evidently the case with Mary and Joseph, then two turtledoves or two young pigeons were acceptable. (Le 12:6-8) The turtledove (*Streptopelia turtur*) shown here (A) inhabits not only Israel but also Europe, North Africa, and western Asia. In October of each year, these birds migrate to

warmer, southern countries, returning to Israel in the spring. The other bird shown here (B) is a rock pigeon (*Columba livia*). This species is found worldwide. They usually do not migrate.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 2:24



100

100 The Great Isaiah Scroll. Shown here is a portion of the Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah (1QIsa^a) that is believed to date from 125 to 100 B.C.E. It was found in 1947 in a cave in Qumran, near the Dead Sea. The highlighted portion shows Isaiah 61:1, 2, the section Jesus read when he visited the synagogue in Nazareth. The individual sheets that make up this scroll were sewn together with linen thread. The scroll was made of 17 parchment strips averaging about 26.4 cm (10.3 in.) in height and varying in width from about 25.2 cm (nearly 10 in.) to about 62.8 cm (about

25 in.). The scroll is a total of 7.3 m (24 ft) in length in its present state of preservation. It was probably a scroll like this one that Jesus opened and then “found the place” where the prophetic words about the Messiah were written. (Lu 4:17) Also highlighted are the three places where the Tetragrammaton occurs in this passage.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 4:17-20



101



102

101 Upper Fold of a Garment. The outer garment worn by Israelites in Bible times was voluminous over the chest. The garment might be worn so that a fold of material hung over the belt. That fold could be used as a large pocket into which a person could place grain, money, or other articles and could even carry a baby or a young lamb. (Ex 4:6, 7; Nu 11:12; 2Ki 4:39; Job 31:33; Isa 40:11) The Greek word rendered “your laps” at Lu 6:38 literally means “your bosom (chest)” but in this context refers to the folds of the garment. ‘Pouring into the lap’ may refer to a custom some

vendors had of filling the fold of a person’s wide upper garment with the goods that he purchased.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 6:38

102 Plowing. Plowing was often done in the autumn when rains softened soil that had been baked hard by the sun during the hot summer months. (See Appendix B15.) Some plows consisted of a simple pointed piece of wood, perhaps metal-tipped, attached to a beam and pulled by one or more animals. After the soil was plowed, the seed was sown. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the familiar work

of plowing was often alluded to in illustrations. (Jg 14:18; Isa 2:4; Jer 4:3; Mic 4:3) Jesus frequently used agricultural activities to illustrate important teachings. For example, he referred to the work involved in plowing to emphasize the importance of being a wholehearted disciple. (Lu 9:62) If a plowman became distracted from the work at hand, he would make crooked furrows. Similarly, a disciple of Christ who gets distracted or turns aside from carrying out his responsibilities becomes unfit for God’s Kingdom.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 9:62



103 The Road From Jerusalem to Jericho. The road (A) shown here likely follows a path similar to that of the ancient road that linked Jerusalem to Jericho. That road was over 20 km (12 mi) long and had a steep, 1 km (.6 mi) descent as it wound from Jerusalem to Jericho. Robberies in the wild and lonely terrain were so frequent that a garrison had to be stationed there to protect travelers. Roman Jericho (B) was located where the road emerged from the wilder-

ness of Judea. An older city of Jericho (C) was located nearly 2 km (just over 1 mi) from the Roman city.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 10:30

104 Scorpions. Of the over 600 varieties of scorpions, generally ranging in size from less than 2.5 cm (1 in.) to 20 cm (8 in.), about a dozen types have been encountered in Israel and Syria. Although the scorpion's sting is usually not fatal to humans, there are several varieties with venom that is

proportionately more potent than that of many dangerous desert vipers. Of the kinds found in Israel, the most poisonous is the yellow *Leirus quinquestriatus* (shown here). The great pain caused by a scorpion's sting is noted at Re 9:3, 5, 10. Scorpions were common in the wilderness of Judea and on the Sinai Peninsula with its "fearsome wilderness."

—De 8:15.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 11:12



105

105 Rue. Rue is a perennial shrub with hairy stems and a strong scent. It attains a height of about 1 m (3 ft), has gray-green leaves, and bears clusters of yellow flowers. The variety of rue shown here (*Ruta chalepensis latifolia*) and a variety known as common rue (*Ruta graveolens*) both grow in Israel. During the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, rue may have been cultivated for use in medicine and as a seasoning for food. In the Bible, this plant is mentioned only at Lu 11:42,

where Jesus condemned the scrupulous and hypocritical tithing by the Pharisees.—Compare Mt 23:23.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 11:42



106



107

106 Raven. The raven is the first bird specifically named in the Bible. (Ge 8:7) It is a powerful flier and is considered to be one of the most adaptable and resourceful of all birds. When teaching Job a lesson regarding the wisdom reflected in creation, Jehovah said that He “prepares food for the raven.” (Job 38:41) The psalmist indicated that Jehovah kindly provides the food brought by parent ravens to quiet the cries of their hungry young. (Ps 147:9) Jesus referred to the ravens in a similar way to assure his followers that the One caring

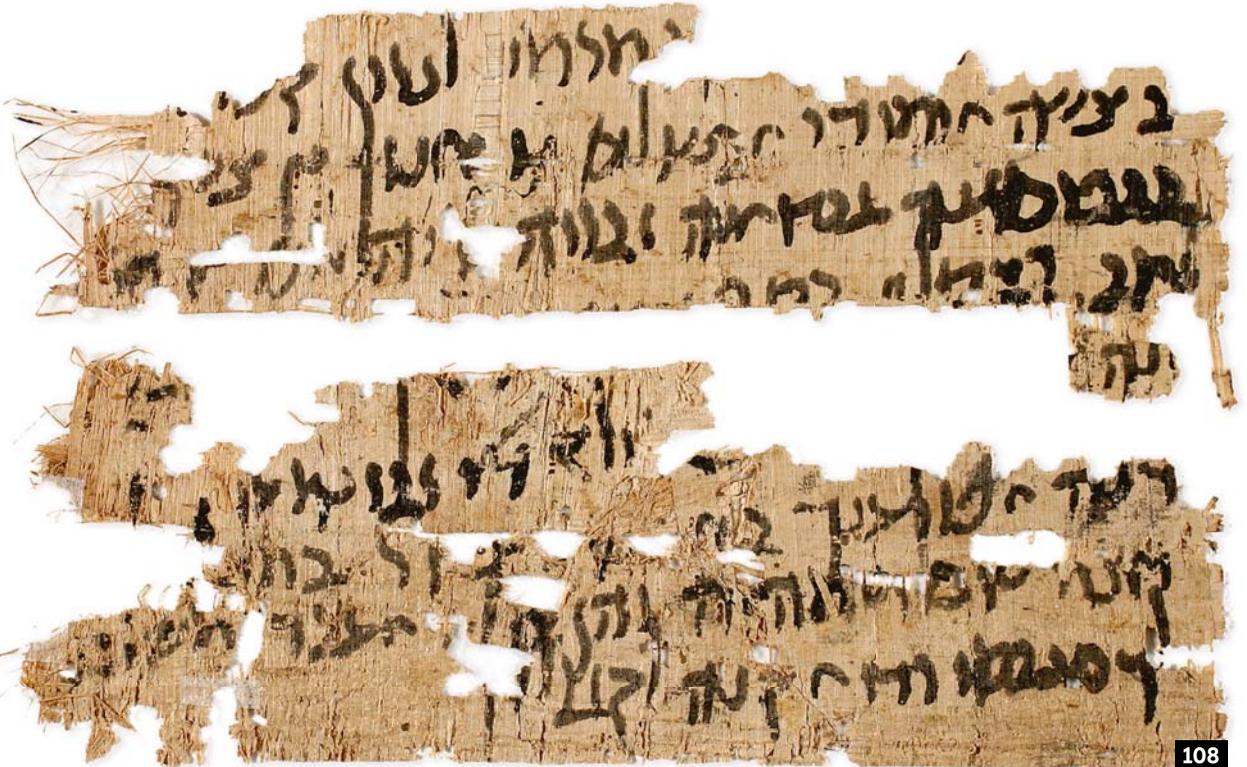
for such birds would surely provide for the needs of His human servants. According to the Law covenant, ravens were unclean, not fit to be eaten. (Le 11:13, 15) Since God provides for unclean ravens, we can be certain that he will never forsake people who trust in him.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 12:24

107 Carob Pods. Carob pods grow on the carob tree (*Ceratonia siliqua*), an attractive evergreen that is found throughout Israel as well as in the rest of the Mediterranean area. The tree

reaches a height of up to 9 m (30 ft). The fruit, or pods, measure from 15 to 25 cm (6 to 10 in.) in length and about 2.5 cm (1 in.) in width. As they mature, the green pods turn a purplish-brown color and look like shiny leather. Inside are several pealike seeds separated from one another by a sweet, sticky, edible pulp. Carob pods are widely used till this day as food for horses, cattle, and pigs.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 15:16



108

108 Written Agreement Acknowledging a Debt. In his parable of the unrighteous steward, Jesus referred to the practice of recording business transactions in a written agreement. (Lu 16:6, 7) The papyrus document shown here is written in Aramaic and is dated to about 55 C.E. It was found in a cave located in Wadi Murabbaat, a dry riverbed in the Judean Desert. The document describes the debt and the terms of repayment agreed to by Absalom son of Hanin and Zechariah son of Jehohanan. This type of document may have come to

mind when people heard Jesus' illustration.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 16:6, 7



109

109 Purple Dyes. Purple dye was obtained from shellfish or mollusks such as the *Murex trunculus* (left) and the *Murex brandaris* (right) shown here. The shells measure from 5 to 8 cm (2 to 3 in.) in length. In the neck of the flesh of these creatures is a small gland containing only a single drop of fluid, called the flower. This fluid initially has the appearance and consistency of cream, but on exposure to air and light, it gradually changes to a deep violet or reddish-purple color. These shellfish are found along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, and

the shades of color acquired from them vary according to their location. The larger specimens were broken open individually, and the precious fluid was carefully removed, whereas the smaller ones were crushed in mortars. The amount of fluid acquired from each shellfish was small, so accumulating a large amount was a costly process. Hence, this dye was expensive, and garments dyed purple became the mark of wealthy people or those in high station.—Es 8:15.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 16:19



110

110 Black Mulberry Tree. Also called the sycamine, the black mulberry (*Morus nigra*) is mentioned only once, in Jesus' statement to the apostles about their faith. (Lu 17:5, 6) The Greek word used was regularly applied to the mulberry tree, and the black mulberry is commonly cultivated in Israel. It is a sturdy tree that grows to a height of about 6 m (20 ft) with large heart-shaped leaves and dark-red or black fruit resembling the blackberry.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Lu 17:6](#)



111

111 Sycamore Tree. The sycamore tree, or fig-mulberry tree (*Ficus sycamorus*), is mentioned once in the Christian Greek Scriptures, in the account of Jesus' visit to Jericho in the spring of 33 C.E. (Lu 19:1-10) This tree belongs to the same family as the common fig tree and the mulberry tree, but it differs from the North American sycamore. The tree's fruit is like that of the common fig tree. The tree grows to a height of 10 to 15 m (33 to 50 ft), is strong, and may live for several hundred years. Sycamore trees grew in the Jordan Valley, and

the Hebrew Scriptures also show that they were abundant in the Shephelah between the coastal plains and the Judean hills. (1Ki 10:27; 2Ch 1:15; 9:27) The tree is an evergreen, and its thick, wide-spreading foliage provides good shade. For that reason, the tree was frequently planted along roadsides. The tree has a short, stout trunk with lower limbs that branch out close to the ground, so it would have been easy for a short-statured man like Zacchaeus to climb it.

Related Scripture(s): Lu 19:4

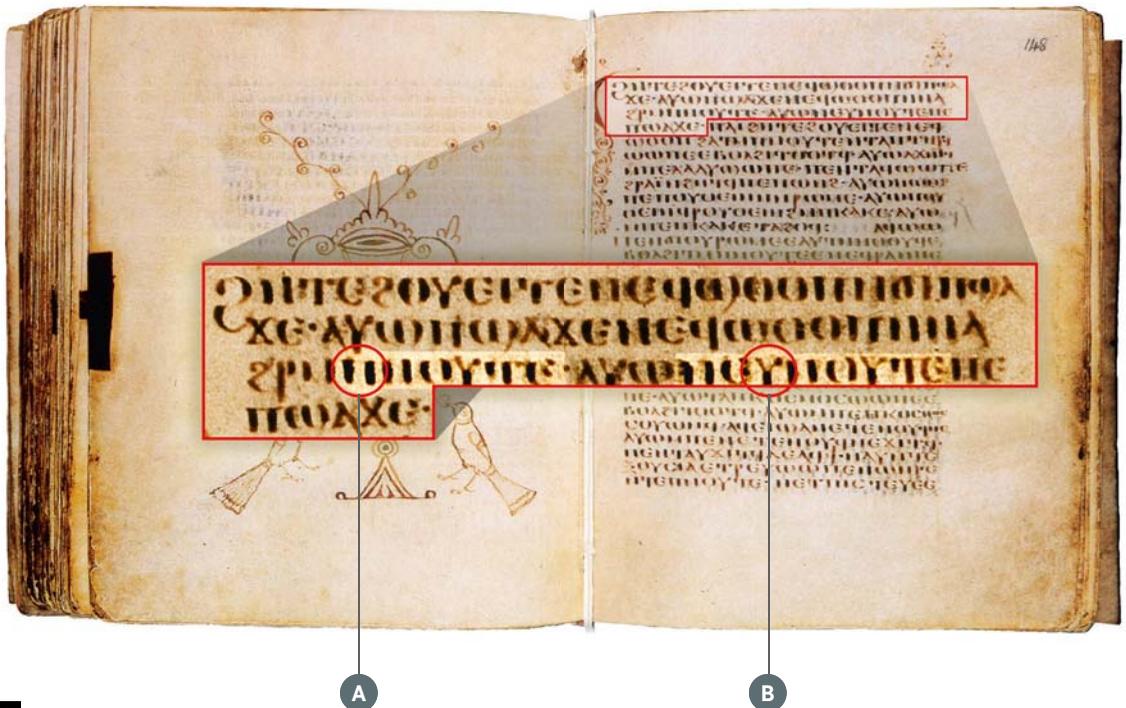


112 Roman Sword. Jesus foretold that the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea would “fall by the edge of the sword.” (Lu 21:24) The 2,000-year-old sword shown in the photograph likely belonged to a soldier serving in the Roman infantry that was stationed in Jerusalem in 66 C.E. when the revolt against the Romans erupted. The sword is about 60 cm (24 in.) long, and the remains of its leather scabbard, or sheath, are still attached. This sword was recently found (reported in 2011) when archaeologists were excavating a drainage

channel between the City of David and the archaeological garden near the Western Wall in Jerusalem. This channel evidently served as a hiding place for residents of Jerusalem during the turbulent time preceding Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 C.E.
Related Scripture(s): Lu 21:24

113 Judea Capta Coin. In his great prophecy about what would happen to Jerusalem and its temple, Jesus foretold that the inhabitants of Judea would “be led captive into all the nations.” (Lu 21:21, 24) The coin shown

here is a striking testimony to the fulfillment of Jesus’ words. Such coins commemorating the capture of Judea were first minted in 71 C.E. One side of the coin contains an image of Titus, the son of Emperor Vespasian. Titus completed the conquest of Judea that Vespasian had begun. The other side shows a palm tree flanked by a captive Judean male with his hands tied behind his back and a seated Jewish woman in mourning. The inscription reads “IVDAEA CAPTA,” meaning “Captive Judea.”
Related Scripture(s): Lu 21:24

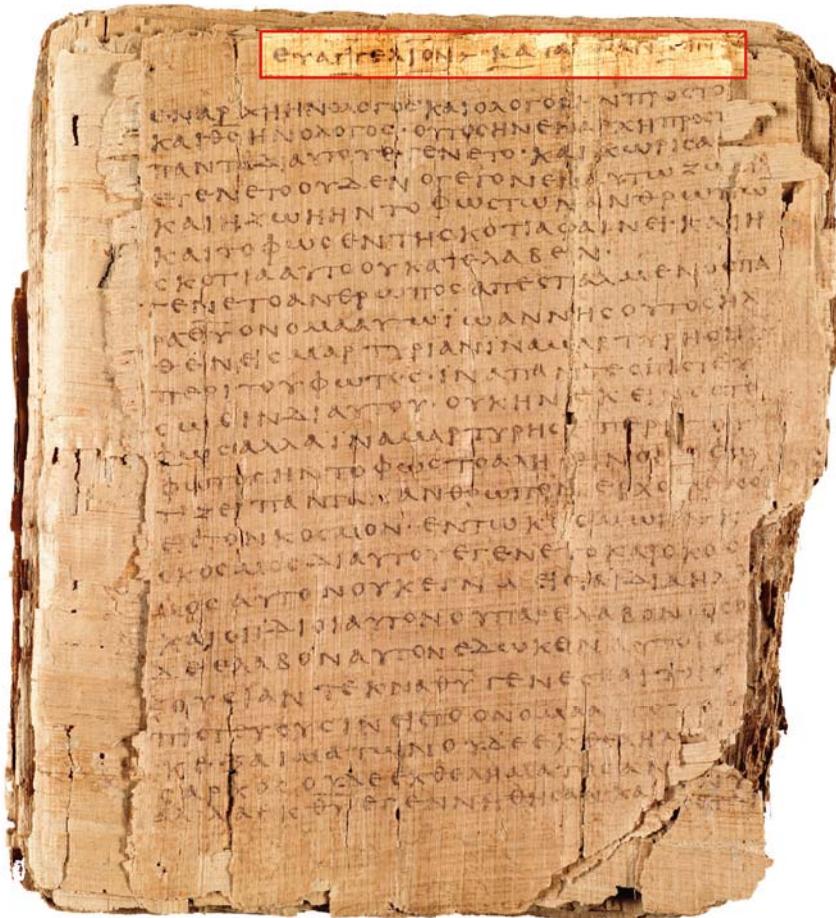


114

114 Sahidic Coptic Translation of John 1:1. The manuscript shown here (dating from about 600 C.E.) contains a translation of the Gospel of John into the Sahidic dialect of the Coptic language. Coptic was spoken in Egypt in the centuries immediately following Jesus’ earthly ministry. Along with Syriac and Latin, Coptic was one of the first languages into which the Christian Greek Scriptures were translated. Translations into Coptic were available by the

third century C.E., so they can give us insight into how the Greek text was understood at that time. This may be of special interest when it comes to the much debated second part of Joh 1:1, which in many translations reads: “And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Unlike Koine Greek, Syriac, and Latin, the Sahidic Coptic dialect does have an indefinite article (in some ways corresponding to “a” and “an” in English). As shown here, the two occurrences of the Cop-

tic word for “God” (highlighted) look slightly different—the first one (A) with the definite article “the” (circled in red) and the second one (B) with the indefinite article “a” (circled in red). Thus, when rendered literally into English, the translation would read: “And the Word was with **the** God, and the Word was **a** god.” —See study note on Joh 1:1 for more information regarding the rendering “and the Word was a god.”
Related Scripture(s): Joh 1:1



115

115 Second-Century Manuscript of John's Gospel. Shown here is the first page of an early Bible manuscript called Papyrus Bodmer 2 (P⁶⁶), which was copied and bound as a codex about 200 C.E. This manuscript contains a large part of the Greek text of the Good News (or, Gospel) According to John. The first page of this manuscript begins with the title (highlighted) *Eu-ag-ge'li-on Ka-ta' I-o-an'nen* ("Good News According to John"). Titles were evidently not

part of the original text but were added later by copyists. The use of such titles along with the name of the writer may have come about for practical reasons, providing a clear means of identification of the books.

Related Scripture(s): [Joh 1:1](#)



116

116 Stone Jars. Shown here are stone jars from first-century Jerusalem. Although jars were usually earthenware (Isa 30:14; La 4:2), in connection with the wedding at Cana, the Bible mentions jars made of stone. (Joh 2:6) Quite a few stone vessels have been found in Jerusalem. It has been suggested that stone vessels were commonly used because they were

not considered susceptible to ceremonial defilement in contrast with vessels made of other materials, such as clay. (Le 11:33) This may explain why the apostle John mentions the connection between the stone vessels used to store the water and “the purification rules of the Jews.”

Related Scripture(s): Joh 2:6



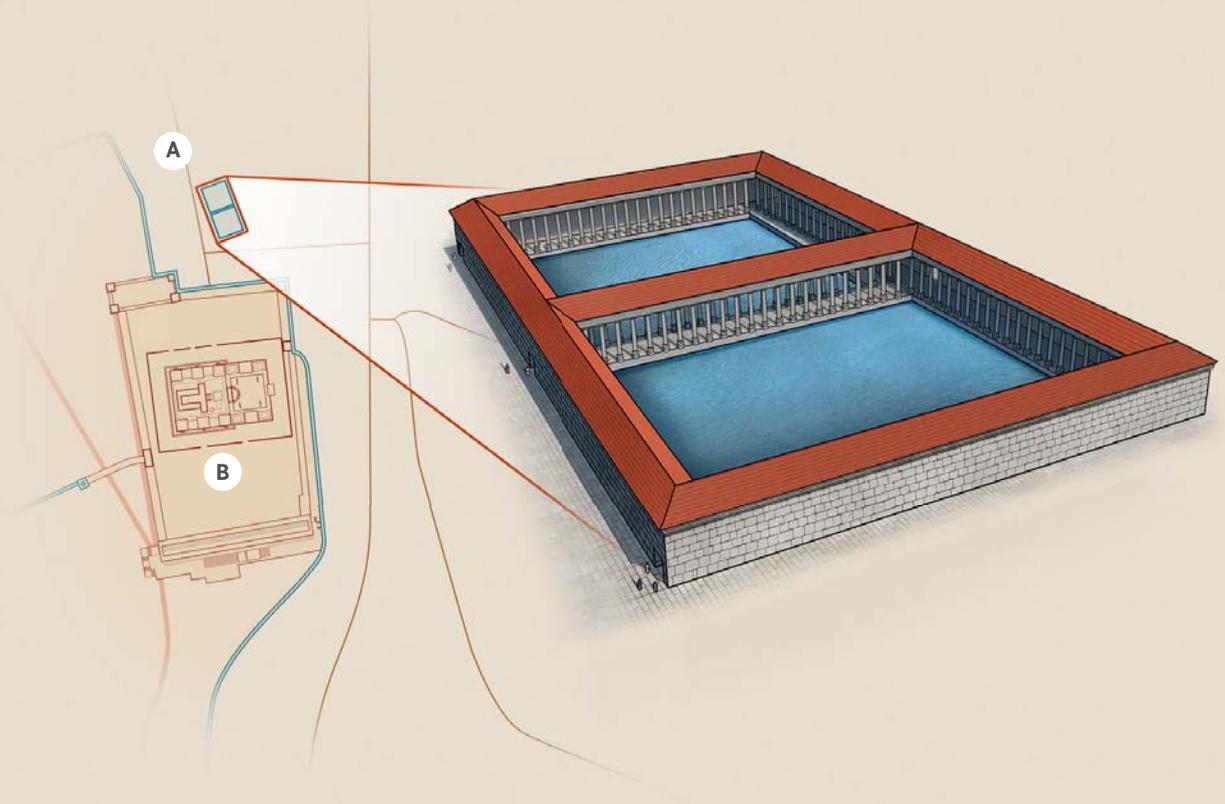
117

117 Mount Gerizim. This shows Mount Gerizim near the traditional location of Jacob's well, where Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman. (Joh 4:6, 7) Mount Gerizim is situated in the heart of the district of Samaria. Its summit rises over 850 m (2,800 ft) above the Mediterranean Sea. The present-day city of Nablus is situated between the moun-

tains in the fertile valley of Shechem. A Samaritan temple was constructed on Mount Gerizim, perhaps in the fourth century B.C.E., but it was destroyed in 128 B.C.E. It was evidently with reference to Mount Gerizim that the Samaritan woman told Jesus Christ: "Our forefathers worshipped on this mountain, but you people say that in Jerusalem is the place

where people must worship." To show her that true worship was not to be dependent on a physical location, Jesus replied: "The hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father."—Joh 4:20, 21.

Related Scripture(s): Joh 4:20, 21



118

118 Pool of Bethzatha. Only the Gospel of John mentions a pool called Bethzatha, located “in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate.” (Joh 5:2) This gate is likely the Sheep Gate that was mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. That gate was located in the NE corner of the city. (Ne 3:1, 32; 12:39) Or “the Sheep Gate” mentioned by John may have been built at a later date than

the one mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. North of the temple mount, archaeologists have discovered the remains of a large pool that seems to match the description given by John. Excavations reveal a pool consisting of two basins and embracing an overall area of about 46 by 92 m (150 by 300 ft). The Gospel account says that the pool had “five

colonnades” and could accommodate “a multitude” of sick and disabled people. (Joh 5:2, 3) The wall separating the northern and southern basins likely included one of these five colonnades, and the other four likely lined the outer perimeter of the pool area. (A) Bethzatha. (B) Temple Mount.

Related Scripture(s): Joh 5:2, 3



119

119 Pool of Siloam. The location of the pool of Siloam was traditionally identified with a small pool in Jerusalem called Birket Silwan. However, in 2004 the remains of a much larger pool were discovered less than 100 m (330 ft) southeast of the site of the smaller pool. Coins found during the excavation date back to the Jewish revolt against Rome (between

66 and 70 C.E.), giving evidence that the pool was in use until Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. This larger pool is now generally recognized as the pool of Siloam referred to at Joh 9:7. As seen in the photograph, a series of steps and landings led to the bottom of the pool (now filled with dirt and vegetation), which made it possible for people to wade

into the pool even when the water level varied. (A) Pool of Siloam. (B) Temple Mount.

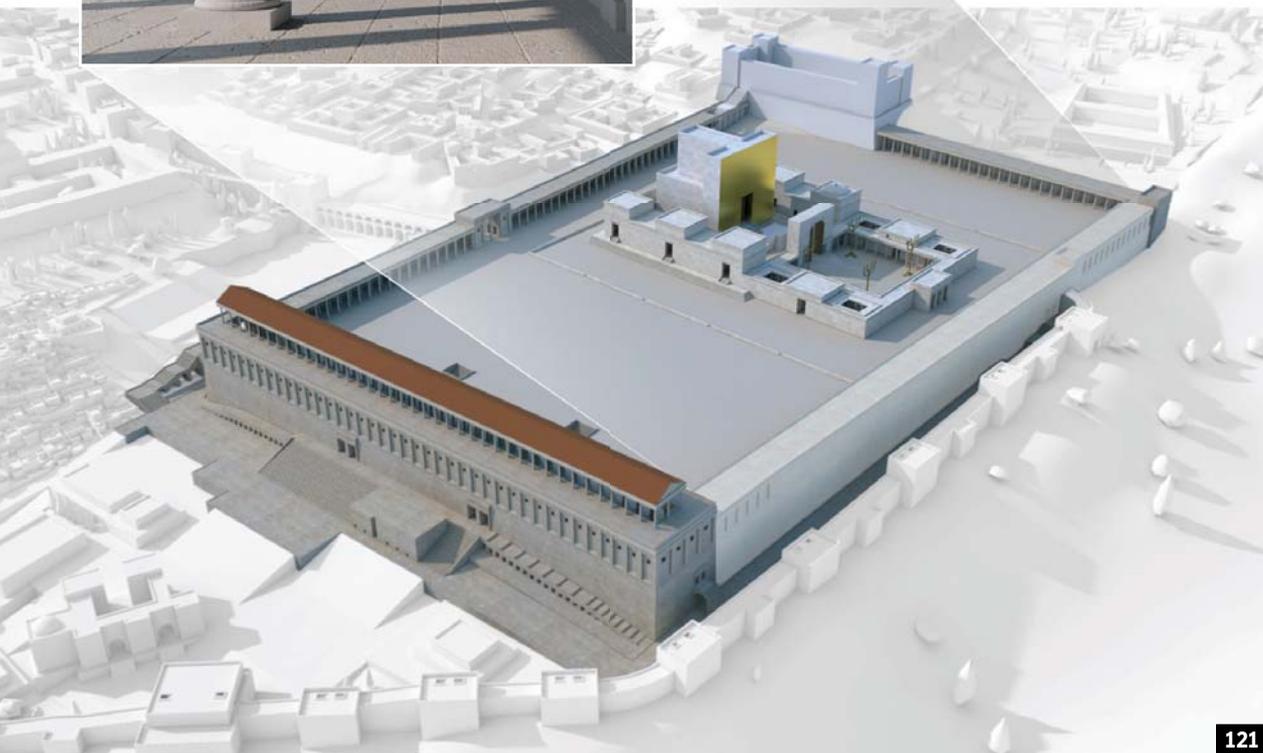
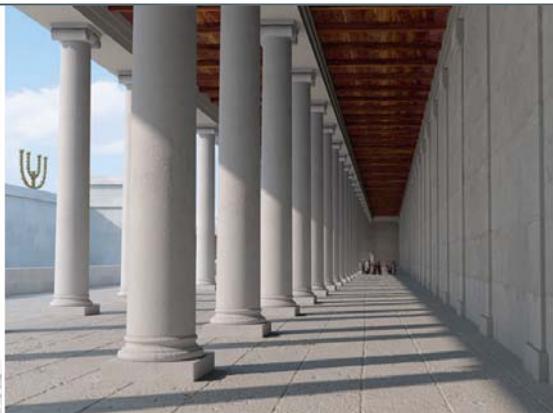
Related Scripture(s): Joh 9:7



120 Sheepfold. A sheepfold was an enclosure designed to protect sheep from thieves and predatory animals. Shepherds kept their flocks in the safety of a sheepfold during the night. In Bible times, sheepfolds were roofless structures of different shapes and sizes, often with stone walls and only one opening. (Nu 32:16; 1Sa 24:3; Zep 2:6) John speaks of entering a sheepfold “through the door,” which was guarded by a “doorkeeper.” (Joh 10:1, 3) In a community sheepfold, more than one flock might

spend the night, and the doorkeeper would keep watch to protect the sheep. In the morning, the doorkeeper would open the door for the shepherds. Each shepherd would collect his flock by calling out to the sheep, and his sheep would recognize the voice of their shepherd and respond. (Joh 10:3-5) Jesus referred to this practice to illustrate the way he cared for his disciples.—Joh 10:7-14.

Related Scripture(s): Joh 10:1



121

121 Solomon's Colonnade. This shows one possibility of what Solomon's Colonnade may have looked like. Located on the east side of the outer courtyard of the first-century temple in Jerusalem, Solomon's Colonnade was a spacious, covered passageway. The Bible mentions this location three times by name. John states that on one occasion when Jesus walked through this colonnade, a group of Jews surrounded him, demanding that he tell them if he was the Christ. (Joh 10:22-24) Later, an

amazed crowd gathered at Solomon's Colonnade to hear Peter explain how he had cured a man who was crippled from birth. (Ac 3:1-7, 11) And early Christians met publicly in Solomon's Colonnade.—Ac 5:12, 13; see  Glossary, "Solomon's Colonnade."

Related Scripture(s): Joh 10:23; Ac 3:11; 5:12



122

122 Palm Tree. In Bible times, the date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) was abundant in Israel and surrounding areas. Palms were said to flourish on the coast of the Sea of Galilee as well as along the lower reaches of the hot Jordan Valley. They were particularly abundant around Jericho, called “the city of the palm trees.” (De 34:3; Jg 1:16; 3:13; 2Ch 28:15) A date palm may reach a height of 30 m (100 ft). Its branches, or

fronds, can grow to be from 3 to 5 m (10 to 16 ft) in length. The Jews gathered palm fronds during the joyful Festival of Booths. (Le 23:39-43; Ne 8:14, 15) The use of palm branches by the crowd who hailed Jesus as “the King of Israel” evidently served to symbolize their praise as well as their submission to his royal position. (Joh 12:12, 13) The “great crowd” of Re 7:9, 10 are likewise pictured with “palm branches in their hands,”

ascribing salvation to God and to the Lamb.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Joh 12:13](#)



123

123 Kidron Valley. The Kidron Valley (Nahal Qidron) separates Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives and generally runs from N to S along the eastern side of the city. The valley starts some distance to the N of Jerusalem's walls. At first, it is broad and shallow, but then it begins to narrow and deepen. Opposite the southern end of the former temple area, it is approximately 30 m (100 ft) deep and 120 m (390 ft) wide, though it was

evidently deeper in Jesus' day. The valley continues running through the Judean wilderness to the Dead Sea. It was this valley that Jesus traversed on his way to the garden of Gethsemane after he instituted the Lord's Evening Meal on Nisan 14, 33 C.E. (Joh 18:1) (A) Kidron Valley. (B) Temple Mount. (C) Mount of Olives (portion shown is covered in tombs).
 Related Scripture(s): Joh 18:1



124

124 Oldest Known Fragment of the Christian Greek Scriptures. Shown here are the front and back of the Papyrus Rylands 457 (P⁵²) fragment, a very early copy of a portion of John's Gospel. Housed at the John Rylands University Library in Manchester, England, it was acquired in Egypt in 1920. It preserves a portion of Joh 18:31-33 on one side and a portion of Joh 18:37, 38 on the other. The presence of writing on both sides of the papyrus is clear evidence that it was part of a codex. The fragment measures 9 by 6 cm (3.5 by 2.4 in.). Many scholars consider it to be the oldest extant Greek manuscript of the Christian Greek Scriptures, dating it to sometime in the first half of the second century C.E. The Gospel of John was written about 98 C.E., so this copy was likely made just a few decades later. The text of this fragment agrees very closely with later

more complete Greek manuscripts that form the basis for modern translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Joh 18:31](#)

125 The Hyssop Mentioned in the Bible. The Hebrew and Greek terms translated "hyssop" in many Bible translations (Hebrew *'e-zohv'* and Greek *hys'so-pos*) may embrace several different kinds of plants. Shown here is marjoram (*Origanum maru*; *Origanum syriacum*), the plant that many scholars think is referred to by the Hebrew term. This plant of the mint family is common in the Middle East. Under favorable conditions, it attains a height of 0.5 to 0.9 m (1.5 to 3 ft). In the Bible, this hyssop is often associated with cleanness. (Ex 12:21, 22; Le 14:2-7; Nu 19:6, 9, 18; Ps 51:7) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, "hyssop" is mentioned only



125

twice. Heb 9:19 describes the inauguration of the old covenant, and in that context, "hyssop" evidently refers to the plant mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. At Joh 19:29, Jesus is said to have been given a sponge full of sour wine "on a hyssop stalk" held up to his mouth. Scholars have different opinions about which plant the Greek word *hys'so-pos* refers to in this context. Some think that because marjoram might not have been long enough to carry the stalk to Jesus' mouth, the term here refers to another plant with a longer stalk, perhaps durra, a variety of common sorghum (*Sorghum vulgare*). Others think that even in this case, hyssop may have been marjoram. They suggest that a bunch of marjoram may have been attached to the "reed" mentioned by Matthew and Mark. —Mt 27:48; Mr 15:36.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Joh 19:29](#)



126

126 Roman Spears. Roman soldiers were commonly equipped with long weapons suitable for thrusting or throwing. The *pilum* (A) was designed to penetrate its target. Its heavy weight limited the range at which it could be thrown but enabled the weapon to pierce through armor or a shield. There is evidence that Roman

legionnaires often carried the *pilum*. Simpler spears (B) had a wooden shaft and a tip of forged iron. Auxiliary infantry sometimes carried one or more spears of this type. It is unknown what kind of spear was used to jab the side of Jesus' body.
 Related Scripture(s): Joh 19:34;
 Ac 23:23



127

127 Theodotus Inscription to Greek-Speaking Jews. The text shown here, carved on a limestone slab measuring 72 cm (28 in.) in length and 42 cm (17 in.) in width, is known as the Theodotus Inscription. It was discovered at the beginning of the 20th century on the hill of Ophel in Jerusalem. The text, written in Greek, refers to Theodotus, a priest who “built the synagogue for the reading of the Law and for teaching the commandments.” The inscription has

been dated to the time before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. It confirms the presence of Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem in the first century C.E. (Ac 6:1) Some believe that this synagogue was “the so-called Synagogue of the Freedmen.” (Ac 6:9) The inscription also mentions that Theodotus, as well as his father and his grandfather, had the title *ar-khi-sy-na’go-gos* (“presiding officer of the synagogue”), a title used a number of times in the Chris-

tian Greek Scriptures. (Mr 5:35; Lu 8:49; Ac 13:15; 18:8, 17) The inscription also states that Theodotus built accommodations for those visiting from abroad. The lodging mentioned in the inscription would likely have been used by Jews visiting Jerusalem, especially those who came during the yearly festivals.—Ac 2:5.
[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 2:5; 6:1; 9:29](#)



128 Early Parchment Manuscript of the Christian Greek Scriptures. The parchment manuscript shown here contains Ac 5:3-21. This leaf, known as Uncial 0189, was once part of a codex containing the book of Acts. The front side (on the left) shows Ac 5:3-12, and the reverse side (on the right) shows Ac 5:12-21. Some scholars date this manuscript to the end of the second century C.E. or the beginning of the third, although others have dated it to the third or fourth

century C.E. Though there are older *papyrus* fragments, this is one of the oldest known *parchment* manuscripts of the Christian Greek Scriptures. It is housed at the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, Germany.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 5:3



129

129 Preaching From House to House.

In the days following Pentecost 33 C.E., Jesus' disciples continued bringing the good news right to the homes of the people. Though the disciples were ordered to "stop speaking," the inspired record says that "every day in the temple and *from house to house* they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus." (Ac 5:40-42) About 56 C.E., the apostle Paul told the elders of Ephesus: "I did not hold back

from . . . teaching you publicly and *from house to house.*" (Ac 20:20) Paul was speaking of his efforts to preach to these men when they were yet unbelievers and needed to know "about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus." (Ac 20:21) When he found spiritually inclined people, he doubtless returned to their homes to teach them further and, as these became believers, to strengthen them in the faith.—See study notes on Ac 5:42; 20:20.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 5:42; 20:20](#)



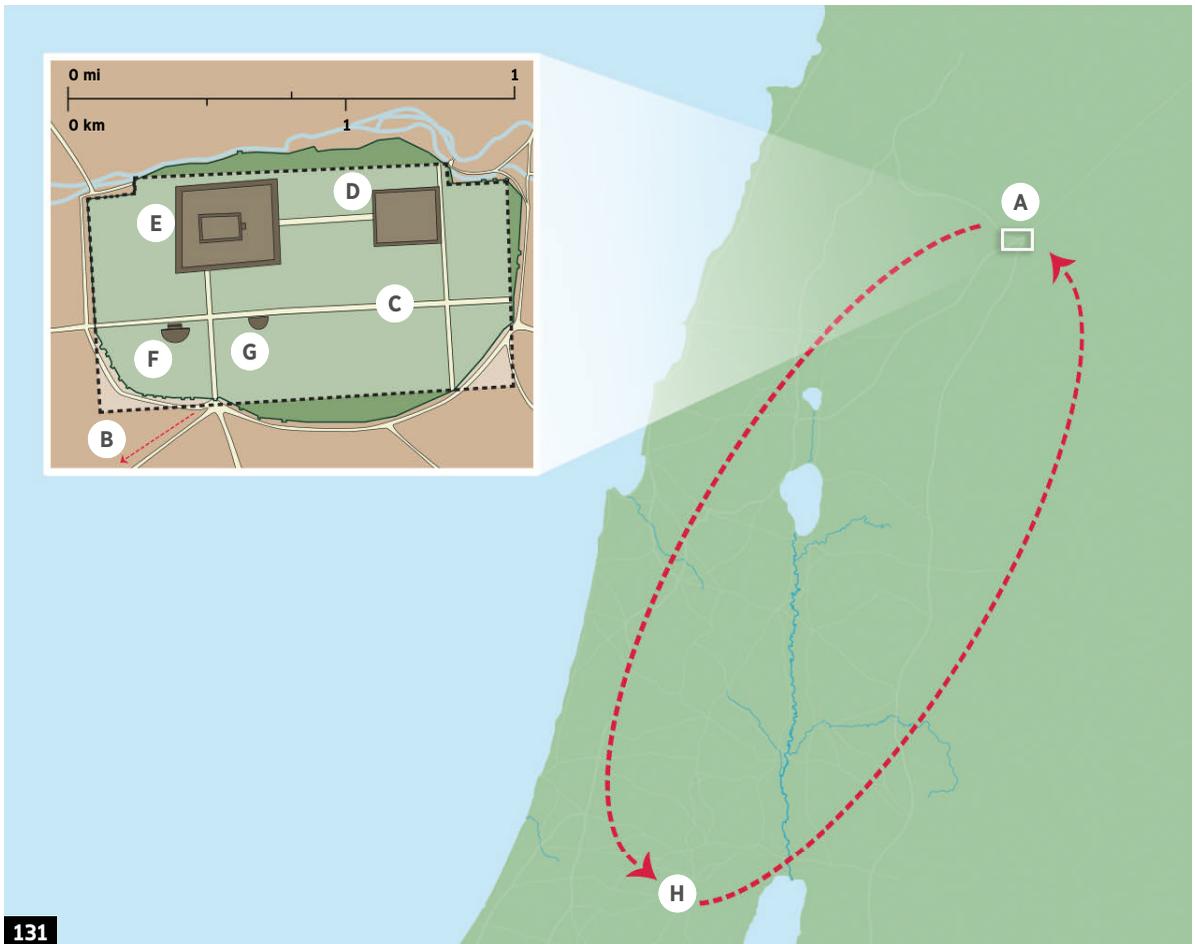
130

130 Caesarea. The city of Caesarea and its harbor were built by Herod the Great toward the end of the first century B.C.E. Herod named the city after Caesar Augustus. Located about 87 km (54 mi) northwest of Jerusalem on the Mediterranean Coast, Caesarea became an important maritime hub. The city included a Roman theater (A), a palace that extended into the sea (B), a hippodrome, or stadium for horse racing, that could hold an estimated 30,000 spectators (C), and a pagan temple (D). The

man-made harbor (E) was an engineering marvel. An aqueduct supplied Caesarea with fresh water, and the city had its own sewer system. The apostle Paul and other Christians traveled to and from Caesarea by boat. (Ac 9:30; 18:21, 22; 21:7, 8, 16) Paul was imprisoned there for about two years. (Ac 24:27) Philip the evangelizer traveled to Caesarea at the end of a preaching tour and possibly settled there. (Ac 8:40; 21:8) Cornelius, the first uncircumcised Gentile to become a Christian, lived in that city.

(Ac 10:1, 24, 34, 35, 45-48) It was probably in Caesarea that Luke wrote his Gospel.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 8:40; 18:22



131

131 Saul and Damascus. In the first century C.E., the city of Damascus likely had a layout similar to what is shown here. It was an important center for trade, and water drawn from the nearby Barada River (the Abanah of 2Ki 5:12) made the area around the city like an oasis. Damascus had a number of synagogues. Saul came to that city intending to arrest “any whom he found who belonged to The Way,” an expression used to describe the followers of Jesus. (Ac 9:2; 19:9,

23; 22:4; 24:22) On the road to Damascus, however, the glorified Jesus appeared to Saul. After that, Saul stayed for a time in Damascus at the house of a man named Judas, who lived on the street called Straight. (Ac 9:11) In a vision, Jesus directed the disciple Ananias to Judas’ house to restore Saul’s sight, and Saul later got baptized. So instead of arresting the Jewish Christians, Saul became one of them. He began his career as a preacher of the good news in the syn-

agogues of Damascus. After traveling to Arabia and then back to Damascus, Saul returned to Jerusalem, likely about the year 36 C.E. (Ac 9:1-6, 19-22; Ga 1:16, 17) (A) Damascus. (B) Road to Jerusalem. (C) Street called Straight. (D) Agora. (E) Temple of Jupiter. (F) Theater. (G) Musical Performance Theater (?). (H) Jerusalem.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 9:1, 2; 22:5



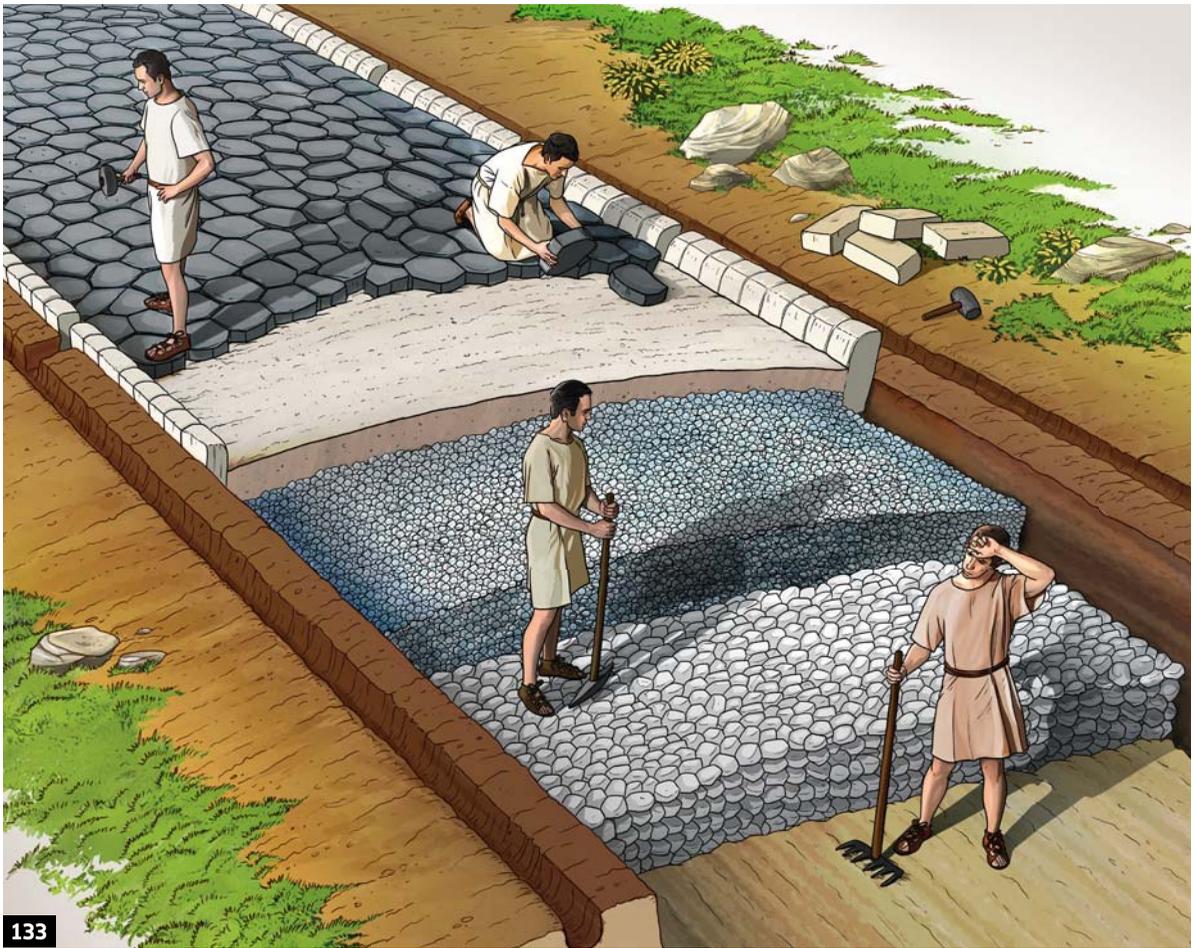
132

132 Roman Road in Tarsus. Tarsus, the birthplace of Saul (later the apostle Paul), was the principal city of the region of Cilicia in the southeast corner of Asia Minor, part of modern-day Turkey. (Ac 9:11; 22:3) Tarsus was a large, prosperous trading city, strategically located along a prime E-W overland trade route that threaded through the Taurus Mountains and the Cilician Gates (a narrow gorge with a wagon road cut through the rock). The city also maintained a

harbor that connected the Cydnus River with the Mediterranean Sea. Tarsus was a center of Greek culture and had a sizable Jewish community. This photograph shows some of the ancient ruins that remain in the modern-day settlement of the same name, situated about 16 km (10 mi) from where the Cydnus River empties into the Mediterranean Sea. During the city's history, a number of noted personalities visited Tarsus, including Mark

Antony, Cleopatra, and Julius Caesar, as well as several emperors. Roman statesman and writer Cicero was the city's governor from 51 to 50 B.C.E. Tarsus was famous as a seat of learning in the first century C.E., and according to the Greek geographer Strabo, as such it outranked even Athens and Alexandria. With good reason, Paul described Tarsus as "no obscure city."—Ac 21:39.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 9:11; 21:39



133

133 Construction of a Roman

Road. The extensive Roman road system helped early Christians to spread the good news throughout the empire. The apostle Paul no doubt traveled many miles on these roads. (Col 1:23) The diagram shown here illustrates the typical construction of a stone-paved Roman road. First, the path was marked. Next, builders dug a trench for the road and filled the trench with layers of road base made of stones, cement, and sand. The workers paved the road with large stone slabs and installed curb stones

that helped keep the paving in place. The materials used and the camber of the road allowed water to drain from its surface. Outlets placed at intervals along the curbs let water escape into ditches that ran beside the road. The builders did such excellent work that some of their roads are still in existence today. Most roads in the Roman Empire, however, were not this sophisticated. The most common types were made simply of packed gravel. [Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 9:17; 28:14-16](#)



134

134 Joppa. This picture shows the seaport of Joppa, located on the Mediterranean Coast halfway between Mount Carmel and Gaza. Modern Yafo (Arabic, Jaffa) merged with Tel Aviv in 1950. Now Tel Aviv-Yafo occupies the ancient site. Joppa was situated on a rocky hill rising to a height of about 35 m (115 ft), and its harbor is formed by a low ledge of rocks about 100 m (330 ft) from the coast. The Tyrians floated rafts of timber from the forests of Lebanon to Joppa to be used in constructing Solomon's temple. (2Ch 2:16) Later, the

prophet Jonah, seeking to flee his assignment, went to Joppa and boarded a ship bound for Tarshish. (Jon 1:3) In the first century C.E., there was a Christian congregation in Joppa. In that group was Dorcas (Tabitha), whom Peter resurrected. (Ac 9:36-42) And it was while staying at Simon the tanner's house in Joppa that Peter received the vision that prepared him to preach to the Gentile Cornelius.—Ac 9:43; 10:6, 9-17.

Related Scripture(s): [Ac 9:36](#); [11:5](#)



135



136

135 Garments and Robes. In Bible times, clothing was among a person’s most important belongings. Dorcas generously made “garments and robes” for those who were widows. (Ac 9:39) The Greek word rendered “garment” (*khi-ton’*) refers to a kind of tunic; it could also be translated “inner garment” (A). According to Greek and Roman custom, men usually wore tunics that were short and women usually wore tunics that went down to the ankles. The Greek word rendered “robe” (*hi-ma’ti-on*) could also be translated “outer garment” (B) and refers to a kind of

garment that was usually worn over the tunic, or inner garment.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 9:39

136 Antioch of Syria. This photograph shows the city of Antakya in modern-day Turkey. It is the location of the ancient city of Antioch, capital of the Roman province of Syria. In the first century C.E., Antioch of Syria is said to have been the third-largest city in the Roman world, after Rome and Alexandria. Some estimate that its population was 250,000 or more. After Stephen was murdered by a mob in Jerusalem and persecution broke

out against Jesus’ followers, some disciples of Jesus came to Antioch. They preached the good news with much success among Greek-speaking people. (Ac 11:19-21) Later, the apostle Paul used Antioch as a home base for his missionary tours. “It was first in Antioch that the disciples were by divine providence called Christians.” (Ac 11:26) Antioch of Syria is not to be confused with another city named Antioch, in Pisidia (central Turkey), mentioned at Ac 13:14; 14:19, 21, and 2Ti 3:11.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 6:5; 11:26; 13:1



137 Emperor Claudius. The book of Acts twice refers to Roman Emperor Claudius by name. (Ac 11:28; 18:2) He succeeded his nephew Caligula (who ruled from 37 to 41 C.E. and who is not mentioned in the Scriptures) to become the fourth emperor of Rome, ruling from 41 to 54 C.E. About the year 49 or 50 C.E., Claudius ordered all Jews to leave Rome. As a result, Priscilla and Aquila moved to Corinth, where they met the apostle Paul. Claudius' fourth wife reportedly poisoned him in 54 C.E., and he was succeeded by Emperor Nero. [Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 11:28; 18:2](#)



138 Herod Agrippa I. The coin shown here was minted about 43-44 C.E. by Herod Agrippa I, referred to at Ac 12:1 as "Herod the king." The coin shows on one side the head of Emperor Claudius and on the other side figures of Claudius and Agrippa I. The inscription includes Agrippa's name. Claudius' predecessor and nephew, Emperor Caligula (who ruled from 37 to 41 C.E. and who is not mentioned in the Scriptures), appointed Herod Agrippa I to be king in the year 37 C.E. Later, Claudius placed more territory under Agrippa's jurisdiction. Herod Agrippa I violently persecuted

the early Christian congregation; he even had the apostle James executed and Peter imprisoned. (Ac 12:1-4) Herod retained his position of power until Jehovah's angel struck him and he died.—Ac 12:21-23.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 12:1](#)



139



140

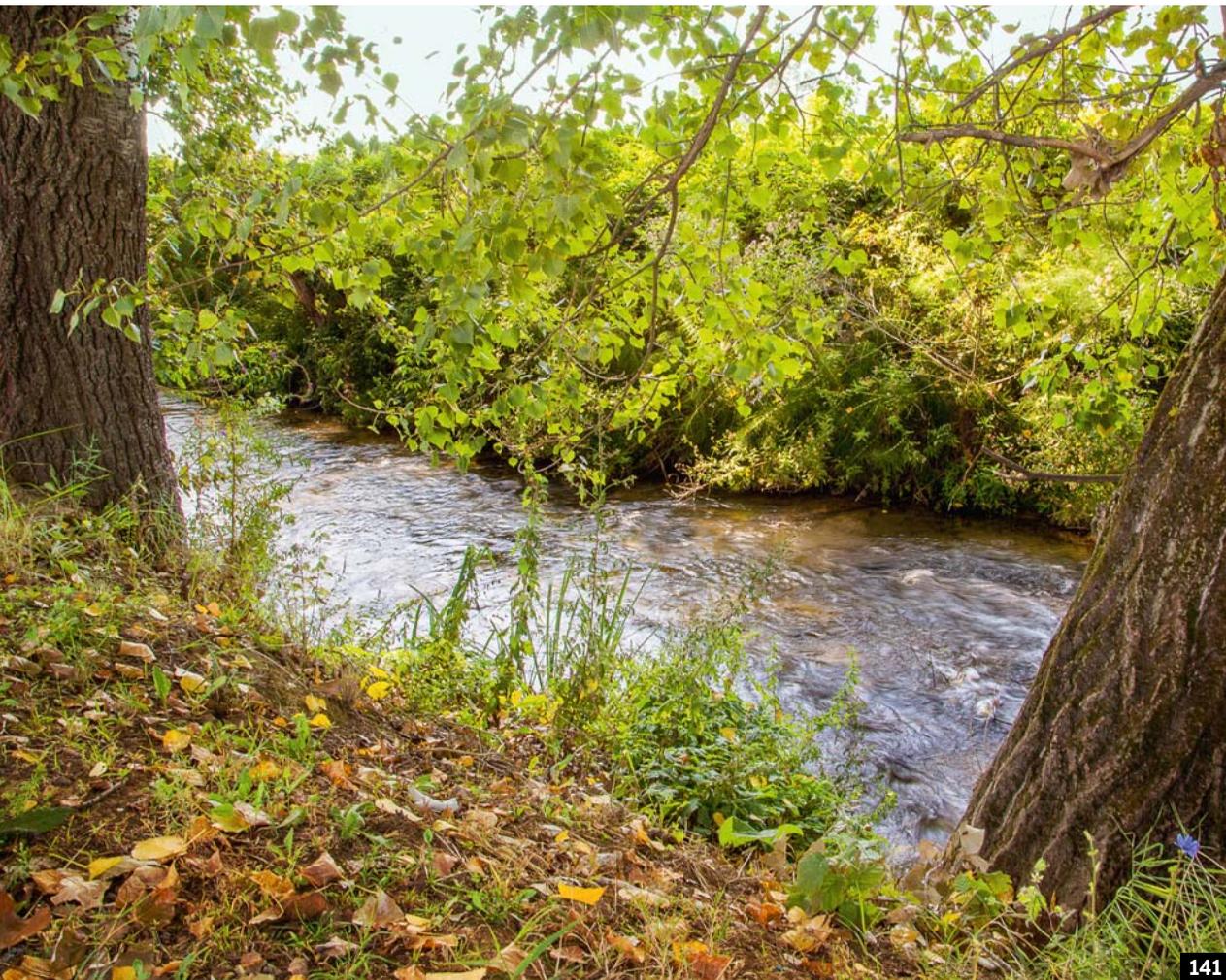
139 Coin From Cyprus, With the Title “Proconsul.” The coin shown here, found in Cyprus, was minted during the reign of Roman Emperor Claudius, who was in power when Paul and Barnabas visited Cyprus about 47 C.E. One side of the coin shows Claudius’ head and title, and the other side uses the Greek word for “proconsul” to describe the governor of that island. The wording on the coin verifies the accuracy of Luke’s account, in which he identifies Sergius Paulus as “the proconsul” of Cyprus.—Ac 13:4, 7.

Related Scripture(s): [Ac 13:7](#)

140 Neapolis. This photograph shows the modern-day city of Kavála, which is built on the site of ancient Neapolis. Located at the northern end of the Aegean Sea, Neapolis served as the port for Philippi, a city that lay a short distance to the northwest. It was at Neapolis that the apostle Paul first entered Europe in response to the call to “step over into Macedonia.” (Ac 16:9, 11, 12) He likely passed through Neapolis again on his third missionary tour. (Ac 20:2, 6) There are few remains of the Roman city, but visitors today can travel on some segments of the Roman-built

Egnatian Way (*Via Egnatia*) nearby. That highway was a major west-east route some 800 km (500 mi) long that helped to connect numerous cities in Europe and reached to the border of Asia. A number of the cities visited by Paul were on the Egnatian Way, including Neapolis, Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica.—Ac 17:1.

Related Scripture(s): [Ac 16:11](#)



141 A Place of Prayer Near Philippi.

The photograph shows the Crenides (Krenides) stream, which flowed just outside the western Krenides Gate of ancient Philippi. It may be the “river” where Paul preached to a group of women who had gathered for prayer, though opinions on the precise location vary.—Ac 16:13-15.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 16:13](#)

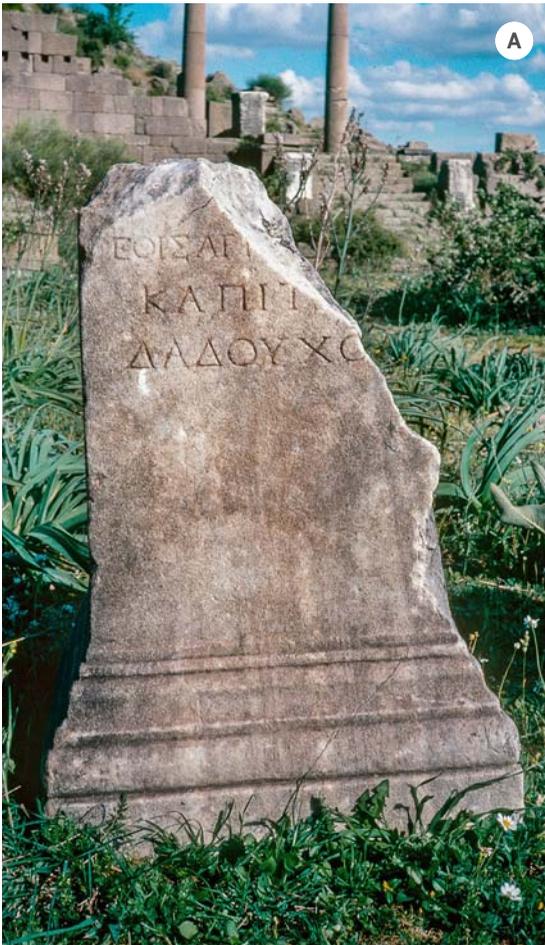


142

142 Beroea. Shown here is the modern-day city of Veroia, Greece, which is located on the site of ancient Beroea, a city visited by Paul and Silas. It lay some 30 km (19 mi) south of a famous Roman highway, the Egnatian Way (*Via Egnatia*), and about 65 km (40 mi) west-southwest of Thessalonica. Both Jews and Greeks in Beroea responded to the good news. However, the local disciples urged Paul to leave the city after troublemakers from Thessalonica arrived and stirred up mob violence. But Silas

and Timothy remained in Beroea for a time, strengthening the new congregation. (Ac 17:10-14) Beroea was the last city in the fruitful but challenging area of Macedonia that Paul visited during his second missionary tour.

Related Scripture(s): [Ac 17:10](#)

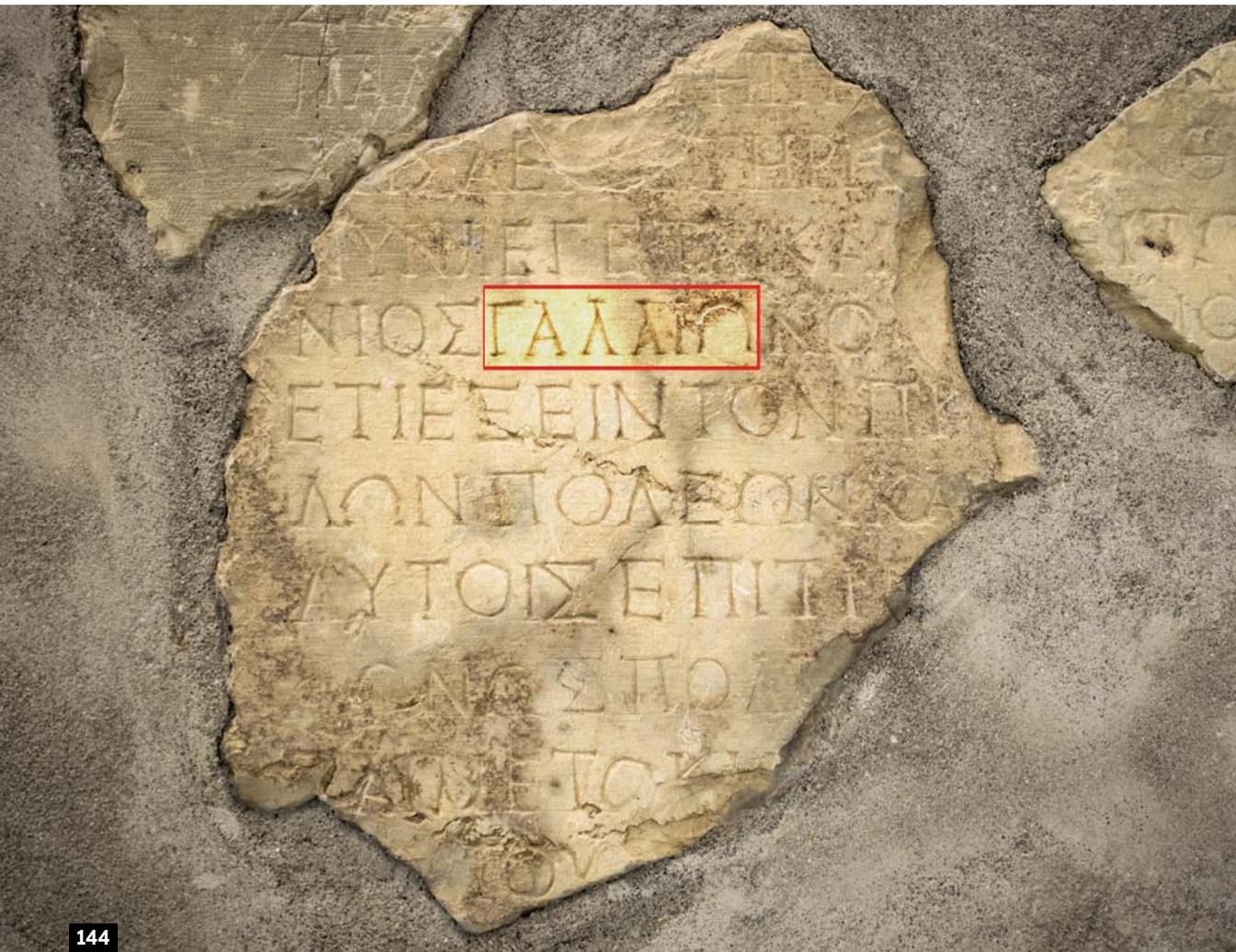


143

143 Altars to Unknown Gods. In his speech at the Areopagus in Athens, Paul spoke of “an altar on which had been inscribed ‘To an Unknown God.’” (Ac 17:23) There is both literary and archaeological evidence supporting the existence of such altars in the Roman Empire. For example, second-century C.E. geographer Pausanias wrote about altars to unknown gods that were located in Greece, and Philostratus of the second and third centuries C.E. specifically refers to such altars in

Athens. Photograph A shows the remains of a second-century C.E. altar in Pergamum (in modern-day Turkey). The inscription is incomplete, but a plausible restoration of the first line reads: “To unknown gods.” Photograph B shows an altar found on Rome’s Palatine Hill. The altar dates to about 100 B.C.E. and is dedicated to an unnamed deity. These examples support the Bible record about the existence of such altars.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 17:23



144

144 Gallio Inscription. This inscription found in Delphi, Greece, dating to about the middle of the first century C.E., refers to the proconsul Gallio. (His name is highlighted.) Ac 18:12 correctly states that “Gallio was proconsul of Achaia” at the time that the Jews in Corinth led the apostle Paul to him to be judged.

Related Scripture(s): [Ac 18:12-14](#)



145

145 Judgment Seat in Corinth. The photograph shows the remains of “the judgment seat,” or bema, in Corinth. It was a large, raised platform used for public speaking. Corinth’s judgment seat was located near the center of the city’s agora, a large public area. A magistrate would use the platform to announce the judgments he rendered. The judgment

seat was made of white and blue marble and was richly decorated. People who were to approach the magistrate waited in rooms that had mosaic floors and benches and were attached to the platform. Shown here is an artist’s conception of what the Corinthian judgment seat may have looked like in the first century C.E. It is believed to be the place where the

Jews brought Paul before the proconsul Gallio.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 18:12](#)



146

146 Harbor of Ancient Cenchreae.

Shown here are the ruins of the harbor of ancient Cenchreae. On his second missionary tour, Paul apparently boarded a boat here and sailed to Ephesus. (Ac 18:18) Cenchreae lay about 11 km (7 mi) east of Corinth on the side of a narrow isthmus facing the Saronic Gulf. It was linked to Corinth by a chain of military fortifications. In the first century C.E., Cenchreae was Corinth's port for points east of Greece, while Le-

chaenum, on the opposite side of the isthmus, served as Corinth's port for Italy and other places west of Greece.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 18:18

147 Inscription Mentioning Ephesian Silversmiths.

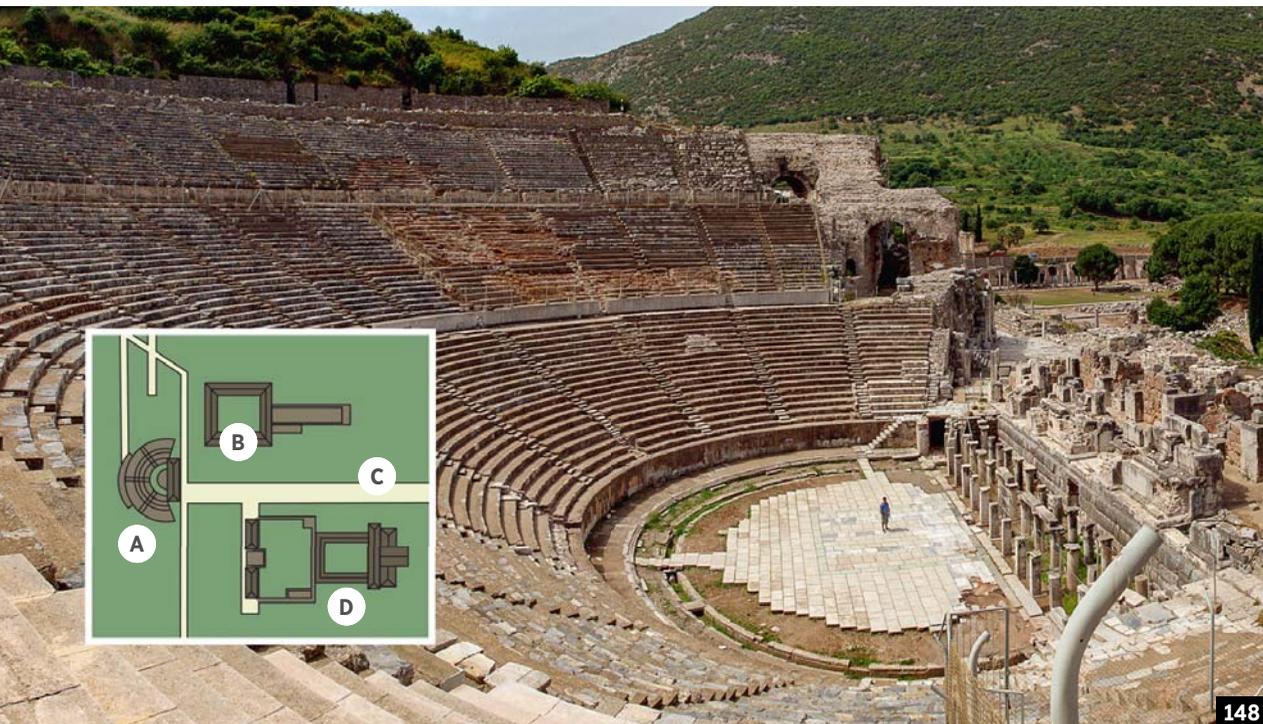
A number of inscriptions mentioning the silversmiths of the city have been found in Ephesus. The one shown here, dated to the third century C.E., records the honor they gave to the proconsul Valerius Festus as their benefactor and for his



147

work on the harbor. The inscription confirms the prominence of the silversmiths as well as the fact that they were organized into an association, or guild. The book of Acts tells of their rioting when faced with the loss of profits from selling their "silver shrines of Artemis."—Ac 19:24.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 19:23-28



148

148 The Theater and Surroundings in Ephesus

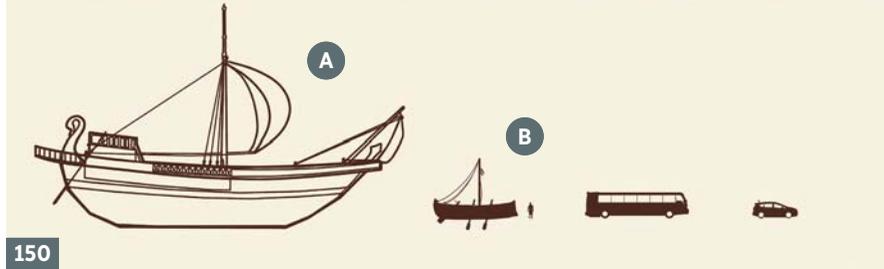
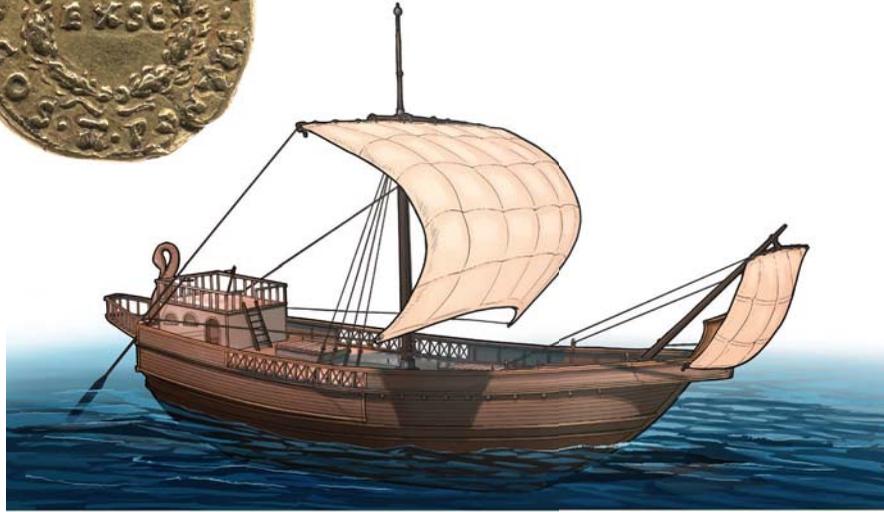
The theater shown in this picture could hold 25,000 people, making it the largest theater in Asia Minor in Paul's day. Located at the intersection of two of the principal thoroughfares in Ephesus, the theater was a prominent part of life in that city. Roman theaters were used not only for theatrical performances but also for hosting debates. It was into this theater that a mob dragged Paul's traveling companions when

the silversmith Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen stirred up a riot against Paul. (Ac 19:23-28) (A) Theater. (B) Agora. (C) Arcadian Way. (D) Gymnasium (built in the late first century C.E.).

[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 19:29](#)



149



150

149 Caesar Nero. This gold coin, minted about 56-57 C.E., shows a bust of Nero, who ruled the Roman Empire from 54 to 68 C.E. Nero was the Caesar to whom Paul appealed after his unjust arrest in Jerusalem and subsequent incarceration in Caesarea from about 56 to about 58 C.E. It appears that after Paul was first imprisoned in Rome, about 59 C.E., he was pronounced innocent and released about 61 C.E. However, in 64 C.E. a fire destroyed a quarter of the city of Rome, and some blamed Nero for the disaster. To deflect suspi-

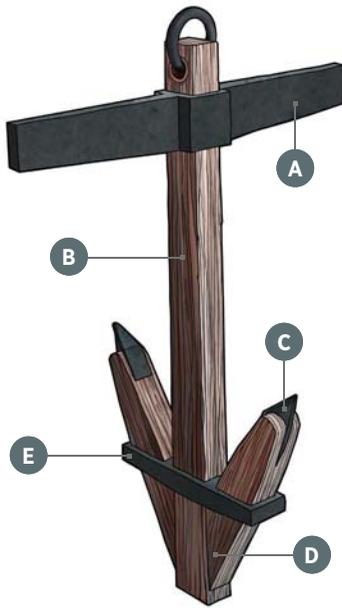
cion, Nero accused the Christians, prompting a wave of violent persecution by the government. It is likely that about this time (65 C.E.), Paul was imprisoned in Rome for the second time and was executed thereafter.

Related Scripture(s): [Ac 25:11](#); [28:19](#)

150 First-Century Merchant Ship. In the first century C.E., numerous merchant ships of various types plied the waters of the Mediterranean Sea. Some of them were coastal vessels, such as the boat from Adramyttium in

which Paul, as a prisoner, sailed from Caesarea to Myra. ([Ac 27:2-5](#)) However, the type of merchant ship that Paul boarded at Myra, similar to what is illustrated here, was a large vessel that carried a cargo of wheat and a crew and passengers totaling 276 persons. ([Ac 27:37, 38](#)) This ship likely had a mainsail and a foresail and would have been steered by two large oars located in the stern. Such ships often had a figurehead representing a god or goddess. (A) Merchant ship. (B) Galilean fishing boat.

Related Scripture(s): [Ac 27:5, 6](#)



151



151 An Anchor of Wood and Metal. In the account of Paul's voyage to Rome, the use of anchors is mentioned repeatedly. (Ac 27:13, 29, 30, 40) In ancient times, the first anchors seem to have been stone weights and other simple devices. By the time of Paul's travels, however, more advanced anchors had been developed. Shown here is a drawing of a hook anchor that was common in Roman times. This kind of anchor was usually made of metal and wood. The heavy stock, typically made of lead, weighed the anchor down, and one of

the anchor's arms dug into the sea-floor. Large boats often had a number of anchors. (Ac 27:29, 30) An anchor discovered near Cyrene, on the African coast, weighs about 545 kg (1,200 lb), giving added meaning to Paul's statement that "we have this hope as an anchor for the soul." (Heb 6:19) (A) Stock. (B) Shank. (C) Fluke. (D) Arm. (E) Collar.

Related Scripture(s): Ac 27:13

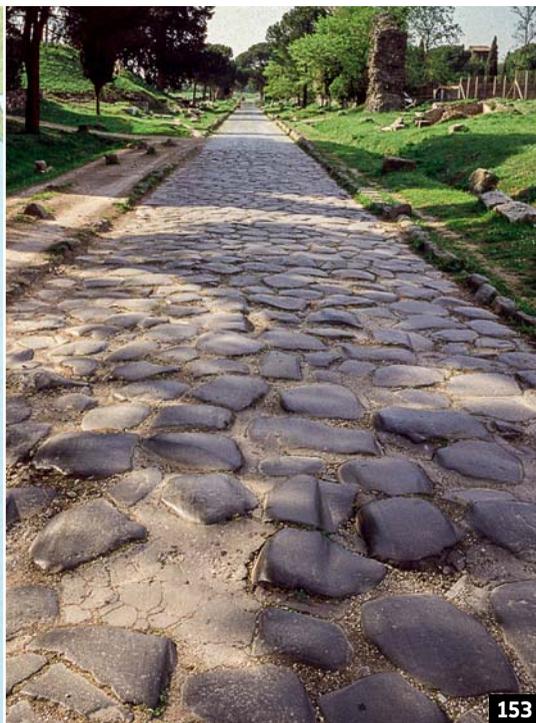
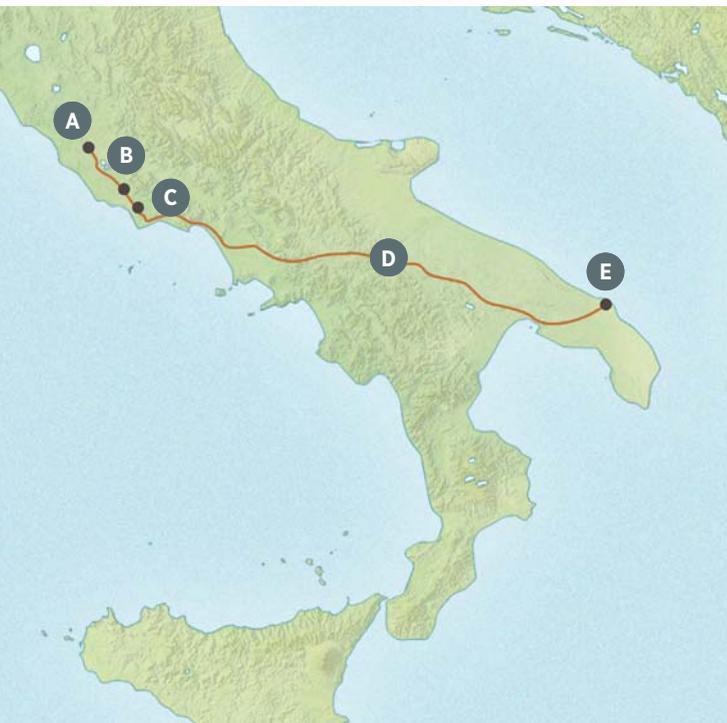


152

152 Sounding Weights. These weights (A), which varied in shape and size, are among the oldest known nautical instruments. They were tied to a rope and thrown over the side of a ship. When the weight hit the seafloor, sailors used the rope to measure the depth beneath the ship's hull (B). The bottom of some weights had a layer of tallow, a soft substance that would pick up fragments, such as pebbles and sand, from the seafloor. When the weight was retrieved, these fragments would be brought to the surface for the sailors to in-

spect. Though various materials were used, sounding weights were typically made of lead. Appropriately, the Greek verb for "to sound the depth; to make a sounding" used at Ac 27:28 literally means "to heave the lead."

(A) Sounding weight. (B) Rope.
Related Scripture(s): Ac 27:28



153

153 The Appian Way. This photograph shows part of the Appian Way, or Via Appia, that can still be found in Italy. Although the road is not mentioned directly in the Bible, it was likely the highway that Paul used on his trek to Rome. The earliest portion of this road was built in 312 B.C.E. Construction continued, however, and by about 244 B.C.E., the Appian Way stretched from Rome to Brundisium. (See map.) Brothers from Rome traveled southward to Three Taverns and the Marketplace of Appius, both located along the Appian Way, to meet

Paul. (Ac 28:15) The Marketplace of Appius was about 65 km (40 mi) from Rome. Three Taverns was about 50 km (30 mi) from Rome. (A) Rome. (B) Three Taverns. (C) Marketplace of Appius. (D) Appian Way. (E) Brundisium (now called Brindisi).

Related Scripture(s): Ac 28:15



MAP GALLERY



CITIES

Name	Map(s)	Name	Map(s)
Aenon	4	Gaza	5, 7
Akeldama	1	Golgotha	1, 3, 4
Alexandria	11	Iconium	8-10
Amphipolis	9	Jericho	2, 3
Antioch (of Pisidia)	8-10	Jerusalem	1-11
Antioch (of Syria)	5, 8-10	Joppa	5
Antipatris	5, 11	Lydda	5
Apollonia	9	Lystra	8-10
Ashdod, Azotus	7	Magadan	1
Assos	10	Miletus	10
Athens	9	Mitylene	10
Attalia	8	Myra	11
Beroea	9, 10	Nain	3
Bethany	1-4	Nazareth	1, 3
Bethany across Jordan	2, 4	Neapolis	9
Bethlehem	1, 3	Paphos	8
Bethphage	1, 2	Patara	10
Bethsaida	2	Perga	8
Caesarea	5, 7, 9-11	Philippi	9, 10
Caesarea Philippi	1	Ptolemais	10
Cana	4	Puteoli	11
Capernaum	1-4	Rhegium	11
Cenchreae	9	Rome	6, 11
Cnidus	11	Salamis	8
Corinth	9, 10	Seleucia	8
Cos	10	Sidon	1, 2, 11
Cyrene	6	Sychar	4
Damascus	5	Syracuse	11
Derbe	8-10	Tarsus	9, 10
Emmaus	3	Thessalonica	9, 10
Ephesus	9, 10	Tiberias	1
Ephraim	4	Troas	9, 10
Fair Havens	11	Tyre	1, 2, 10

COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

Name	Map(s)	Name	Map(s)
Arabia	6	Lycaonia	8
Asia	6, 9, 10	Lycia	11
Cappadocia	6	Macedonia	9, 10
Cauda	11	Malta	11
Cilicia	9-11	Media	6
Crete	6, 11	Mesopotamia	6
Decapolis	1-4	Pamphylia	6
Egypt	6	Parthia	6
Elam	6	Perea	1-4
Gadara	1	Phoenicia	1, 2, 10
Galatia	8-10	Phrygia	6, 9, 10
Galilee	1-4	Pisidia	8
Greece	10, 11	Pontus	6
Italy	11	Rhodes	10, 11
Judea	1-4, 6	Samaria	1-5, 7
Libya	6	St. Paul's Island	11

MAN-MADE LOCATIONS

Name	Map(s)	Name	Map(s)
Acropolis (Philippi)	9	Marketplace of Appius	11
Cistern (Philippi)	9	Neapolis Gate (Philippi)	9
City Walls (Philippi)	9	Pool of Bethzatha	4
Fortress of Antonia	5	Pool of Siloam	4
Forum (Philippi)	9	Sanhedrin Hall	2, 5
Garden of Gethsemane	3, 4	Temple	1-5
Governor's Palace	1, 4	Theater (Philippi)	9
House of Caiaphas	3	Three Taverns	11
Jacob's Well	4	Via Egnatia (Philippi)	9
Krenides Gate (Philippi)	9		

NATURAL LOCATIONS

Name	Map(s)	Name	Map(s)
Black Sea	6	Place of prayer (Philippi)	9
Caspian Sea	6	Red Sea	6
Jordan River	1-4, 7	Salt Sea (Dead Sea)	1-4, 7
Kidron Valley	1-5	Sea of Adria	11
Koura Head	11	Sea of Galilee	1-4, 7
Krenides Stream	9	St. Paul's Bay	11
Mediterranean Sea	5-11	Stream (Philippi)	9
Mount of Olives	1-5	Syrtis	11
Mt. Hermon	1	Valley of Hinnom	1-5
Persian Gulf	6	Wilderness of Judea	1-4

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Some Major Events

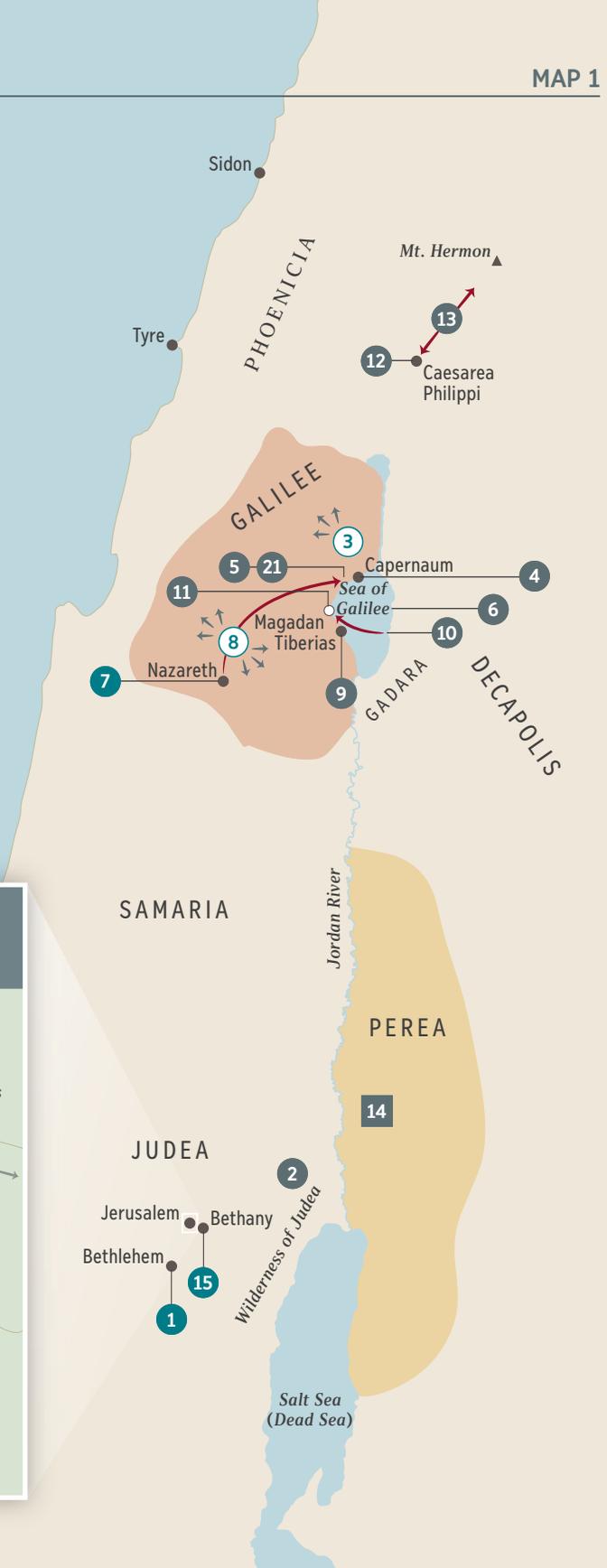
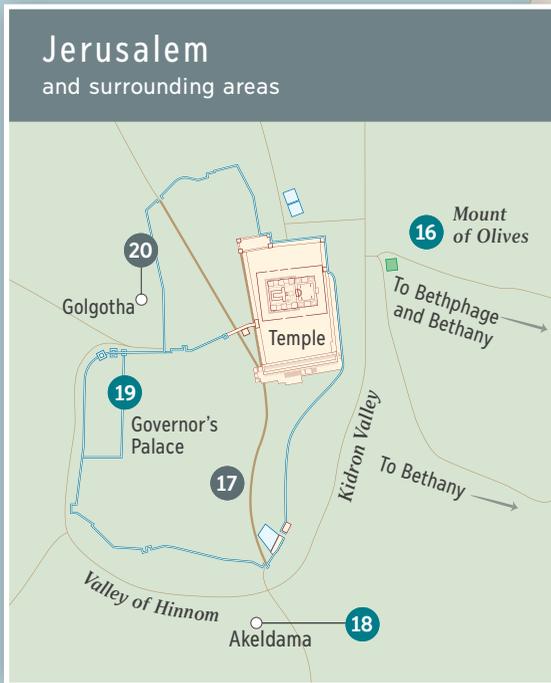
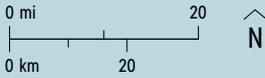
Where possible, events have been listed in chronological order.

Each Gospel map traces a different series of events

- 1 Jesus is born in Bethlehem (Mt 2:1; Lu 2:4-6).—See  Gallery, image 7
- 2 Jesus is tempted by Satan in the wilderness of Judea (Mt 4:1-3; Mr 1:12, 13; Lu 4:1-4).—See  Gallery, image 8
- 3 Jesus' first preaching tour of Galilee when he brings along his first four disciples; he probably begins from the area near Capernaum (Mt 4:23; Mr 1:38, 39; Lu 4:42, 43)
- 4 In the vicinity of Capernaum, Jesus calls Matthew (Mt 9:9; Mr 2:14; Lu 5:27, 28)
- 5 Jesus delivers the Sermon on the Mount in the hilly terrain near Capernaum (Mt 5:1, 2; Lu 6:17, 20).—See  Gallery, image 20
- 6 On the east side of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus meets demon-possessed men; demons are sent into swine (Mt 8:28, 31, 32; Mr 5:1, 2, 11-13; Lu 8:26, 27, 32, 33).—See  Gallery, image 38
- 7 People of Jesus' hometown, Nazareth, reject him (Mt 13:54-57; Mr 6:1-3)
- 8 Third preaching tour of Galilee, possibly from the area near Nazareth (Mt 9:35, 37, 38; Mr 6:6, 7; Lu 9:1, 2)
- 9 John the Baptist is killed, apparently in Tiberias (Mt 14:10; Mr 6:27)
- 10 After traveling through the region of Tyre and Sidon, Jesus feeds about 4,000 men on the east side of the Sea of Galilee (Mt 15:29, 36-38; Mr 8:1, 2, 6, 9)
- 11 Jesus goes to the region of Magadan; the Pharisees and Sadducees ask for a sign from heaven (Mt 15:39; 16:1, 2, 4; Mr 8:10-12)
- 12 In the region of Caesarea Philippi, Peter identifies Jesus as the Christ; Jesus promises Peter the keys of the Kingdom (Mt 16:13-16, 19)
- 13 Jesus' transfiguration, probably on some spur of Mount Hermon (Mt 17:1, 2; Mr 9:2, 3; Lu 9:28, 29).—See  Gallery, image 60
- 14 Jesus again foretells his death and resurrection, probably while in Perea (Mt 20:17-19; Mr 10:32-34; Lu 18:31-33)
- 15 Jesus arrives at Bethany; Mary pours oil on Jesus' head and feet (Mt 26:6, 7, 12, 13; Mr 14:3, 8, 9; Joh 12:1, 3, 7, 8)
- 16 On the Mount of Olives, the disciples ask about the sign of Jesus' presence (Mt 24:3; Mr 13:3, 4; Lu 21:7).—See  Gallery, image 77
- 17 In Jerusalem, Jesus institutes the Lord's Evening Meal (Mt 26:26-28; Mr 14:22-24; Lu 22:19, 20)
- 18 Judas feels remorse and hangs himself; priests purchase a field that came to be known as Field of Blood (Akeldama) (Mt 27:3-8)
- 19 Jesus stands before Pilate in the governor's palace (Mt 27:11-14; Mr 15:1, 2; Lu 23:1-3; Joh 18:33, 36, 37)
- 20 Jesus is buried (Mt 27:57-60; Mr 15:43-46; Lu 23:50, 52, 53; Joh 19:38, 40-42)
- 21 In Galilee, Jesus gives the commission to make disciples (Mt 28:16-20)

KEY

- Location of Event
- Approximate Location of Event in the Area
- Approximate Location of Event in the Region
- ⊕ Preaching Tour
- ← Possible Route
- ▭ Galilee Region
- ▭ Perea Region
- ▲ Mountain
- Road
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain



GOSPEL OF MARK

Some Major Events

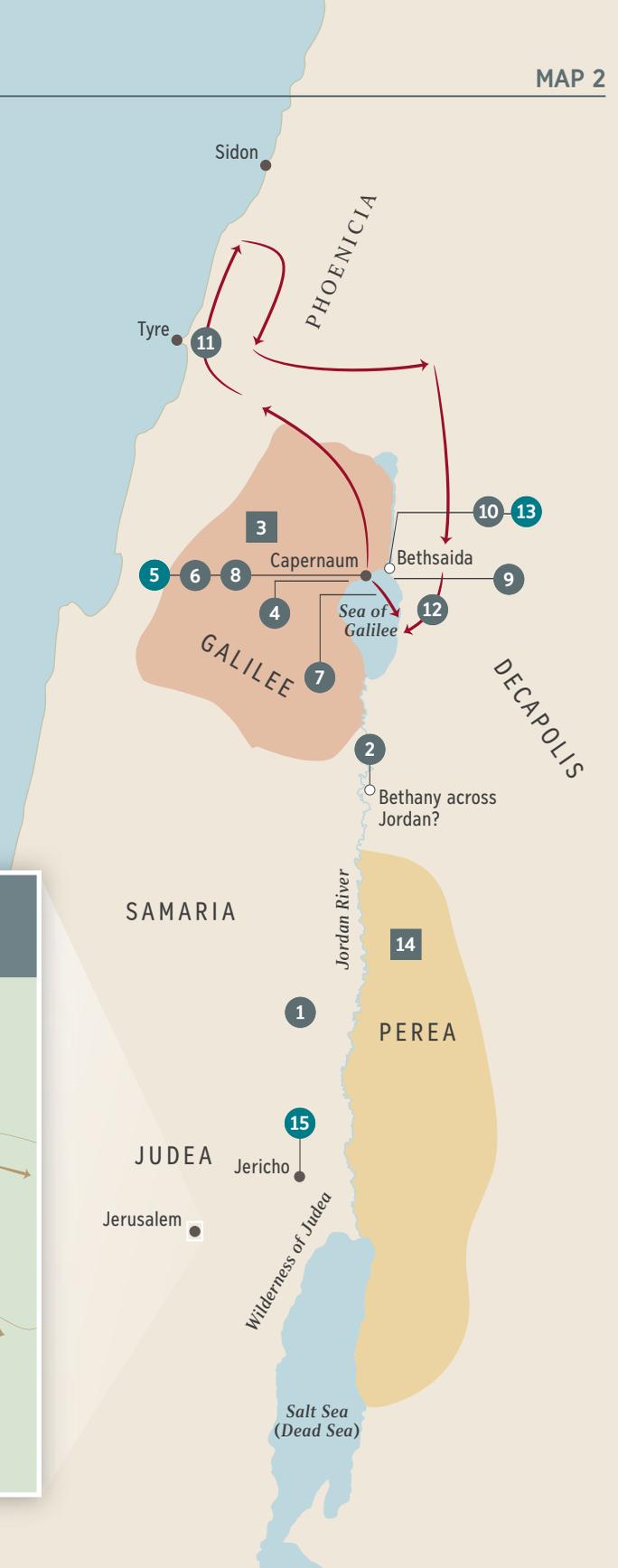
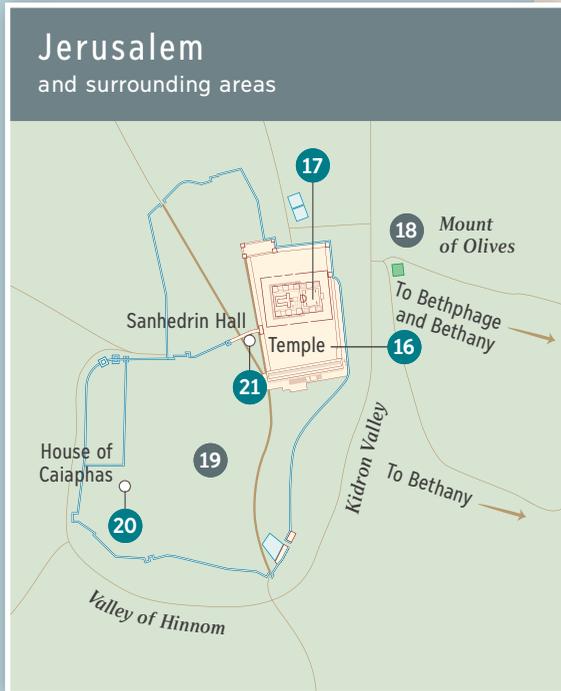
Where possible, events have been listed in chronological order.

Each Gospel map traces a different series of events

- 1 Ministry of John the Baptizer in the wilderness near the Jordan River (Mt 3:1, 2; Mr 1:3-5; Lu 3:2, 3).
—See  Gallery, image 9
- 2 Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River; Jehovah identifies Jesus as his Son (Mt 3:13, 16, 17; Mr 1:9-11; Lu 3:21, 22).—See  Gallery, image 18
- 3 Jesus begins preaching in Galilee (Mt 4:17; Mr 1:14, 15; Lu 4:14, 15)
- 4 On the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus calls four disciples to be fishers of men (Mt 4:18-22; Mr 1:16-20).—See  Gallery, image 21
- 5 Jesus teaches in the synagogue in Capernaum (Mr 1:21; Lu 4:31, 38).
—See  Gallery, image 88
- 6 Jesus ascends a mountain near Capernaum and chooses the 12 apostles (Mr 3:13-15; Lu 6:12, 13)
- 7 Sea of Galilee; Jesus calms a violent windstorm (Mt 8:23-26; Mr 4:37-39; Lu 8:22-24).—See  Gallery, image 24
- 8 Probably in Capernaum, a woman touches Jesus' outer garment and is cured (Mt 9:19-22; Mr 5:25-29; Lu 8:43, 44)
- 9 On the northeast side of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus feeds about 5,000 men (Mt 14:19-21; Mr 6:39-42, 44; Lu 9:14, 16, 17; Joh 6:10, 11)
- 10 Jesus sends disciples by boat, toward Bethsaida (Mt 14:22; Mr 6:45)
- 11 In the region of Tyre and Sidon, Jesus heals a Syrophenician woman's daughter (Mt 15:21, 22, 28; Mr 7:24-26, 29)
- 12 Jesus goes through the region of Decapolis on his way to the Sea of Galilee (Mr 7:31)
- 13 Jesus heals a blind man in Bethsaida (Mr 8:22-25)
- 14 Jesus teaches people in Perea (Mt 19:1-3; Mr 10:1, 2)
- 15 Jesus heals blind men near Jericho (Mt 20:29, 30, 34; Mr 10:46, 47, 51, 52; Lu 18:35, 40-43)
- 16 Jesus cleanses the temple (Mt 21:12, 13; Mr 11:15-17; Lu 19:45, 46)
- 17 At the temple treasury in the Court of Women, Jesus sees a poor widow who donates two coins (Mr 12:42-44; Lu 21:1-4).—See  Gallery, image 89
- 18 On his way from the temple to the Mount of Olives, Jesus foretells the destruction of the temple (Mt 24:1, 2; Mr 13:1, 2; Lu 21:5, 6).
—See  Gallery, image 76
- 19 In the city of Jerusalem, preparations are made for the Passover (Mr 14:13-16; Lu 22:10-13).—See  Gallery, image 90
- 20 Jesus is taken to the house of High Priest Caiaphas (Mt 26:57-59; Mr 14:60-62; Lu 22:54)
- 21 Jesus stands before the Sanhedrin again, this time at the Sanhedrin hall (Mr 15:1; Lu 22:66-69).
—See  Gallery, image 91

KEY

- Location of Event
- Approximate Location of Event in the Area
- Approximate Location of Event in the Region
- ← Possible Route
- Galilee Region
- Perea Region
- ? Precise Location Unknown
- Road
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain



GOSPEL OF LUKE

Some Major Events

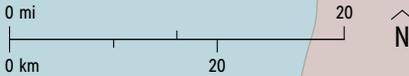
Where possible, events have been listed in chronological order.

Each Gospel map traces a different series of events

- 1 The angel Gabriel appears to Zechariah at the temple and foretells the birth of John the Baptist (Lu 1:8, 11-13).—See  Gallery, image 94
- 2 After Jesus' birth, angels appear to shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem (Lu 2:8-11)
- 3 Twelve-year-old Jesus talks with teachers at the temple (Lu 2:41-43, 46, 47)
- 4 The Devil stations Jesus "on the battlement of the temple" and tempts him (Mt 4:5-7; Lu 4:9, 12, 13).—See  Gallery, image 19
- 5 In the synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus reads from the scroll of Isaiah (Lu 4:16-19).—See  Gallery, image 100
- 6 Jesus is rejected in his hometown (Lu 4:28-30)
- 7 Jesus travels to Nain, apparently from Capernaum (Lu 7:1, 11)
- 8 In Nain, Jesus resurrects a widow's only son (Lu 7:12-15)
- 9 Jesus makes his second preaching tour of Galilee (Lu 8:1-3)
- 10 Jesus resurrects Jairus' daughter, probably in Capernaum (Mt 9:23-25; Mr 5:38, 41, 42; Lu 8:49, 50, 54, 55)
- 11 While traveling to Jerusalem through Samaria, Jesus says: "The Son of man has nowhere to lay down his head" (Lu 9:57, 58)
- 12 Jesus sends out the 70, probably in Judea (Lu 10:1, 2)
- 13 Location for the illustration of the neighborly Samaritan going down the road to Jericho (Lu 10:30, 33, 34, 36, 37).—See  Gallery, image 103
- 14 Jesus teaches in cities and villages in Perea and travels to Jerusalem (Lu 13:22)
- 15 Passing between Samaria and Galilee, Jesus heals ten lepers (Lu 17:11-14)
- 16 Jesus visits Zacchaeus, the tax collector, in Jericho (Lu 19:2-5)
- 17 Jesus prays in the garden of Gethsemane (Mt 26:36, 39; Mr 14:32, 35, 36; Lu 22:40-43)
- 18 Peter denies Jesus three times in the courtyard of the house of Caiaphas (Mt 26:69-75; Mr 14:66-72; Lu 22:55-62; Joh 18:25-27)
- 19 At the place called Skull (Golgotha), Jesus says to the criminal: "You will be with me in Paradise" (Lu 23:33, 42, 43)
- 20 Jesus appears before two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lu 24:13, 15, 16, 30-32)
- 21 Jesus leads the disciples as far as Bethany; Jesus ascends to heaven from the nearby Mount of Olives (Lu 24:50, 51)

KEY

- Location of Event
- Approximate Location of Event in the Area
- Approximate Location of Event in the Region
- ⊕ Preaching Tour
- ← Possible Route
- ▭ Judea-Samaria Region
- ▭ Galilee Region
- ▭ Perea Region
- Road
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain



Jerusalem and surrounding areas



GOSPEL OF JOHN

Some Major Events

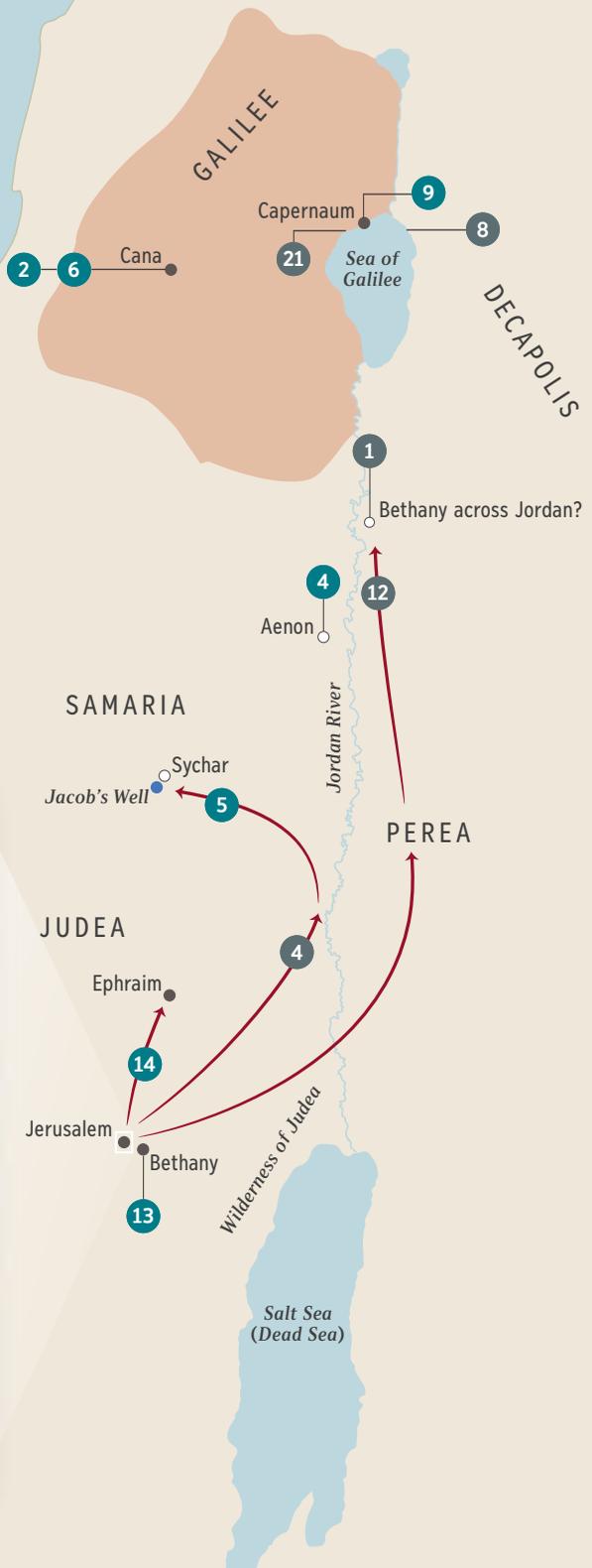
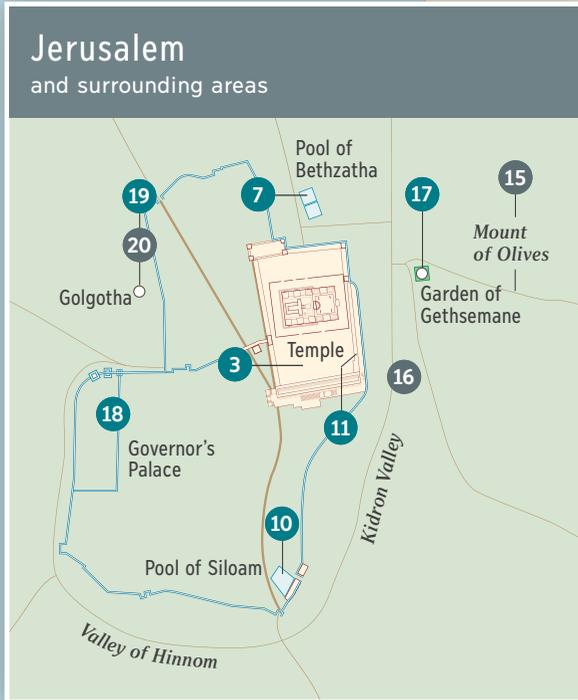
Where possible, events have been listed in chronological order.

Each Gospel map traces a different series of events

- 1 Near Bethany across the Jordan, John calls Jesus “the Lamb of God” (Joh 1:29)
- 2 In Cana of Galilee, Jesus performs his first miracle (Joh 2:3, 7-9, 11)
- 3 Jesus cleanses the temple for the first time (Joh 2:13-15)
- 4 Jesus goes to the Judean countryside; his disciples baptize; John baptizes in Aenon (Joh 3:22, 23)
- 5 At Jacob’s well at Sychar, Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman (Joh 4:4-7, 14, 19, 20).—See  Gallery, image 117
- 6 Jesus heals an official’s son from a distance, his second sign in Cana of Galilee (Joh 4:46, 47, 50-54)
- 7 Jesus heals a sick man at the pool of Bethzatha in Jerusalem (Joh 5:2-5, 8, 9).—See  Gallery, image 118
- 8 Northeast side of the Sea of Galilee; after Jesus miraculously fed about 5,000 men, people try to make him king (Mt 14:19-21; Joh 6:10, 14, 15)
- 9 In a synagogue in Capernaum, Jesus says that he is “the bread of life”; many are stumbled at his words (Joh 6:48, 54, 59, 66)
- 10 At the pool of Siloam, Jesus heals a man born blind (Joh 9:1-3, 6, 7)
- 11 In Solomon’s Colonnade in the temple, the Jews try to stone Jesus (Joh 10:22, 23, 31).—See  Gallery, image 121
- 12 When the Jews try to seize Jesus, he goes to where John was baptizing at first; many across the Jordan put faith in Jesus (Joh 10:39-42)
- 13 Jesus resurrects Lazarus in Bethany (Joh 11:38, 39, 43, 44)
- 14 When Jews in Jerusalem conspire to kill Jesus, he departs for Ephraim, a city in the region near the wilderness (Joh 11:53, 54)
- 15 On the road from Bethphage, Jesus rides a donkey and enters Jerusalem triumphantly (Mt 21:1, 7-10; Mr 11:1, 7-11; Lu 19:29, 30, 35, 37, 38; Joh 12:12-15).—See  Gallery, image 67
- 16 Jesus crosses the Kidron Valley and goes to Gethsemane with his disciples (Mt 26:30; Mr 14:26; Lu 22:39; Joh 18:1)
- 17 In the garden of Gethsemane, Judas betrays Jesus and Jesus is arrested (Mt 26:47-50; Mr 14:43-46; Lu 22:47, 48, 54; Joh 18:2, 3, 12)
- 18 Jesus is scourged and mocked in the governor’s palace (Mt 27:26-29; Mr 15:15-20; Joh 19:1-3)
- 19 Jesus is nailed to a stake at Golgotha (Mt 27:33-36; Mr 15:22-25; Lu 23:33; Joh 19:17, 18).—See  Gallery, image 84
- 20 The resurrected Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene in the garden near the tomb (Mt 28:1, 5, 6, 8, 9; Joh 20:11, 12, 15-17)
- 21 On the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus appears to his disciples; Peter affirms his affection for Jesus (Joh 21:12-15)

KEY

- Location of Event
- Approximate Location of Event in the Area
- ← Possible Route
- ▭ Galilee Region
- ? Precise Location Unknown
- Road
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain



ACTS OF APOSTLES

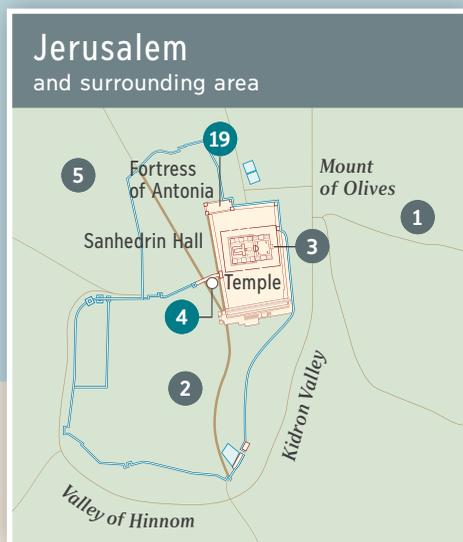
Some Major Events

Events are listed in chronological order

- 1 On the Mount of Olives near Bethany, Jesus tells his disciples to witness about him “to the most distant part of the earth” (Ac 1:8).—See  Gallery, image 67
- 2 At Pentecost, holy spirit is poured out on the disciples, who give a witness in different languages (Ac 2:1-6)
- 3 Lame man healed at the Beautiful Gate of the temple (Ac 3:1-8)
- 4 Apostles stand before the Sanhedrin, saying that they “must obey God as ruler rather than men” (Ac 5:27-29).—See  Gallery, image 91
- 5 Stephen stoned to death outside Jerusalem (Ac 7:54-60)
- 6 When the disciples are scattered, Philip goes to Samaria and begins preaching there; Peter and John sent there so that those baptized can receive holy spirit (Ac 8:4, 5, 14, 17)
- 7 Philip preaches to an Ethiopian eunuch on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza and baptizes him.—See map “Activities of Philip the Evangelizer” (Ac 8:26-31, 36-38)
- 8 Jesus appears to Saul on the road to Damascus (Ac 9:1-6)
- 9 Jesus directs Ananias to go to the street called Straight and assist Saul; Saul gets baptized (Ac 9:10, 11, 17, 18).—See  Gallery, image 131
- 10 After Dorcas dies in Joppa, the disciples urge Peter to come from nearby Lydda; when he arrives

KEY

-  Location of Event
-  Approximate Location of Event in the Area
-  Possible Route
-  Paul’s 1st Missionary Tour
-  Paul’s 2nd Missionary Tour
-  Paul’s 3rd Missionary Tour
-  Paul’s Trip to Rome
-  Road
-  Location Reasonably Certain
-  Location Less Certain



- 11 While staying in Joppa, Peter sees a vision of cleansed animals (Ac 9:43; 10:9-16)
- 12 Peter goes to Caesarea, where he preaches to Cornelius and other uncircumcised Gentiles; they believe, receive holy spirit, and get baptized (Ac 10:23, 24, 34-48).—See  Gallery, image 130
- 13 Disciples first called Christians in Antioch of Syria (Ac 11:26).—See  Gallery, image 136
- 14 Herod kills James and imprisons Peter; Peter freed by angel (Ac 12:2-4, 6-10)
- 15 Beginning of Paul’s first missionary tour with Barnabas and John Mark (Ac 12:25; 13:4, 5).—See Map 8



- 16** When a dispute regarding circumcision erupts in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas take the matter to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, returning to Antioch after the meeting (Ac 15:1-4, 6, 22-31)
- 17** Beginning of Paul's second missionary tour.—See Map 9
- 18** Beginning of Paul's third missionary tour.—See Map 10
- 19** When Paul is in Jerusalem, a riot breaks out in the temple; Paul is arrested and speaks to the people from the steps of the Fortress of Antonia (Ac 21:27-40)
- 20** When a conspiracy to kill Paul is detected, Paul is escorted to Antipatris by army guards and then transferred to Caesarea (Ac 23:12-17, 23, 24, 31-35)
- 21** Paul's trial before Festus; Paul appeals to Caesar (Ac 25:8-12). —See [Gallery](#), image 149
- 22** First part of Paul's trip to Rome. —See Map 11

PENTECOST 33 C.E.

And the Spreading of the Good News

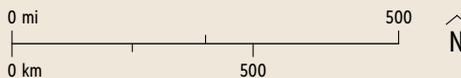
At Pentecost 33 C.E., “Jews from every nation under heaven were staying in Jerusalem.” (Ac 2:5) After holy spirit was poured out on the Christian disciples, miraculously they were able to speak the languages of the Jews visiting Jerusalem. (Ac 2:4, 8) The crowds were astounded to hear the good news in their own native languages. Ac 2:9-11 indicates that the visitors came from 15 different regions. Many of those visitors who became believers no doubt took the good news back with them to their home territories, shown on this map and numbered according to the order in which they are mentioned at Ac 2:9-11.—Ac 2:41, 44, 47.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 2:9](#)



KEY

- Locations mentioned at Acts 2:9-11 (Numbered according to the order in which they are mentioned)
- ↔ General direction of travel
- City





ACTIVITIES OF PHILIP THE EVANGELIZER

The Bible records some of the zealous activity of “Philip the evangelizer.” (Ac 21:8) He was one of the “seven reputable men” who distributed food among the Greek-speaking and Hebrew-speaking disciples in Jerusalem. (Ac 6:1-6) After the death of Stephen when “all except the apostles were scattered,” Philip went to Samaria; there he preached the good news and performed miracles. (Ac 8:1, 4-7) Later, Jehovah’s angel sent Philip to a desert road that ran

from Jerusalem to Gaza. (Ac 8:26) Philip encountered an Ethiopian eunuch on that road and declared the good news to him. (Ac 8:27-38) Led away by Jehovah’s spirit (Ac 8:39), Philip continued preaching, traveling from Ashdod and through other cities near the coast until he reached Caesarea. (Ac 8:40) Years later, Luke and Paul stayed at Philip’s home in Caesarea. At that time, Philip “had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.”—Ac 21:8, 9.

[Related Scripture\(s\): Ac 8:5; 21:8](#)

- 1 Jerusalem: Performs administrative work.—Ac 6:5
- 2 Samaria: Preaches the good news.—Ac 8:5
- 3 Desert road to Gaza: Explains the Scriptures to an Ethiopian eunuch and baptizes him.—Ac 8:26-39
- 4 Coastal region: Declares the good news to all the cities.—Ac 8:40
- 5 Caesarea: Philip welcomes Paul to his house.—Ac 21:8, 9

KEY

- Location of Event
- Approximate Location of Event in the Area or on the Route Taken
- ← Possible Route or General Direction of Travel
- City



MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Sea of Galilee

Jordan River

Salt Sea (Dead Sea)

SAMARIA

Caesarea 5

2

1 Jerusalem

4

Ashdod, Azotus

3

Gaza



ACTS OF APOSTLES

Paul's First Missionary Tour

(Ac 13:1–14:28) c. 47-48 C.E.

Events are listed in chronological order

- 1 Barnabas and Saul sent as missionaries from Antioch of Syria. —See  App. B13 for a map showing all of Paul's missionary tours (Ac 13:1-3); see  Gallery, image 136
- 2 Barnabas and Saul sail from Seleucia to Salamis in Cyprus; they proclaim the word of God in local synagogues (Ac 13:4-6)
- 3 In Paphos, Saul is for the first time on record called Paul (Ac 13:6, 9)
- 4 Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus, becomes a believer (Ac 13:7, 12)
- 5 Paul and his companions arrive in Perga in Pamphylia; John Mark returns to Jerusalem (Ac 13:13)
- 6 Paul and Barnabas preach in the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia (Ac 13:14-16)
- 7 Many gather in Antioch to hear Paul and Barnabas, but the Jews persecute the two men (Ac 13:44, 45, 50)
- 8 Paul and Barnabas speak in the synagogue in Iconium; many Jews and Greeks become believers (Ac 14:1)
- 9 Some Jews in Iconium oppose the brothers, and the city is divided; the Jews try to stone Paul and Barnabas (Ac 14:2-5)
- 10 Paul and Barnabas in Lystra, a city of Lycaonia; they are mistaken for gods (Ac 14:6-11)



KEY

-  Starting Point of Paul's 1st Missionary Tour
-  1st Missionary Tour c. 47-48 C.E.
-  Location of Event
-  Approximate Location of Event in the Area or on the Route Taken
-  Location Reasonably Certain

- 11 Jews who came from Antioch and Iconium fiercely oppose Paul in Lystra; Paul survives stoning (Ac 14:19, 20a)
- 12 Paul and Barnabas declare the good news in Derbe; quite a few become disciples (Ac 14:20b, 21a)
- 13 Paul and Barnabas return to newly established congregations in

Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch to strengthen them; they appoint elders in each congregation (Ac 14:21b-23)

- 14 Paul and Barnabas travel back to Perga and proclaim the word; they go down to Attalia (Ac 14:24, 25)

GALATIA

Iconium

8 9

Lystra

LYCAONIA

13

Derbe

12



MEDITERRANEAN SEA

1

Antioch (of Syria)

Seleucia

15

2

Salamis

Cyprus

3

4

Paphos

- 15 From Attalia, they sail for Antioch of Syria (Ac 14:26, 27)

Related Scripture(s): Ac 13:1

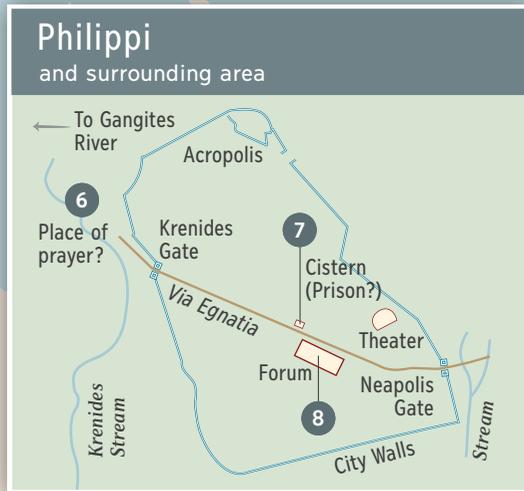
ACTS OF APOSTLES

Paul's Second Missionary Tour

(Ac 15:36–18:22) c. 49-52 C.E.

Events are listed in chronological order

- 1 Paul and Barnabas separate; Paul travels with Silas, while Barnabas takes along John (also called Mark) (Ac 15:36-41).—See  App. B13 for a map showing all of Paul's missionary tours (Ac 13:1-3); see  Gallery, image 136
- 2 Paul travels to Derbe and then to Lystra, where he selects Timothy to accompany him (Ac 16:1-4)
- 3 Holy spirit forbids Paul from speaking the word in the province of Asia; Paul travels through Phrygia and Galatia and then comes down to Mysia (Ac 16:6, 7)
- 4 When Paul and his companions come down to Troas, Paul sees a vision of a Macedonian man inviting the brothers to go to Macedonia (Ac 16:8-10)
- 5 Paul and his companions sail from Troas for Neapolis and then travel to Philippi (Ac 16:11, 12).—See  Gallery, image 140
- 6 Outside a gate of Philippi, beside a river, Paul speaks to women; Lydia and her household get baptized (Ac 16:13-15).—See  Gallery, image 141
- 7 Paul and Silas are imprisoned in Philippi; the jailer and his household get baptized (Ac 16:22-24, 31-33)
- 8 Paul requests an official apology; the city magistrates escort the brothers out of prison; Paul visits



- 9 Paul and his companions come through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica (Ac 17:1)
- 10 Paul preaches in Thessalonica; some Jews as well as many Greeks become believers; unbelieving Jews cause an uproar in the city (Ac 17:2-5)
- 11 On arriving at Beroea, Paul and Silas preach in the synagogue there; Jews from Thessalonica agitate the crowd (Ac 17:10-13).—See  Gallery, image 142



KEY

- ⊕ Starting Point of Paul's 2nd Missionary Tour
- ← 2nd Missionary Tour c. 49-52 C.E.
- Location of Event
- Approximate Location of Event in the Area or on the Route Taken
- Location Reasonably Certain

12 Paul goes to Athens by sea, while Silas and Timothy stay in Beroea (Ac 17:14, 15)

13 In Athens, Paul speaks at the Areopagus; some become believers (Ac 17:22, 32-34)

14 Paul spends 18 months in Corinth, teaching the word of God; some oppose him, but many believe and get baptized (Ac 18:1, 8, 11)

15 From Cenchreae, a port of Corinth, Paul, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila, sails for Ephesus, where Paul preaches in the synagogue (Ac 18:18, 19).—See 🖼️ Gallery, image 146

16 Paul sails for Caesarea, but Priscilla and Aquila stay in Ephesus; apparently, Paul goes to Jerusalem and then goes to Antioch of Syria (Ac 18:20-22)

Related Scripture(s): Ac 15:36

ACTS OF APOSTLES

Paul's Third Missionary Tour

(Ac 18:23–21:17) c. 52-56 C.E.

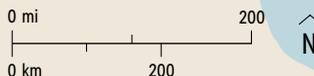
Events are listed in chronological order

- 1 Paul departs from Antioch of Syria for Galatia and Phrygia and strengthens the disciples in the congregations (Ac 18:23).—See  App. B13 for a map showing all of Paul's missionary tours (Ac 13:1-3); see  Gallery, image 136
- 2 Paul goes through the inland regions and comes to Ephesus, where some are rebaptized and receive holy spirit (Ac 19:1, 5-7)
- 3 Paul preaches in the synagogue in Ephesus, but some Jews refuse to believe; Paul moves to the school auditorium of Tyrannus and gives talks daily (Ac 19:8, 9)
- 4 Paul's ministry in Ephesus is fruitful (Ac 19:18-20)
- 5 A riot breaks out in the theater in Ephesus (Ac 19:29-34).—See  Gallery, image 148
- 6 Paul travels from Ephesus to Macedonia and then to Greece (Ac 20:1, 2)
- 7 After staying in Greece for three months, Paul goes back through Macedonia (Ac 20:3)
- 8 From Philippi, Paul travels to Troas; resurrects Eutychus there (Ac 20:5-11)
- 9 Paul's companions arrive in Assos by boat while Paul travels overland and joins them there (Ac 20:13, 14)
- 10 Paul and his companions arrive in Miletus by boat, where Paul

- 11 Paul prays with the elders and tells them that they will not see his face anymore; the elders escort him to the ship (Ac 20:36-38)

meets with the elders from Ephesus and admonishes them with many words (Ac 20:14-20)

- 12 From Miletus, Paul and his companions sail to Cos and then to Rhodes and Patara, where they board a ship to Syria; the ship passes the SW end of the island of Cyprus and lands at Tyre (Ac 21:1-3)





13 The disciples in Tyre, through the spirit, repeatedly warn Paul not to set foot in Jerusalem (Ac 21:4, 5)

14 Paul arrives in Caesarea; the prophet Agabus tells him that tribulation awaits him in Jerusalem (Ac 21:8-11)

15 Paul arrives in Jerusalem despite the danger there (Ac 21:12-15, 17)

Related Scripture(s): Ac 18:23

ACTS OF APOSTLES

Paul's Trip to Rome and His First Imprisonment There

(Ac 27:1–28:31) c. 58-59 C.E.

Events are listed
in chronological order

- 1 After spending two years in prison in Caesarea, Paul, still a prisoner, sets sail on the voyage to Rome (Ac 27:1, 2).—See  App. B13 for a map showing all of Paul's missionary tours (Ac 13:1-3); see  Gallery, image 136
- 2 Paul and his companions arrive at Sidon; Paul is permitted to meet the brothers there (Ac 27:3)
- 3 Paul leaves on a ship that sails under the shelter of Cyprus, through open sea along Cilicia and Pamphylia, and arrives in Myra in the region of Lycia (Ac 27:4, 5)
- 4 At Myra, Paul boards a grain ship from Alexandria; the ship comes to Cnidus with difficulty and then sails under the shelter of Crete off Salmone (Ac 27:6, 7).—See  Gallery, image 150
- 5 Paul and his companions continue sailing with difficulty along the coast of Crete and arrive in Fair Havens (Ac 27:8)
- 6 The ship stays a considerable time at Fair Havens; a decision is made to depart Fair Havens for Phoenix, another harbor in Crete (Ac 27:9-13)
- 7 After the ship sails for a short time, a violent NE wind, Euroaquilo, strikes; the ship is driven along (Ac 27:14, 15)
- 8 The ship runs under the shelter of the island of Cauda; sailors fear that the ship will run aground on



the sandbanks of Syrtis (Ac 27: 16, 17)

- 9 An angel appears to Paul and tells him that he will stand before Caesar; Paul assures those sailing with him that all will survive (Ac 27:22-25)

10 Shipwreck on Malta (Ac 27:39-44; 28:1)

- 11 People in Malta show extraordinary kindness; Paul heals Publius' father (Ac 28:2, 7, 8)



12 After boarding a ship from Alexandria that had wintered in Malta, Paul travels to Syracuse and then to Rhegium (Ac 28:11-13a)

13 Paul arrives in Puteoli; brothers there warmly welcome him (Ac 28: 13b, 14)

14 Brothers from Rome meet up with Paul at the Marketplace of Appius and Three Taverns (Ac 28:15)

15 Paul arrives in Rome; he is permitted to stay in a house with a soldier guarding him (Ac 28:16)

16 Paul speaks to Jews in Rome; then for two years he preaches with boldness to all who come to him (Ac 28:17, 18, 21-31)

Related Scripture(s): Ac 27:1

Κύριος ὁ Θε

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

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The items shown in the illustrations in the Appendixes are based on extensive research. However, they are artists' renditions and at times depict only one of several possibilities.

Principles of Bible Translation

The Bible was originally written in ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Today it is available in whole or in part in over 3,000 languages. The vast majority of people who read the Bible do not understand the original languages and therefore must rely on a translation. What principles should guide how the Bible is translated, and how did these govern the rendering of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*?

Some might conclude that a strict, word-for-word, interlinear-style translation would enable the reader to get closest to what was expressed in the original languages. However, that is not always the case. Consider a few of the reasons:

- No two languages are exactly alike in grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. A professor of Hebrew, S. R. Driver, wrote that languages “differ not only in grammar and roots, but also . . . in the manner in which ideas are built up into a sentence.” Different languages require quite different thought patterns. “Consequently,” continues Professor Driver, “the forms taken by the sentence in different languages are not the same.”
- No modern language exactly mirrors the vocabulary and grammar of Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, so a word-for-word translation of the Bible could be unclear or at times could even convey the wrong meaning.
- The meaning of a word or an expression may vary depending on the context in which it is used.

A translator may be able to mirror the literal rendering of the original language in some passages, but this must be done very carefully.

Here are some examples of how word-for-word translation can be misunderstood:

- The Scriptures use the expressions “sleep” and “fall asleep” to refer both to physical sleep and to the sleep of death. (Matthew 28:13; Acts 7:60) When these expressions are used in contexts that refer to death, Bible translators can use such wording as “fall asleep in death,” which helps the modern reader avoid confusion.—1 Corinthians 7:39; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; 2 Peter 3:4.
- The apostle Paul used an expression found at Ephesians 4:14 that can be literally translated “in the playing of dice of men.” This ancient idiom alludes to the practice of cheating others when using dice. In most languages, a literal rendering of this allusion makes little sense. Translating this expression as “the trickery of men” is a clearer way to convey the meaning.
- At Romans 12:11, a Greek expression is used that literally means “to the spirit boiling.” This wording does not convey the intended meaning in English, so it is rendered “aglow with the spirit” in this translation.
- During his famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used an expression that is often translated “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” (Matthew 5:3, *King James Version*) But in many languages, a literal rendering of this expression is obscure. In some cases, a strictly literal translation could imply that “the poor in spirit” are mentally unbalanced or lacking in vitality and determination. However, Jesus was here teaching people that their happiness depended, not on satisfying their physical needs, but on recognizing their need for God’s guidance. (Luke 6:20) Thus, such renderings as “those conscious of their spiritual need” or “those who know their need for God” convey more accurately the meaning of the original expression.—Matthew 5:3; *The New Testament in Modern English*.
- In many contexts, the Hebrew word translated “jealousy” corresponds to the common meaning of the English word, namely, to feel anger over the apparent unfaithfulness of a close associate or to envy others for their possessions. (Proverbs 6:34; Isaiah 11:13) However, the same Hebrew word also has a positive conno-

ΟΙ ΠΤΩΧΟΙ
ΤΩ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ

MATTHEW 5:3

Literal English:
“the poor in spirit”

Idea: “those
conscious of their
spiritual need”

tation. For example, it may be used of the “zeal,” or protective ardor, that Jehovah shows for his servants or of his “requiring exclusive devotion.” (Exodus 34:14; 2 Kings 19:31; Ezekiel 5:13; Zechariah 8:2) It may also be used of the “zeal” that his faithful servants have for God and his worship or of their ‘tolerating no rivalry’ toward him. —Psalm 69:9; 119:139; Numbers 25:11.

- The Hebrew expression that usually refers to the human hand has a wide variety of meanings. Depending on the context, this word may be rendered “authority,” “generosity,” or “power.” (2 Samuel 8:3; 1 Kings 10:13; Proverbs 18:21) In fact, this particular word is translated over 40 different ways in the English edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

יָד

The Hebrew word *yadh* is usually rendered “hand,” but depending on the context, this word may be rendered “authority,” “generosity,” “power,” and many other ways

In view of these factors, Bible translation involves more than simply rendering an original-language word with the same term each time it occurs. A translator must use good judgment in order to select words in the target language that best represent the ideas of the original-language text. In addition, there is a need to structure the sentences in a way that conforms to the rules of grammar of the target language, making the text easy to read.

At the same time, extremes in rewording the text must be avoided. A translator who liberally paraphrases the Bible according to how he interprets the overall idea could distort the meaning of the text. How so? The translator may erroneously insert his opinion of what the original text means or may omit important details contained in the original text. So while paraphrases of the Bible may be easy to read, their very freeness at times may prevent the reader from getting the true message of the text.

Doctrinal bias can easily color a translator’s work. For example, Matthew 7:13 says: “Spacious is the road leading off into destruction.” Some translators, perhaps affected by doctrinal bias, have used the term “hell” rather than what the Greek term really means, namely, “destruction.”

A Bible translator must also consider that the Bible was written using the common, everyday language of average people, such as farmers,

shepherds, and fishermen. (Nehemiah 8:8, 12; Acts 4:13) Therefore, a good translation of the Bible makes the message it contains understandable to sincere people, regardless of their background. Clear, common, readily understood expressions are preferred over terms that are rarely used by the average person.

Quite a number of Bible translators have taken the unjustifiable liberty of omitting God's name, Jehovah, from modern translations even though that name is found in ancient Bible manuscripts. (See Appendix A4.) Many translations replace the name with a title, such as "Lord," and some even obscure the fact that God has a name. For example, in some translations, Jesus' prayer recorded at John 17:26 reads: "I made you known to them," and at John 17:6, "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me." However, a faithful rendering of Jesus' prayer reads: "I have made *your name* known to them," and "I have made *your name* manifest to the men whom you gave me."

As stated in the foreword to the original English edition of the *New World Translation*: "We offer no paraphrase of the Scriptures. Our endeavor all through has been to give as literal a translation as possible, where the modern English idiom allows and where a literal rendition does not for any clumsiness hide the thought." Thus, the New World Bible Translation Committee has endeavored to strike a balance between using words and phrasing that mirror the original and, at the same time, avoiding wording that reads awkwardly or hides the intended thought. As a result, the Bible can be read with ease and the reader can have full confidence that its inspired message has been transmitted faithfully.—1 Thessalonians 2:13.

A reliable translation must:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanctify God's name by restoring it to its rightful place in the Scriptures. —Matthew 6:9. • Accurately convey the original message that was inspired by God. —2 Timothy 3:16. • Translate expressions literally when the wording and structure of the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> target language allow for such renderings of the original-language text. • Communicate the correct sense of a word or a phrase when a literal rendering would distort or obscure the meaning. • Use natural, easy-to-understand language that encourages reading. —Nehemiah 8:8, 12. |
|--|--|
-

Features of This Revision

The *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* was released in English in 1950, and the complete *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* was published in 1961. Since then, tens of millions of readers in well over 180 languages have benefited from this accurate yet readable rendering of the Holy Scriptures from the original languages.

Over the past half century, however, languages have changed. The current New World Bible Translation Committee recognized the need to respond to those changes in order to touch the heart of today's reader. For this reason, a number of style and vocabulary changes have been made in this revision, with the following objectives in mind:

- **Use of modern, understandable language.** For example, the expression “long-suffering” can be misunderstood to mean “someone who suffers for a long time.” However, the intended idea is that of deliberate restraint, which is better expressed by the term “patience.” (Galatians 5:22) The now obsolete meaning of “dumb” was replaced with “speechless.” (Matthew 9:32, 33) The term “harlot” was changed to “prostitute.” (Genesis 38:15) In this revision, “fornication” is usually rendered as “sexual immorality”; “loose conduct” as “brazen conduct”; and “revelries” as “wild parties.” (Galatians 5:19-21) The expression “time indefinite” was replaced with such terms as “forever,” “lasting,” “everlasting,” or “long ago,” to convey the intended meaning in each context.—Genesis 3:22; Exodus 31:16; Psalm 90:2; Ecclesiastes 1:4; Micah 5:2.

The term “seed” in ancient Hebrew and Greek could refer to plant seed as well as to human offspring, or descendants, or to semen. Because it is no longer common in English to use the term “seed” when referring to humans, it was replaced with

expressions that convey the intended idea according to the context. (Genesis 1:11; 22:17; 48:4; Matthew 22:24; John 8:37) In most cases, the term “offspring” is now used when referring to the Edenic promise, found at Genesis 3:15.

The English verb “impale” was used in previous versions of this Bible in connection with the execution of Jesus. While this term could refer to the way that Jesus was nailed to the torture stake, it is more often used in reference to the ancient method of execution by running a sharp stake through the body and fixing the victim on it. Since Jesus was not impaled *with* the torture stake, this revision uses such expressions as “executed on a stake” and “nailed to the stake” with regard to the manner in which Jesus was fastened to the torture stake.—Matthew 20:19; 27:31, 35.

- **Biblical expressions clarified.** Some terms used in previous editions of the English *New World Translation* often needed to be explained in order to be properly understood. For example, the Hebrew term “Sheol” and the Greek term “Hades” are used in the Bible to refer to the common grave of mankind. Those terms are unknown to many, and “Hades” has a dual meaning as a result of its usage in Greek mythology. Therefore, both terms were replaced with what was meant by the Bible writers, “the Grave.” The terms “Sheol” and “Hades” are now given in footnotes.—Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27.

In past editions, the Hebrew word *ne’phesh* and the Greek word *psy-khe’* were consistently rendered “soul.” In view of the many misconceptions regarding the meaning of the word “soul,” this approach helped the reader to see how the inspired Bible writers used these original-language terms. Depending on the context, those words may refer (1) to a person, (2) to the life of a person, (3) to living creatures, (4) to the desires and appetite of a person or, in some cases, (5) even to dead individuals. However, since such use of the word “soul” is not common in English, the decision was made to render these original-language words according to their intended meaning, usually with a footnote that reads “Or ‘soul.’” (See, for example, Genesis 1:20; 2:7; Leviticus 19:28; Psalm 3:2; Proverbs 16:26; Matthew 6:25.) However, in some poetic or well-known contexts, the word “soul” was retained in the main text, along with a footnote referring to the

Glossary or showing another possible rendering.—Deuteronomy 6:5; Psalm 131:2; Proverbs 2:10; Matthew 22:37.

Similarly, the word “kidney” was retained when it refers to the literal organ. However, when it is used figuratively in such verses as Psalm 7:9 and 26:2 and Revelation 2:23, the intended idea of “deepest emotions” or “innermost thoughts” is conveyed in the main text, and the literal idea is given in a footnote.

Like its Hebrew and Greek equivalents, the English expression “heart” has both a literal and a figurative meaning, so it was usually retained in the main text. However, in a few contexts where the sense was not clear, a more explicit rendering was used. For example, in the book of Proverbs, “in want of heart” now reads “lacking good sense,” and the literal idea is given in a footnote. (Proverbs 6:32; 7:7) Other expressions, for instance, “fat,” “flesh,” and “horn,” were handled similarly, according to the context. (Genesis 45:18; Ecclesiastes 5:6; Job 16:15) Some of these expressions are discussed in the Glossary.

- **Enhanced readability.** In previous editions of the English *New World Translation*, auxiliary expressions were used to indicate whether the Hebrew verb is in the imperfect or the perfect state. For example, the continuous action often expressed by imperfect verbs was indicated by means of the expressions “proceeded to,” “went on to,” “came to be,” and so forth. The emphasis often conveyed by the Hebrew perfect verb was denoted by the added expressions “certainly,” “must,” “actually,” and similar ones. As a result, these terms were used thousands of times in the text. In this revision, auxiliary terms were retained in certain contexts by using such expressions as “kept,” “keep on,” and “used to” when there was a valid reason to express continuous action. (Genesis 3:9; 34:1; Proverbs 2:4) However, they were omitted to enhance readability when the auxiliary expressions were not critical for conveying the original meaning.
- **Conveying the correct idea of words involving gender.** Hebrew and Greek nouns indicate male or female gender, and in Greek, also neuter. At times, though, reflecting the gender of the original-language term may obscure the intended meaning. In both Hebrew and Greek, plural nouns are generally masculine, not only when referring exclusively to males but also when referring to both males and females. For example, though the

expression “the sons of Israel” may refer to the 12 sons of Jacob, it more often refers to the entire nation of Israel, both men and women. (Genesis 46:5; Exodus 35:29) So in the revision, this phrase was often rendered “Israelites” to show that it refers to the entire nation. Similarly, the expression “fatherless boy” was rendered “fatherless child” or “orphan” to show that it may refer to a boy or a girl. On the other hand, since the Bible uses the male gender in reference to God and to his Son, as well as to various angels and demons, there is no basis for using genderless terms as is done in some modern translations.

- **Omission of indicators for second person plural.** Past editions also indicated whether the pronouns “you” and “your” and second person verbs were singular or plural by using small capital letters to show plurality. This feature was not retained in this revision, but readers may consult earlier editions of this translation for this information.

All adjustments in the Bible text were made prayerfully, carefully, and with deep respect for the fine work of the original New World Bible Translation Committee.

Other features of this revision:

This Bible edition contains a limited number of footnotes. The footnotes generally fall into the following categories:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| “Or” | Alternative ways the text could be rendered from Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek that would give the same overall idea.—Genesis 1:2, footnote on “active force”; Joshua 1:8, “undertone.” |
| “Or possibly” | Alternative ways the text could be rendered that would convey a valid yet different overall idea.—Genesis 21:6, “laugh with me”; Zechariah 14:21, “Canaanite.” |
| “Lit.” | A word-for-word translation from the Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek or the basic meaning of an original-language expression.—Genesis 30:22, “pregnant”; Exodus 32:9, “obstinate.” |

Meaning and background information

Meaning of names (Genesis 3:17, “Adam”; Exodus 15:23, “Marah”); details about weights and measures (Genesis 6:15, “cubits”); the antecedent of a pronoun (Genesis 38:5, “He”); helpful information in the Appendix and the Glossary.—Genesis 37:35, “Grave”; Matthew 5:22, “Gehenna.”

The front section contains an explanation of the contents and features of the printed edition of this Bible. This is followed by the “Table of Bible Books” and the “Bible Reading Schedule.” Immediately following the Bible text, you will find the Image Gallery, the Map Gallery, and Appendixes A to C. Appendix A contains the following sections: “Principles of Bible Translation,” “Features of This Revision,” “How the Bible Came to Us,” “The Divine Name in the Hebrew Scriptures,” “The Divine Name in the Christian Greek Scriptures,” “Chart: Prophets and Kings of Judah and of Israel,” and “Main Events of Jesus’ Earthly Life.” Appendix B contains maps, charts, and other information useful to diligent Bible students. Appendix C contains the following sections: “The Restoration of the Divine Name in the ‘New Testament,’” “Verses Where the Name Jehovah Appears as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations,” “Verses Where the Name Jehovah Does Not Appear as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations,” and “Translations and Reference Works Supporting the Use of the Divine Name in the ‘New Testament.’”

In the main text of the Bible, each book features an outline of its chapter contents, along with the related verses, giving the reader an overview of the entire book. Each page contains the most relevant marginal references from previous editions, pointing to related Bible verses. In addition, subheadings inserted within the sacred text provide a summary of the verses that follow and help the reader to locate specific accounts more easily.

How the Bible Came to Us

The Author and Originator of the Bible is also its Preserver. He is the One who caused this statement to be recorded:

“The word of our God endures forever.”

—ISAIAH 40:8.

That statement is true, even though no original Bible manuscript of the Hebrew and Aramaic Scriptures* or of the Christian Greek Scriptures has survived to our day. Therefore, how can we be so certain that the contents of the Bible we have today truly reflect the original inspired writings?

Copyists Preserve God’s Word

Regarding the Hebrew Scriptures, part of the answer lies in an ancient tradition that was established by God, who said that the text should be copied.[#] For example, Jehovah instructed the kings of Israel to make their own copies of the written Law. (Deuteronomy 17:18) Additionally, God made the Levites responsible for preserving the Law and teaching it to the people. (Deuteronomy 31:26; Nehemiah 8:7) After the exile of the Jews to Babylon, a class of copyists, or scribes (Sopherim), developed. (Ezra 7:6, footnotes) Over time, those scribes made numerous copies of the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Through the centuries, scribes meticulously copied these books. During the Middle Ages, a group of Jewish scribes known as the Masoretes carried on that tradition. The oldest complete Masoretic manuscript is the Leningrad Codex, which dates from 1008/1009 C.E. However, in the middle of the 20th century, some 220 Biblical manuscripts or fragments were discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Those Biblical manuscripts were more than a thousand years older

* Referred to simply as the Hebrew Scriptures from here on.

[#] One reason the manuscripts needed to be copied was that the originals were written on perishable materials.

than the Leningrad Codex. A comparison of the Dead Sea Scrolls with the Leningrad Codex confirms a vital point: While the Dead Sea Scrolls contain some variations in wording, none of those variations affect the message itself.

What about the 27 books of the Christian Greek Scriptures? Those books were first penned by some of the apostles of Jesus Christ and by a few other early disciples. Following the tradition of the Jewish scribes, early Christians made copies of those books. (Colossians 4: 16) Despite attempts by Roman Emperor Diocletian and others to destroy all early Christian literature, thousands of ancient fragments and manuscripts have been preserved until our day.

Christian writings were also translated into other languages. Early translations of the Bible include those in such ancient languages as Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, Georgian, Latin, and Syriac.

Establishing the Hebrew and Greek Texts for Translation

Not all copies of ancient Bible manuscripts contain identical wording. How, then, can we know what the original text contained?

The situation could be likened to that of a teacher who asks 100 students to copy a chapter of a book. Even if the original chapter was later lost, a comparison of the 100 copies would still reveal the original text. While each student might make some errors, it is highly unlikely that all the students would make exactly the same ones. Similarly, when scholars compare the thousands of fragments and copies of ancient Bible books available to them, they can detect copyist error and determine the original wording.

How confident can we be that the thoughts contained in the original Bible texts have been accurately transmitted to us? Commenting on the text of the Hebrew Scriptures, scholar William H. Green stated: “It may be safely said that no other work of antiquity has been so accurately transmitted.” Regarding the Christian Greek Scriptures, or so-called New Testament, Bible scholar F. F. Bruce wrote: “The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning.” He also said: “If the New Testament were

“It may be safely said that no other work of antiquity has been so accurately transmitted”

a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt.”

Hebrew Text: The *New World Translation of the Hebrew Scriptures* (1953-1960) was based on *Biblia Hebraica*, by Rudolf Kittel. Since that time, updated editions of the Hebrew text, namely, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, have included recent research based on the Dead Sea Scrolls and other ancient manuscripts. These scholarly works reproduce the Leningrad Codex in the main text along with footnotes that contain comparative wording from other sources, including the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Greek *Septuagint*, the Aramaic Targums, the Latin *Vulgate*, and the Syriac *Peshitta*. Both *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* were consulted when preparing the present revision of the *New World Translation*.

Greek Text: In the late 19th century, scholars B. F. Westcott and F.J.A. Hort compared existing Bible manuscripts and fragments as they prepared the Greek master text that they felt most closely reflected the original writings. In the mid-20th century, the New World Bible Translation Committee used that master text as the basis for its translation. Other early papyri, thought to date back to the second and third centuries C.E., were also used. Since then, more papyri have become available. In addition, master texts such as those by Nestle and Aland and by the United Bible Societies reflect recent scholarly studies. Some of the findings of this research were incorporated into this present revision.

Based on those master texts, it is evident that some verses of the Christian Greek Scriptures found in older translations, such as the *King James Version*, were actually additions made by later copyists and were never part of the inspired Scriptures. However, because the verse division generally accepted in Bible translations was already established in the 16th century, the omission of these verses now creates gaps in the verse numbering in most Bibles. The verses are Matthew 17:21; 18:11; 23:14; Mark 7:16; 9:44, 46; 11:26; 15:28; Luke 17:36; 23:17; John 5:4; Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29; and Romans 16:24. In this revised edition, those omitted verses are indicated by a footnote at the location of the omission.

Regarding the long conclusion for Mark 16 (verses 9-20), the short conclusion for Mark 16, and the wording found at John 7:53-8:11, it is evident that none of these verses were included in the original

Chapter 40 of Isaiah's book in the Dead Sea Scrolls (dated from 125 to 100 B.C.E.)

When compared with Hebrew manuscripts from about a thousand years later, only minor differences were found, mostly in spelling



Chapter 40 of Isaiah's book in the Aleppo Codex, an important Hebrew Masoretic manuscript from about 930 C.E.

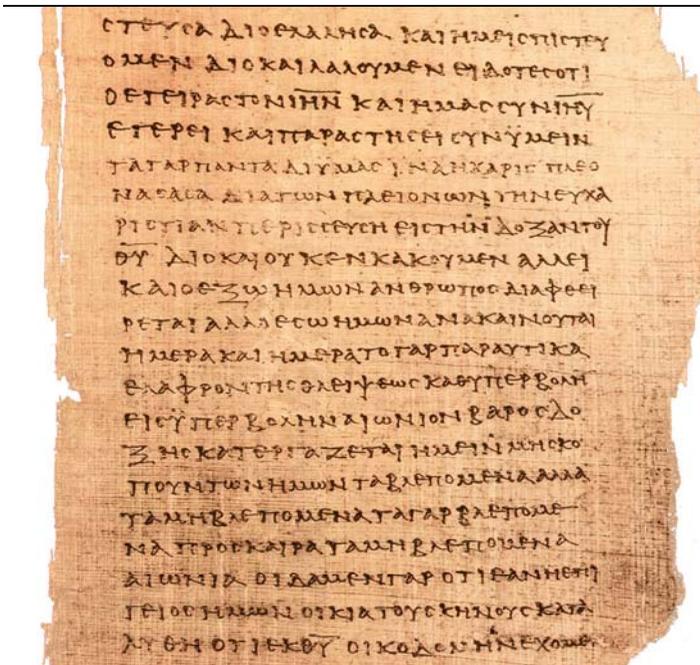


manuscripts. Therefore, those spurious texts have not been included in this revision.*

Some other wording has been adjusted to incorporate what scholars generally accept as the most authentic reflection of the original writings. For instance, according to some manuscripts, Matthew 7:13 reads: “Go in through the narrow gate, because broad *is the gate* and spacious is the road leading off into destruction.” In previous editions of the *New World Translation*, “is the gate” was not included in the text. However, further study of the manuscript evidence led to the conclusion that “is the gate” was in the original text. So it was included in this present edition. There are a number of similar refinements. However, these adjustments are minor, and none of them change the basic message of God’s Word.

* Further details on why these verses are viewed as spurious can be found in the footnotes of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, published in 1984.

A papyrus manuscript of
2 Corinthians 4:13–5:4
from about 200 C.E.



The Divine Name in the Hebrew Scriptures

The divine name, represented by the four Hebrew consonants יהוה, appears nearly 7,000 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. This translation renders those four letters, known as the Tetragrammaton, “Jehovah.” That name is by far the most frequently occurring name in the Bible. While the inspired writers refer to God by many titles and descriptive terms, such as “Almighty,” “Most High,” and “Lord,” the Tetragrammaton is the only personal name they use to identify God.

Jehovah God himself directed Bible writers to use his name. For example, he inspired the prophet Joel to write: “Everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.” (Joel 2:32) And God caused one psalmist to write: “May people know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth.” (Psalm 83:18) In fact, the divine name appears some 700 times in the book of Psalms alone—a book of poetic writings that were to be sung and recited by God’s people. Why, then, is God’s name missing from many Bible translations? Why does this translation use the form “Jehovah”? And what does the divine name, Jehovah, mean?

Why is the name missing from many Bible translations?

The reasons vary. Some feel that Almighty God does not need a unique name to identify him. Others appear to have been influenced by the Jewish tradition of avoiding the use of the name, perhaps out of fear of desecrating it. Still others believe that since no one can be sure of the exact pronunciation of God’s name, it is better just to use a title, such as “Lord” or “God.” Such objections, however, lack merit for the following reasons:

- Those who argue that Almighty God does not need a unique name ignore evidence that early copies of his Word, including those preserved from before the time of Christ, contain God's personal name. As noted above, God directed that his name be included in his Word some 7,000 times. Obviously, he wants us to know and use his name.
- Translators who remove the name out of deference to Jewish tradition fail to recognize a key fact. While some Jewish scribes refused to pronounce the name, they did not remove it from their

copies of the Bible. Ancient scrolls found in Qumran, near the Dead Sea, contain the name in many places. Some Bible translators hint that the divine name appeared in the original text by substituting the title "LORD" in capital letters. But the question remains, Why have these translators felt free to substitute or remove God's name from the Bible when they acknowledge that it is found in the Bible text thousands of times? Who do they believe gave them authority to make such a change? Only they can say.

יהוה

The divine name in the ancient Hebrew letters used before the Babylonian exile

יהוה

The divine name in the Hebrew letters used after the Babylonian exile

- Those who say that the divine name should not be used because it is not known exactly how to pronounce it will nevertheless freely use the name Jesus. However, Jesus' first-century disciples said his name quite differently from the way most Christians do today. To Jewish Christians, the name Jesus was probably pronounced *Ye-shu'a'*. And the title "Christ" was *Ma-shi'ach*, or "Messiah."

Greek-speaking Christians called him *I-e-sous' Khri-stos'*, and Latin-speaking Christians *le'sus Chri'stus*. Under inspiration, the Greek translation of his name was recorded in the Bible, showing that first-century Christians followed the sensible course of using the form of the name common in their language. Similarly, the New World Bible Translation Committee feels that it is reasonable to use the form "Jehovah," even though that rendering is not exactly the way the divine name would have been pronounced in ancient Hebrew.

Why does the *New World Translation* use the form "Jehovah"?

In English, the four letters of the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) are represented by the consonants *YHWH*. As was true of all written words in



Excerpts from the Psalms in a Dead Sea Scroll dated to the first half of the first century C.E. The text is in the style of the Hebrew letters commonly used after the Babylonian exile, but the Tetragrammaton appears repeatedly in distinctive ancient Hebrew letters

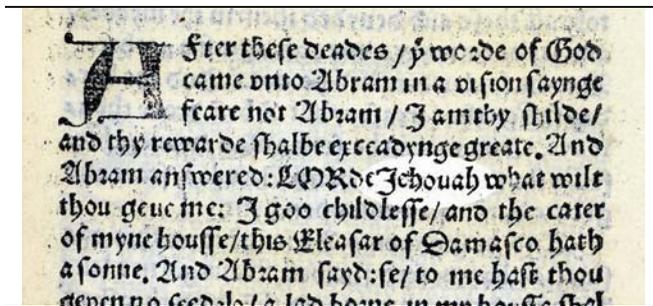
ancient Hebrew, the Tetragrammaton contained no vowels. When ancient Hebrew was in everyday use, readers easily provided the appropriate vowels.

About a thousand years after the Hebrew Scriptures were completed, Jewish scholars developed a system of pronunciation points, or signs, by which to indicate what vowels to use when reading Hebrew. By that time, though, many Jews had the superstitious idea that it was wrong to say God's personal name out loud, so they used substitute expressions. Thus, it seems that when they copied the Tetragrammaton, they combined the vowels for the *substitute expressions* with the four consonants representing the divine name. Therefore, the manuscripts with those vowel points do not help in determining how the name was originally pronounced in Hebrew. Some feel that the name was pronounced "Yahweh," whereas others suggest different possibilities. A Dead Sea Scroll containing a portion of Leviticus in Greek transliterates the divine name *lao*. Besides that form, early Greek writers also suggest the pronunciations *lae*, *l-a-be'*, and *l-a-ou-e'*. However, there is no reason to be dogmatic. We simply do not know how God's ancient servants pronounced this name in Hebrew. (Genesis 13:4; Exodus 3:15) What we do know is that God used his name repeatedly in communication with his people, that they addressed him by that name, and that they used it freely in speaking with others.—Exodus 6:2; 1 Kings 8:23; Psalm 99:9.

Why, then, does this translation use the form "Jehovah"? Because that form of the divine name has a long history in the English language.

The first rendering of God's personal name in an English Bible appeared in 1530 in William Tyndale's translation of the Pentateuch. He used the form "Iehouah." Over time, the English language changed, and the spelling of the divine name was modernized. For example,

God's name at Genesis 15:2
in William Tyndale's translation
of the Pentateuch, 1530



in 1612, Henry Ainsworth used the form “Jehovah” throughout his translation of the book of Psalms. Then, in 1639, when that work was revised and printed with the Pentateuch, the form “Jehovah” was used. In 1901, the translators who produced the *American Standard Version* of the Bible used the form “Jehovah” where the divine name appeared in the Hebrew text.

Explaining why he used “Jehovah” instead of “Yahweh” in his 1911 work *Studies in the Psalms*, respected Bible scholar Joseph Bryant Rotherham said that he wanted to employ a “form of the name more familiar (while perfectly acceptable) to the general Bible-reading public.” In 1930 scholar A. F. Kirkpatrick made a similar point regarding the use of the form “Jehovah.” He said: “Modern grammarians argue that it ought to be read *Yahveh* or *Yahaveh*; but JEHOVAH seems firmly rooted in the English language, and the really important point is not the exact pronunciation, but the recognition that it is a Proper Name, not merely an appellative title like ‘Lord.’”

What is the meaning of the name Jehovah?

In Hebrew, the name Jehovah comes from a verb that means “to become,” and a number of scholars feel that it reflects the causative form of that Hebrew verb. Thus, the understanding of the New World Bible Translation Committee is that God’s name means “He Causes to Become.” Scholars hold varying views, so we cannot be dogmatic about this meaning. However, this definition well fits Jehovah’s role as the Creator of all things and the Fulfiller of his purpose. He not only caused the physical universe and intelligent beings to exist, but as events unfold, he continues to cause his will and purpose to be realized.

Therefore, the meaning of the name Jehovah is not limited to the related verb found at Exodus 3:14, which reads: “I Will Become What I Choose to Become” or, “I Will Prove to Be What I Will Prove to Be.” In the strictest sense, those words do not fully define God’s name. Rather, they reveal an aspect of God’s personality, showing that he becomes what is needed in each circumstance to fulfill his purpose. So while the name Jehovah may include this idea, it is not limited to what he himself chooses to become. It also includes what he causes to happen with regard to his creation and the accomplishment of his purpose.

יהוה

The Tetragrammaton, *YHWH*:
“He Causes to Become”

הוה

The verb *HWH*:
“to become”

The Divine Name in the Christian Greek Scriptures

Bible scholars acknowledge that God's personal name, as represented by the Tetragrammaton (יהוה), appears almost 7,000 times in the original text of the Hebrew Scriptures. However, many feel that it did not appear in the original text of the Christian Greek Scriptures. For this reason, most modern English Bibles do not use the name Jehovah when translating the so-called New Testament. Even when translating quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures in which the Tetragrammaton appears, most translators use "Lord" rather than God's personal name.

The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* does not follow this common practice. It uses the name Jehovah a total of 237 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. In deciding to do this, the translators took into consideration two important factors: (1) The Greek manuscripts we possess today are not the originals. Of the thousands of copies in existence today, most were made at least two centuries after the originals were composed. (2) By that time, those copying the manuscripts either replaced the Tetragrammaton with *Ky'ri-os*, the Greek word for "Lord," or they copied from manuscripts where this had already been done.

The New World Bible Translation Committee determined that there is compelling evidence that the Tetragrammaton did appear in the original Greek manuscripts. The decision was based on the following evidence:

- **Copies of the Hebrew Scriptures used in the days of Jesus and his apostles contained the Tetragrammaton throughout**

the text. In the past, few people disputed that conclusion. Now that copies of the Hebrew Scriptures dating back to the first century have been discovered near Qumran, the point has been proved beyond any doubt.

- **In the days of Jesus and his apostles, the Tetragrammaton also appeared in Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures.** For centuries, scholars thought that the Tetragrammaton was absent from manuscripts of the Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Then, in the mid-20th century, some very old fragments of the Greek Septuagint version that existed in Jesus' day were brought to the attention of scholars. Those fragments contain the personal name of God, written in Hebrew characters. So in Jesus' day, copies of the Scriptures in Greek did contain the divine name. However, by the fourth century C.E., major manuscripts of the Greek *Septuagint*, such as the Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus, did not contain the divine name in the books from Genesis through Malachi (where it had been in earlier manuscripts). Hence, it is not surprising that in texts preserved from that time period, the divine name is not found in the so-called New Testament, or Greek Scripture portion of the Bible.
- **The Christian Greek Scriptures themselves report that Jesus often referred to God's name and made it known to others.** (John 17:6, 11, 12, 26) Jesus plainly stated: "I have come in the name of my Father." He also stressed that his works were done in his "Father's name."—John 5:43; 10:25.
- **Since the Christian Greek Scriptures were an inspired addition to the sacred Hebrew Scriptures, the sudden disappearance of Jehovah's name from the text would seem inconsistent.** About the middle of the first century C.E., the disciple James said to the elders in Jerusalem: "Symeon has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) It would not be logical for James to make such a statement if no one in the first century knew or used God's name.

Jesus plainly stated:
 "I have come in the
 name of my Father."
 He also stressed
 that his works were
 done in his "Father's
 name"



Deuteronomy 6:4
Nash Papyrus
Second or first century B.C.E.

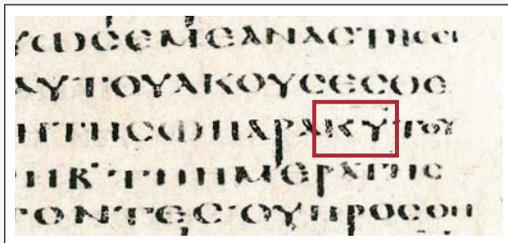
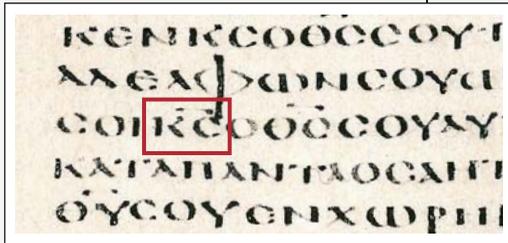
Ancient Hebrew text with the divine name appearing twice

Fragment of Deuteronomy 18:15, 16
P. Fouad Inv. 266
First century B.C.E.

The Greek Septuagint translation with the divine name in Hebrew characters

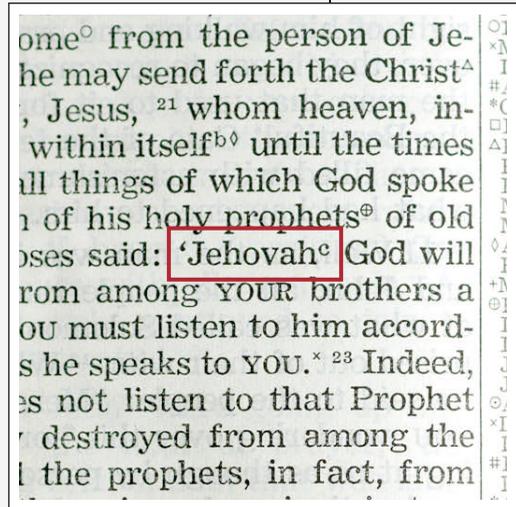
- **The divine name appears in its abbreviated form in the Christian Greek Scriptures.** At Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, 6, the divine name is embedded in the word “Hallelujah.” This comes from a Hebrew expression that literally means “Praise Jah.” “Jah” is a contraction of the name Jehovah. Many names used in the Christian Greek Scriptures were derived from the divine name. In fact, reference works explain that Jesus’ own name means “Jehovah Is Salvation.”
- **Early Jewish writings indicate that Jewish Christians used the divine name in their writings.** The Tosefta, a written collection of oral laws that was completed by about 300 C.E., says with regard to Christian writings that were burned on the Sab-

300 400 500 1900 1950 2000



Deuteronomy 18:15, 16
Codex Alexandrinus
Fifth century C.E.

Divine name removed and replaced by KC and KY, abbreviated forms of the Greek word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord)

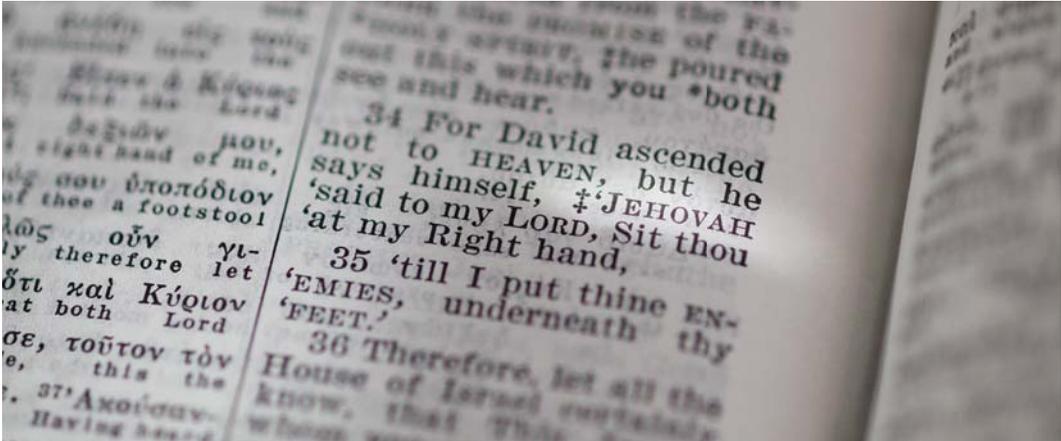


Acts 3:22, quoting Deuteronomy 18:15
New World Translation
20th century C.E.

The *New World Translation* restores the divine name

bath: “The books of the Evangelists and the books of the *minim* [thought to be Jewish Christians] they do not save from a fire. But they are allowed to burn where they are, they and the references to the Divine Name which are in them.” This same source quotes Rabbi Yosé the Galilean, who lived at the beginning of the second century C.E., as saying that on other days of the week, “one cuts out the references to the Divine Name which are in them [understood to refer to the Christian writings] and stores them away, and the rest burns.”

- **Some Bible scholars acknowledge that it seems likely that the divine name appeared in Hebrew Scripture quotations found in the Christian Greek Scriptures.** Under the heading



God's name at Acts 2:34 in *The Emphatic Diaglott*, by Benjamin Wilson (1864)

"Tetragrammaton in the New Testament," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* states: "There is some evidence that the Tetragrammaton, the Divine Name, Yahweh, appeared in some or all of the O[ld] T[estament] quotations in the N[ew] T[estament] when the NT documents were first penned." Scholar George Howard says: "Since the Tetragram was still written in the copies of the Greek Bible [the *Septuagint*] which made up the Scriptures of the early church, it is reasonable to believe that the N[ew] T[estament] writers, when quoting from Scripture, preserved the Tetragram within the biblical text."

- **Recognized Bible translators have used God's name in the Christian Greek Scriptures.** Some of these translators did so long before the *New World Translation* was produced. These translators and their works include: *A Literal Translation of the New Testament . . . From the Text of the Vatican Manuscript*, by Herman Heinfetter (1863); *The Emphatic Diaglott*, by Benjamin Wilson (1864); *The Epistles of Paul in Modern English*, by George Barker Stevens (1898); *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, by W. G. Rutherford (1900); *The New Testament Letters*, by J.W.C. Wand, Bishop of London (1946). In addition, in a Spanish translation in the early 20th century, translator Pablo Besson used "Jehová" at Luke 2:15 and Jude 14, and nearly 100 footnotes in his translation suggest the divine name as a likely rendering. Long before those translations, Hebrew versions of the

Languages and Dialects Containing the Divine Name in the Main Text of the Christian Greek Scriptures

Language or Dialect: **Divine Name**

Aneityum: Ihova	Grebo: Jehova
Arawak: Jehovah	Hawaiian: lehova
Awabakal: Yehóa	Hebrew: יהוה
Bangi: Yawe	Hindustani: Yihováh
Batak (Toba): Jahowa	Hiri Motu: lehova
Benga: Jěhova	Ho-Chunk (Winnebago): Jehowa
Bolia: Yawe	Ila: Yaave
Bube: Yehovah	Iliku (dialect of Lusengo): Yawe
Bullom So: Jehovah	Indonesian: YAHWEH
Chácobo: Jahué	Kala Lagaw Ya: lehovan
Cherokee: Yihowa	Kalanga: Yehova; Yahwe
Chin (Hakha): Zahova	Kalenjin: Jehovah
Chippewa: Jehovah	Kerewo: lehova
Choctaw: Chihowa	Kiluba: Yehova
Chuukese: Jiowa	Kipsigis: Jehoba
Croatian: Jehova	Kiribati: lehova
Dakota: Jehowa	Kisonge: Yehowa
Dobu: leoba	Korean: 여호와
Douala: Yehowa	Kosraean: Jeova
Dutch: Jehovah	Kuanua: leova
Efate (North): Yehova	Laotian: Yehowa
Efik: Jehovah	Lele: Jehova
English: Jehovah	Lewo: Yehova
Éwé: Yehowa	Lingala: Yawe
Fang: Jehôva	Logo: Yehova
Fijian: Jiowa	Lomongo: Yawe; Yova
French: IHVH, yhwé	Lonwolwol: Jehovah
Ga: lehowa	Lugbara: Yehova
German: Jehovah; Jehova	Luimbi: Yehova
Gibario (dialect of Kerewo): lehova	Luna: Yeoba

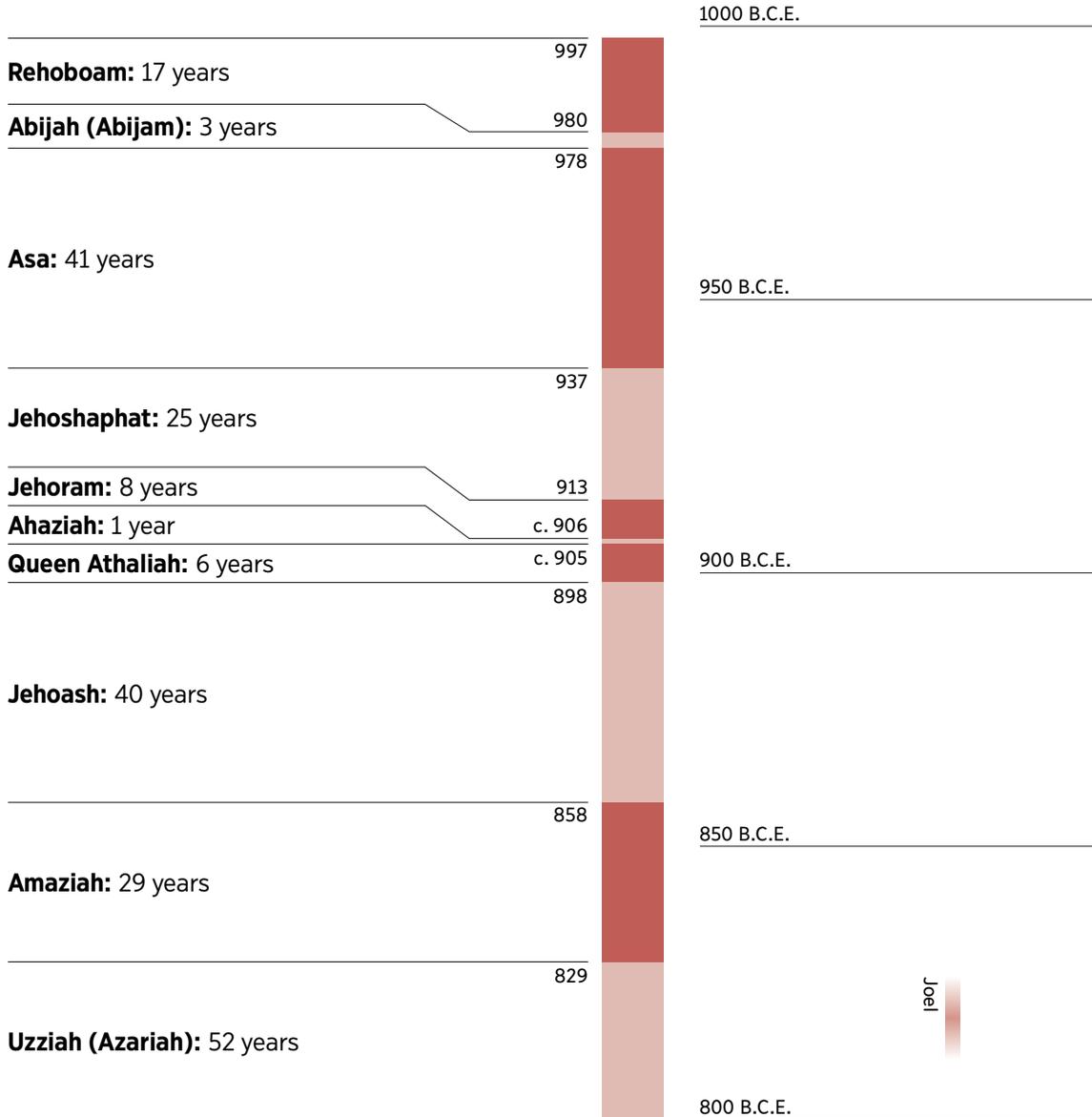
Lunda: Yehova	Rotuman: Jihova
Luo: Yawe	Sakao: Ihova; Iehova
Luvale: Yehova	Samoa: Ieova
Malagasy: Jehovah; Iehôvah	Seneca: Ya'wën
Malo: Iova	Sengele: Yawe
Marquesan: Iehova	Sesotho: Yehofa
Marshallese: Jeova	Sie: Iehôva
Maskelynes: Iova	Spanish: Jehová; Yahvé; YHWH; Yahweh
Mentawai: Jehoba	Sranantongo: Jehova
Meriam: Iehoua	Sukuma: Yahuwa; Jakwe
Misima-Paneati: Iehova	Tahitian: Iehova
Mizo: Jehovan; Jihova'n	Teke-Eboo: Yawe
Mohawk: Yehow	Temne: Yehófa; Yehofa
Mortlockese: Jioua	Thai: Yahowa
Motu: Iehova	Toaripi: Jehova; Iehova
Mpongwe (dialect of Myene): Jehova	Tonga: Jehova
Muskogee: Cehofv	Tongan: Jihova; Sihova
Myene: Yeôva	Tshiluba: Yehowa
Naga, Angami: Jihova	Tswana: Jehofa; Yehova; Yehofa
Naga, Konyak: Jihova	Umbundu: Yehova
Naga, Lotha: Jihova	Uripiv: Iova
Naga, Mao: Jihova	Wampanoag: Jehovah
Naga, Northern Rengma: Jihova	Welsh: Iehofah
Naga, Sangtam: Jihova	Xhosa: Yehova
Nandi: Jehova	Zande: Yekova
Narrinyeri: Jehovah	Zulu: Jehova; YAHWE
Nauruan: Jehova	
Navajo: Jiho'vah	
Ndau: Jehova	
Nembe: Jehovah	
Nengone (or, Maré): Iehova	
Ngando: Yawe	
Ntomba: Yawe	
Nukuoro: Jehova	
Polish: Jehowa	
Portuguese: Iáhve	
Rarotongan: Jehova; Iehova	
Rerep: Iova	

(In addition to those on this list, a number of languages and dialects use a form of the divine name in footnotes or in explanatory text.)

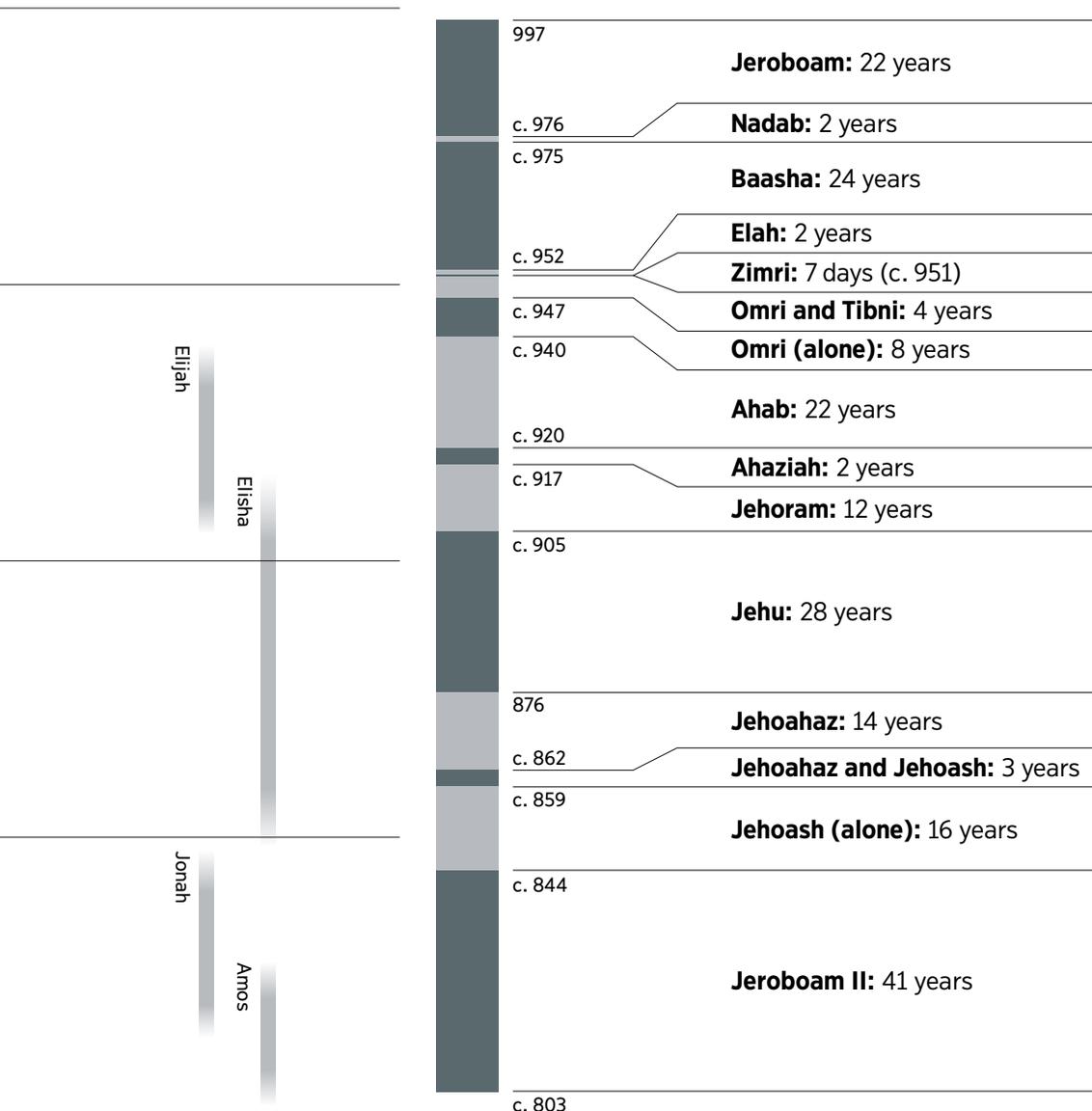
Over 120 languages

Chart: Prophets and Kings of Judah and of Israel

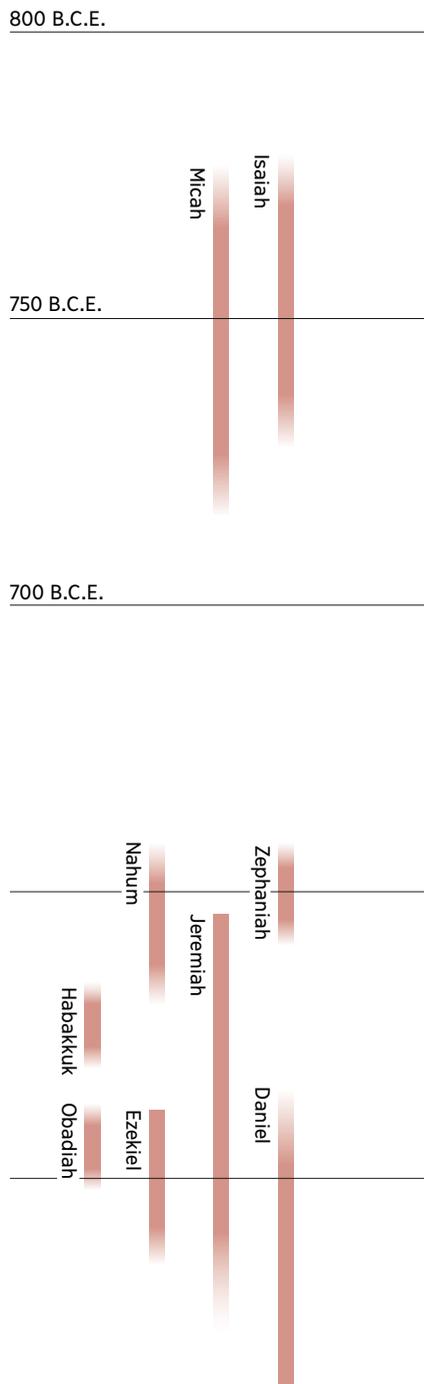
Kings of Southern Two-Tribe Kingdom of Judah



Kings of Northern Ten-Tribe Kingdom of Israel



Kings of the Southern Kingdom (Continued)



Jerusalem and its temple are destroyed by the invading Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah, the last earthly king in the Davidic line, is dethroned

Kings of the **Northern** Kingdom
(Continued)

Hosea



Assyria conquers Samaria, subjugates Israel; northern ten-tribe kingdom of Israel comes to its end

650 B.C.E.

600 B.C.E.

* Zechariah began to reign in some sense, but evidently the kingship was not fully confirmed as his until c. 792

It seems that Hoshea's rule became fully established or possibly received the backing of the Assyrian monarch Tiglath-pileser III in c. 748

Main Events of Jesus' Earthly Life—The Four Gospels Set in Chronological Order

The following charts have corresponding maps that show the travels and preaching tours of Jesus. The arrows on the maps do not represent the exact routes used but mainly show direction.

LEADING UP TO JESUS' MINISTRY

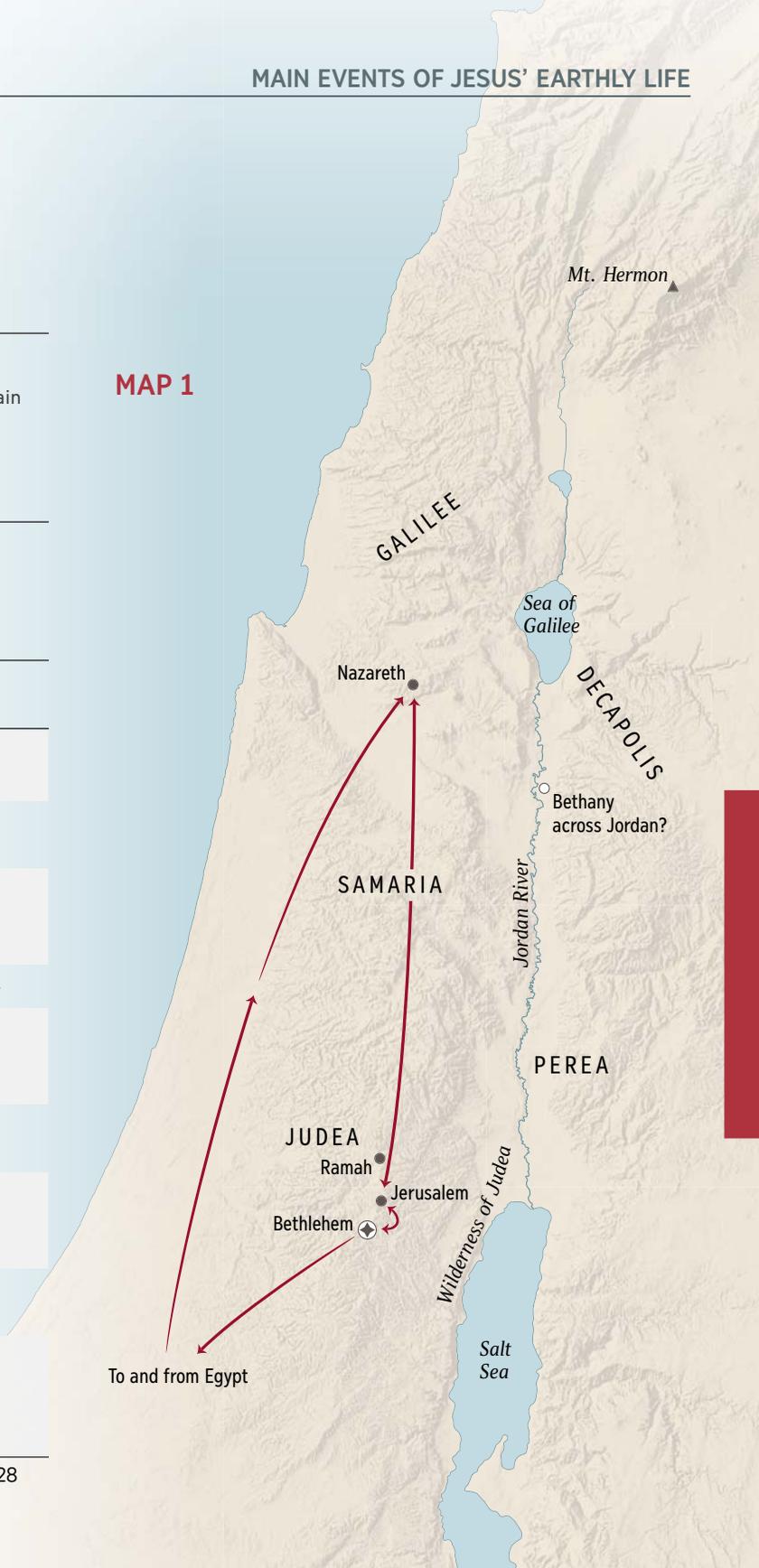
Time	Place	Event	Matthew
3 B.C.E.	Jerusalem, temple	Angel Gabriel foretells the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah	
c. 2 B.C.E.	Nazareth; Judea	Angel Gabriel foretells the birth of Jesus to Mary; she visits her relative Elizabeth	
2 B.C.E.	Judean hill country	John the Baptist born and named; Zechariah prophesies; John to be in desert	
2 B.C.E., c. Oct. 1	Bethlehem	Jesus born; "the Word became flesh"	1:1-25
	Near Bethlehem; Bethlehem	Angel announces good news to shepherds; angels praise God; shepherds visit infant	
	Bethlehem; Jerusalem	Jesus circumcised (8th day); presented in temple by parents (after 40th day)	
1 B.C.E. or 1 C.E.	Jerusalem; Bethlehem; Egypt; Nazareth	Astrologers visit; family flees to Egypt; Herod kills young boys; family returns from Egypt and settles in Nazareth	2:1-23
12 C.E., Passover	Jerusalem	Twelve-year-old Jesus at the temple questions teachers	
	Nazareth	Returns to Nazareth; continues subject to parents; learns carpentry; Mary raises four more sons, as well as daughters (Mt 13:55, 56; Mr 6:3)	
29, spring	Wilderness, Jordan River	John the Baptist begins his ministry	3:1-12

KEY

- ⊕ Starting Point
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain
- ▲ Mountain
- ? Precise location unknown

MAP 1

Mark	Luke	John
	1:5-25	
	1:26-56	
	1:57-80	
2:1-7		1:1-5, 9-14
2:8-20		
	2:21-38	
2:39, 40		
2:41-50		
2:51, 52		
1:1-8	3:1-18	1:6-8, 15-28



Nazareth

Mt. Hermon ▲

GALILEE

Sea of Galilee

DECAPOLIS

Bethany across Jordan?

SAMARIA

Jordan River

PEREA

JUDEA

Ramah

Jerusalem

Bethlehem

Wilderness of Judea

Salt Sea

To and from Egypt

THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY

Time	Place	Event	Matthew
29, fall	Jordan River, possibly at or near Bethany across Jordan	Jesus baptized and anointed; Jehovah declares him his Son and approves him	3:13-17
	Judean Wilderness	Tempted by the Devil	4:1-11
	Bethany across Jordan	John the Baptist identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God; first disciples join Jesus	
	Cana of Galilee; Capernaum	First miracle at wedding, turns water into wine; visits Capernaum	
30, Passover	Jerusalem	Cleanses the temple	
		Talks with Nicodemus	
	Judea; Aenon	Goes to Judean countryside, his disciples baptize; John's final witness about Jesus	
	Tiberias; Judea	John imprisoned; Jesus leaves for Galilee	4:12; 14:3-5
	Sychar, in Samaria	En route to Galilee, teaches the Samaritans	



Mark	Luke	John
1:9-11	3:21-38	1:32-34
1:12, 13	4:1-13	
		1:15, 29-51
		2:1-12
		2:13-25
		3:1-21
		3:22-36
6:17-20	3:19, 20	4:1-3
		4:4-43

MAP 2



KEY

- ⊕ Starting Point
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain
- ▲ Mountain
- ? Precise location unknown

JESUS' GREAT MINISTRY IN GALILEE

Time	Place	Event	Matthew	
30	Galilee	Jesus first announces that “the Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near”	4:17	
	Cana; Nazareth; Capernaum	Heals official’s son; reads from Isaiah scroll; goes to Capernaum	4:13-16	
	Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum	Calls four disciples: Simon and Andrew, James and John	4:18-22	
	Capernaum	Heals Simon’s mother-in-law and others	8:14-17	
	Galilee		First tour of Galilee, with the four	4:23-25
			Heals leper; crowds follow	8:1-4
	Capernaum		Heals a paralytic	9:1-8
			Calls Matthew; dines with tax collectors; fasting question	9:9-17
	Judea		Preaches in synagogues	
	31, Passover	Jerusalem	Heals sick man at Bethzatha; Jews seek to kill him	
Returning from Jerusalem (?)		Disciples pluck grain on the Sabbath; Jesus “Lord of the Sabbath”	12:1-8	
Galilee; Sea of Galilee		Heals man’s hand on the Sabbath; crowds follow; heals many more	12:9-21	
Mt. near Capernaum		Chooses 12 apostles		
Near Capernaum		Gives Sermon on the Mount	5:1–7:29	
Capernaum		Heals army officer’s servant	8:5-13	
Nain		Resurrects widow’s son		
Tiberias; Galilee (Nain or nearby)		John sends disciples to Jesus; truth revealed to young children; yoke kindly	11:2-30	
Galilee (Nain or nearby)		Sinful woman pours oil on his feet; debtors illustration		
Galilee			Second preaching tour, with the 12	
	Expels demons; unforgivable sin		12:22-37	
	Gives no sign but sign of Jonah		12:38-45	
	His mother and brothers come; says disciples are his relatives		12:46-50	

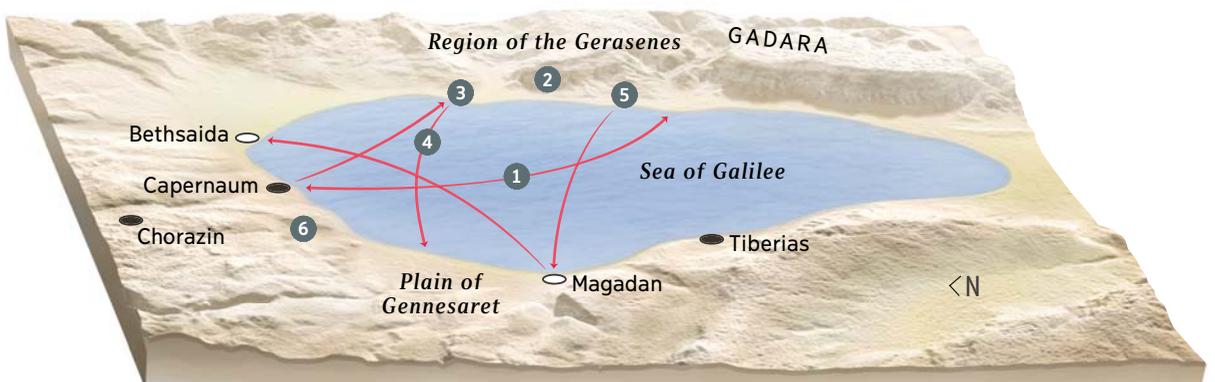
Mark	Luke	John
1:14, 15	4:14, 15	4:44, 45
	4:16-31	4:46-54
1:16-20	5:1-11	
1:21-34	4:31-41	
1:35-39	4:42, 43	
1:40-45	5:12-16	
2:1-12	5:17-26	
2:13-22	5:27-39	
	4:44	
		5:1-47
2:23-28	6:1-5	
3:1-12	6:6-11	
3:13-19	6:12-16	
	6:17-49	
	7:1-10	
	7:11-17	
	7:18-35	
	7:36-50	
	8:1-3	
3:19-30		
3:31-35	8:19-21	

MAP 3A



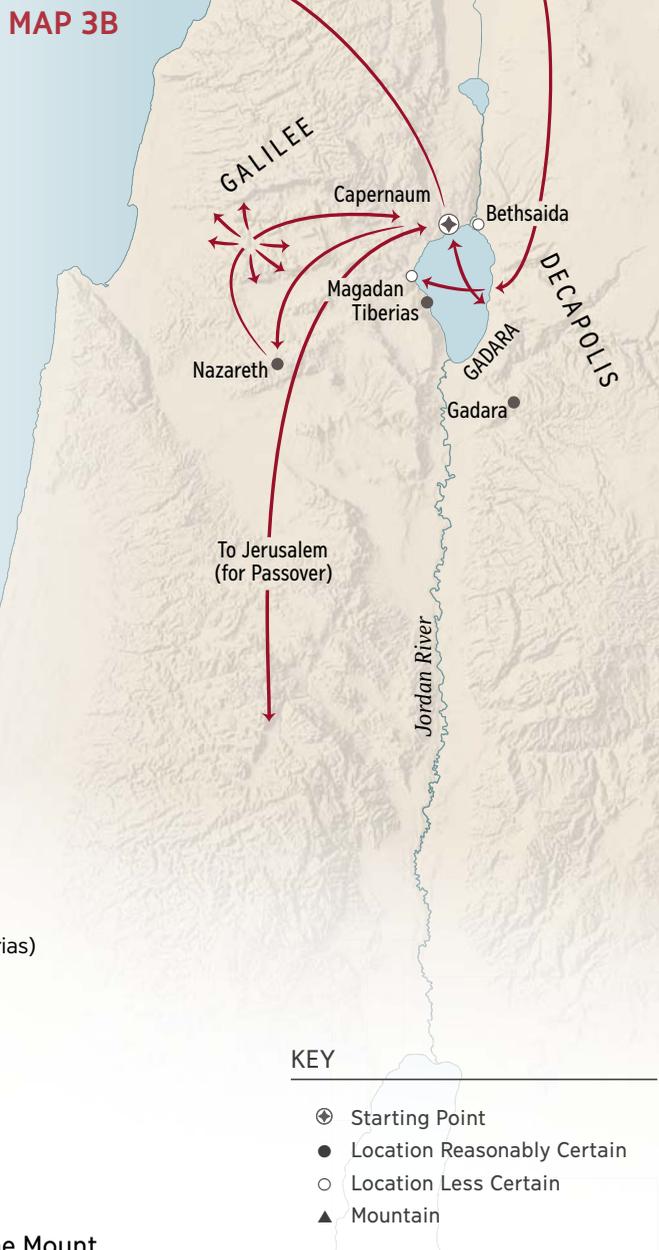
JESUS' GREAT MINISTRY IN GALILEE

Time	Place	Event	Matthew
31 or 32	Capernaum area	Jesus gives Kingdom illustrations	13:1-53
	Sea of Galilee	Calms a storm from the boat	8:18, 23-27
	Gadara region	Sends demons into swine	8:28-34
	Probably Capernaum	Heals woman's flow of blood; resurrects Jairus' daughter	9:18-26
	Capernaum (?)	Heals the blind and speechless	9:27-34
	Nazareth	Rejected again in his hometown	13:54-58
	Galilee	Third tour of Galilee; expands work by sending out apostles	9:35-11:1
	Tiberias	Herod beheads John the Baptist; Herod perplexed by Jesus	14:1-12
32, near Passover (Joh 6:4)	Capernaum (?); NE side Sea of Galilee	Apostles return from preaching tour; Jesus feeds 5,000 men	14:13-21
	NE side Sea of Galilee; Gennesaret	People try to make Jesus king; he walks on sea; heals many	14:22-36
	Capernaum	Says he is "the bread of life"; many are stumbled and leave	
32, after Passover	Probably Capernaum	Exposes human traditions	15:1-20
	Phoenicia; Decapolis	Heals Syrophenician woman's daughter; feeds 4,000 men	15:21-38
	Magadan	Gives no sign but sign of Jonah	15:39-16:4



Mark	Luke	John
4:1-34	8:4-18	
4:35-41	8:22-25	
5:1-20	8:26-39	
5:21-43	8:40-56	
6:1-5		
6:6-13	9:1-6	
6:14-29	9:7-9	
6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-13
6:45-56		6:14-21
		6:22-71
7:1-23		7:1
7:24-8:9		
8:10-12		

MAP 3B



Activity at the Sea of Galilee

(Also called Lake of Gennesaret and Sea of Tiberias)

- 1 Calms a storm from the boat
- 2 Sends demons into swine
- 3 Feeds 5,000 men
- 4 Walks on sea
- 5 Feeds 4,000 men
- 6 Traditional location of Sermon on the Mount

JESUS' GREAT MINISTRY IN GALILEE

Time	Place	Event	Matthew
32, after Passover	Sea of Galilee; Bethsaida	On boat to Bethsaida, Jesus warns against leaven of Pharisees; heals blind man	16:5-12
	Caesarea Philippi area	Keys of the Kingdom; foretells his death and resurrection	16:13-28
	Probably Mt. Hermon	Transfiguration; Jehovah speaks	17:1-13
	Caesarea Philippi area	Heals demon-possessed boy	17:14-20
	Galilee	Again foretells his death	17:22, 23
	Capernaum	Pays tax with coin from fish's mouth	17:24-27
		Greatest in the Kingdom; lost sheep and unforgiving slave illustrations	18:1-35
Galilee-Samaria	On way to Jerusalem, tells disciples to set aside all for Kingdom	8:19-22	

JESUS' LATER MINISTRY IN JUDEA

32, Festival of Tabernacles (or, Booths)	Jerusalem	Teaches at the Festival; officers sent to arrest him
		Says "I am the light of the world"; heals man born blind
	Probably Judea	Sends out the 70; they return joyful
	Judea; Bethany	Neighborly Samaritan illustration; visits Mary and Martha's home
Probably Judea	Teaches model prayer again; persistent friend illustration	
	Expels demons by God's finger; again gives only sign of Jonah	
	Dines with Pharisee; condemns hypocrisy of Pharisees	
	Illustrations: unreasonable rich man and the faithful steward	
	Heals crippled woman on the Sabbath; mustard grain and leaven illustrations	
32, Festival of Dedication	Jerusalem	Fine shepherd and sheepfold illustration; Jews try to stone him; leaves for Bethany across Jordan

Mark	Luke	John
8:13-26		
8:27-9:1	9:18-27	
9:2-13	9:28-36	
9:14-29	9:37-43	
9:30-32	9:43-45	
9:33-50	9:46-50	
	9:51-62	7:2-10
		7:11-52
		8:12-9:41
	10:1-24	
	10:25-42	
	11:1-13	
	11:14-36	
	11:37-54	
	12:1-59	
	13:1-21	
		10:1-39

MAP 4

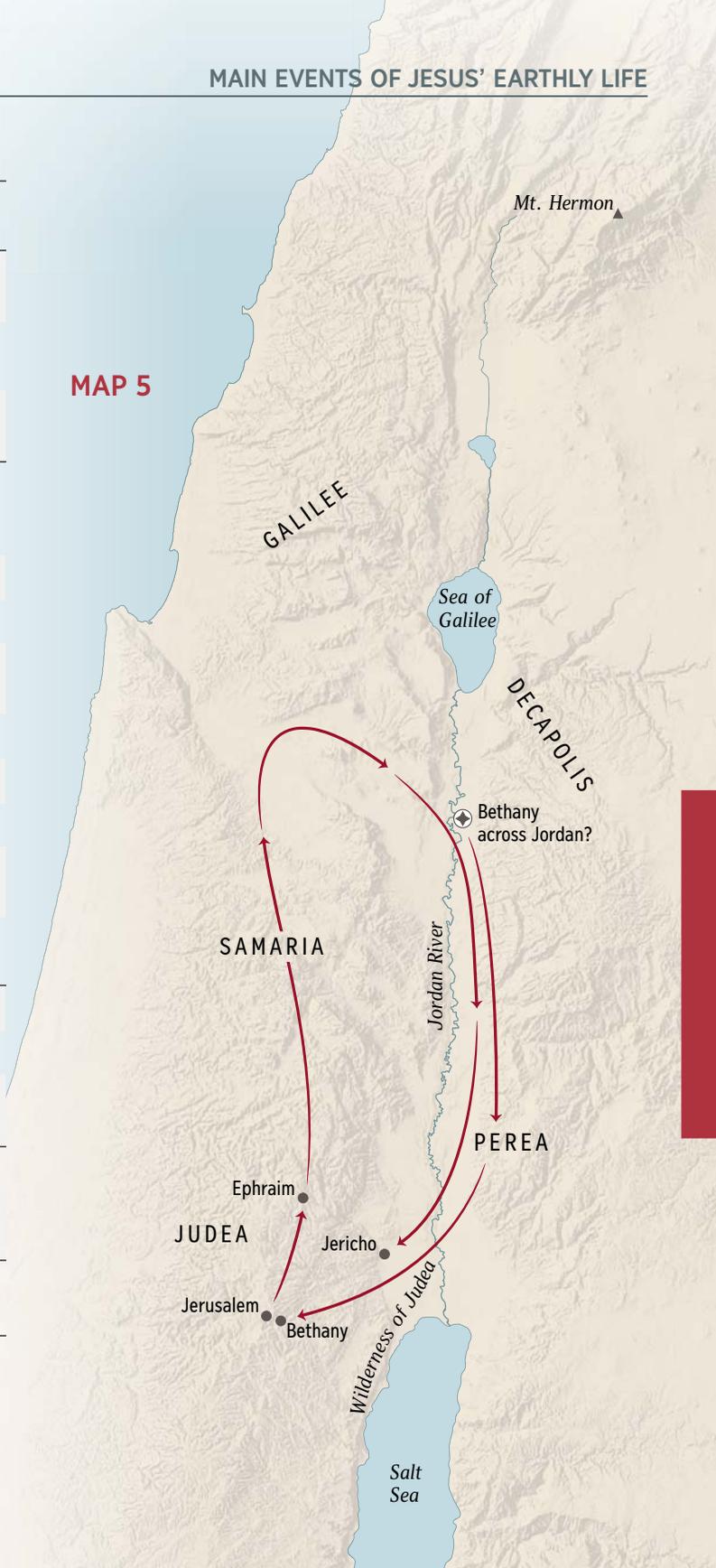


JESUS' LATER MINISTRY EAST OF THE JORDAN

Time	Place	Event	Matthew
32, after Festival of Dedication	Bethany across Jordan	Goes to where John was baptizing; many put faith in Jesus	
	Perea	Teaches in cities and villages, traveling toward Jerusalem	
		Urges to enter narrow door; laments over Jerusalem	
	Probably Perea	Teaches humility; illustrations: most prominent place and guests who made excuses	
		Count cost of discipleship	
		Illustrations: lost sheep, lost coin, lost son	
		Illustrations: unrighteous steward, rich man and Lazarus	
		Teaches on stumbling, forgiveness, and faith	
	Bethany	Lazarus dies and is resurrected	
	Jerusalem; Ephraim	Plot to kill Jesus; he leaves	
	Samaria; Galilee	Heals ten lepers; tells how God's Kingdom will come	
	Samaria or Galilee	Illustrations: persistent widow, Pharisee and tax collector	
	Perea	Teaches on marriage and divorce	19:1-12
Blesses the children		19:13-15	
Rich man's question; illustration of vineyard workers and equal pay		19:16-20:16	
Probably Perea	Foretells his death a third time	20:17-19	
	Request for James' and John's position in the Kingdom	20:20-28	
Jericho	Passing through, heals two blind men; visits Zacchaeus; ten minas illustration	20:29-34	

Mark	Luke	John
		10:40-42
	13:22	
	13:23-35	
	14:1-24	
	14:25-35	
	15:1-32	
	16:1-31	
	17:1-10	
		11:1-46
		11:47-54
	17:11-37	
	18:1-14	
10:1-12		
10:13-16	18:15-17	
10:17-31	18:18-30	
10:32-34	18:31-34	
10:35-45		
10:46-52	18:35-19:28	

MAP 5

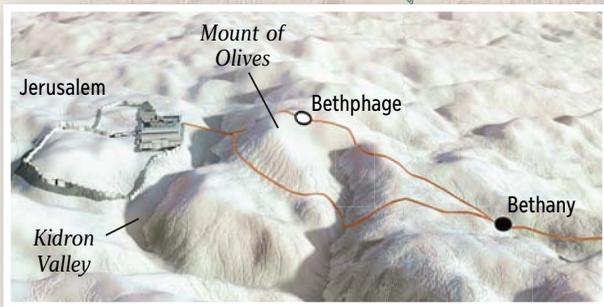
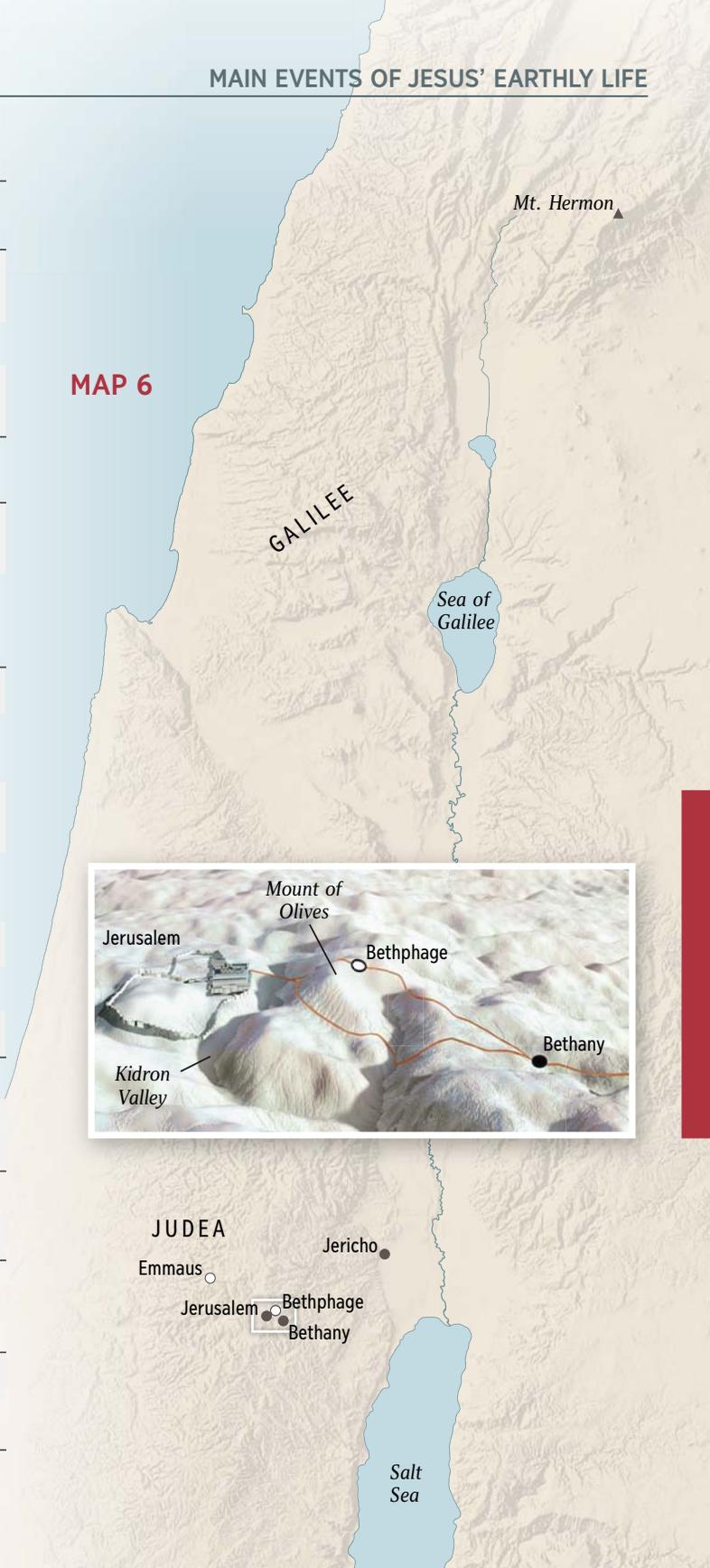


JESUS' FINAL MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM

Time	Place	Event	Matthew
33, Nisan 8	Bethany	Jesus arrives six days before Passover	
Nisan 9	Bethany	Mary pours oil on his head and feet	26:6-13
	Bethany-Bethphage-Jerusalem	Enters Jerusalem triumphantly, riding on a donkey	21:1-11, 14-17
Nisan 10	Bethany-Jerusalem	Curses fig tree; cleanses temple again	21:18, 19; 21:12, 13
	Jerusalem	Chief priests and scribes scheme to destroy Jesus Jehovah speaks; Jesus foretells his death; disbelief of Jews fulfills prophecy of Isaiah	
Nisan 11	Bethany-Jerusalem	Withered fig tree lesson	21:19-22
	Jerusalem, temple	His authority challenged; illustration of two sons	21:23-32
		Illustrations: murderous cultivators, marriage feast	21:33-22:14
		Answers questions on God and Caesar, resurrection, greatest commandment	22:15-40
		Asks crowd if Christ is David's son	22:41-46
		Woes to scribes and Pharisees	23:1-39
	Observes widow's contribution		
Mount of Olives	Gives sign of future presence Illustrations: ten virgins, talents, sheep and goats	24:1-51 25:1-46	
Nisan 12	Jerusalem	Jewish leaders plot to kill him	26:1-5
		Judas arranges betrayal	26:14-16
Nisan 13 (Thursday afternoon)	Near and in Jerusalem	Prepares for last Passover	26:17-19
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Eats Passover with apostles	26:20, 21
		Washes feet of apostles	

Mark	Luke	John
		11:55-12:1
14:3-9		12:2-11
11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
11:12-17	19:45, 46	
11:18, 19	19:47, 48	
		12:20-50
11:20-25		
11:27-33	20:1-8	
12:1-12	20:9-19	
12:13-34	20:20-40	
12:35-37	20:41-44	
12:38-40	20:45-47	
12:41-44	21:1-4	
13:1-37	21:5-38	
14:1, 2	22:1, 2	
14:10, 11	22:3-6	
14:12-16	22:7-13	
14:17, 18	22:14-18	
		13:1-20

MAP 6

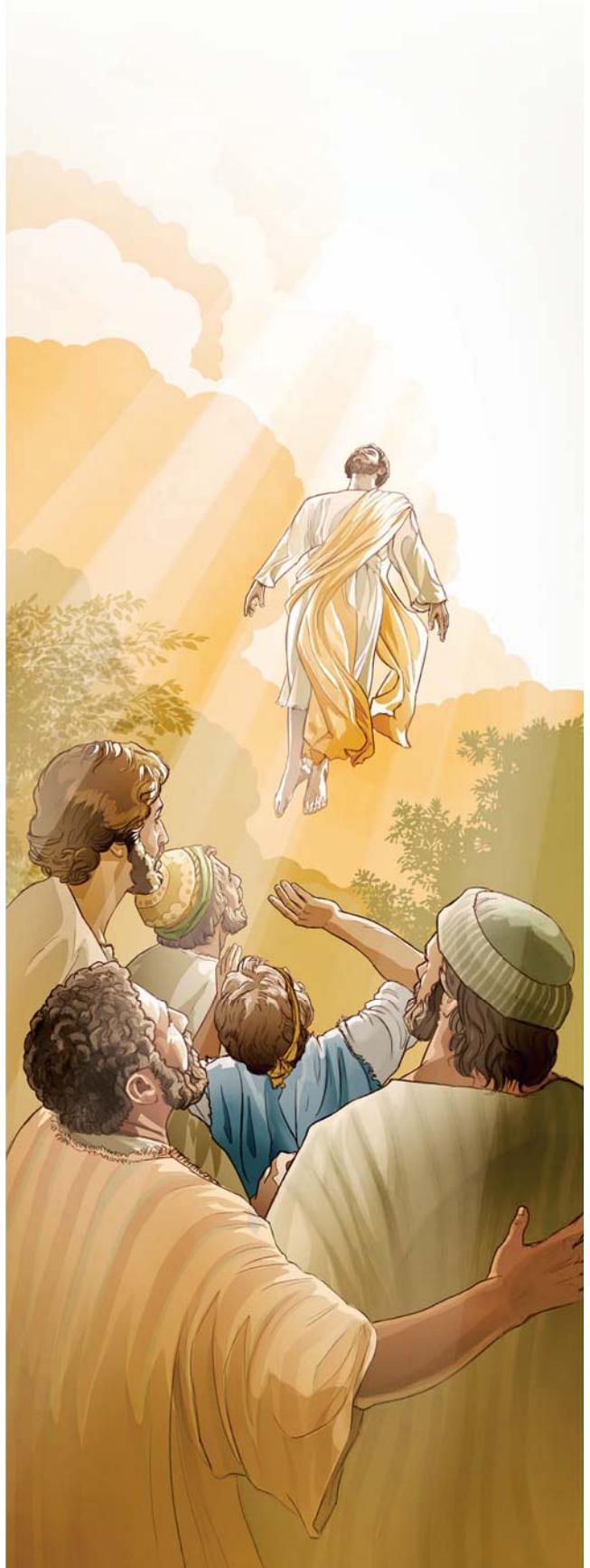


JESUS' FINAL MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM

Time	Place	Event	Matthew
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Jesus identifies Judas as traitor and dismisses him	26:21-25
		Institutes the Lord's Evening Meal (1Co 11:23-25)	26:26-29
		Foretells Peter's denials and scattering of apostles	26:31-35
		Promises helper; illustration of true vine; gives command to love; last prayer with apostles	
	Gethsemane	Agony in the garden; Jesus' betrayal and arrest	26:30, 36-56
	Jerusalem	Questioned by Annas; trial by Caiaphas, Sanhedrin; Peter denies him	26:57-27:1
		Judas the betrayer hangs himself (Ac 1:18, 19)	27:3-10
Before Pilate, then Herod, and back to Pilate		27:2, 11-14	
Pilate seeks his release but Jews ask for Barabbas; sentenced to death on the torture stake		27:15-30	
(Friday, c. 3:00 p.m.)	Golgotha	Dies on torture stake	27:31-56
	Jerusalem	Body taken from the stake and placed in tomb	27:57-61
Nisan 15	Jerusalem	Priests and Pharisees get guard for tomb and seal it	27:62-66
Nisan 16	Jerusalem and vicinity; Emmaus	Jesus resurrected; appears five times to disciples	28:1-15
After Nisan 16	Jerusalem; Galilee	Makes more appearances to disciples (1Co 15:5-7; Ac 1:3-8); instructs; commissions disciple-making	28:16-20
Iyyar 25	Mount of Olives, near Bethany	Jesus' ascension, 40th day after his resurrection (Ac 1:9-12)	

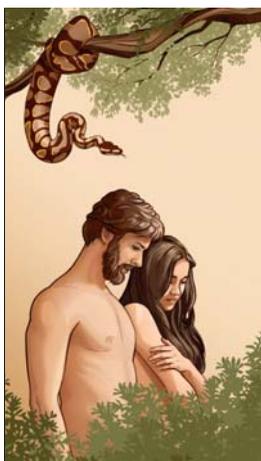
Mark	Luke	John
14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21-30
14:22-25	22:19, 20, 24-30	
14:27-31	22:31-38	13:31-38
		14:1-17:26
14:26, 32-52	22:39-53	18:1-12
14:53-15:1	22:54-71	18:13-27
15:1-5	23:1-12	18:28-38
15:6-19	23:13-25	18:39-19:16
15:20-41	23:26-49	19:16-30
15:42-47	23:50-56	19:31-42
16:1-8	24:1-49	20:1-25
		20:26-21:25
	24:50-53	

The disciples look on as
the resurrected Jesus
ascends to heaven



The Message of the Bible

Jehovah God has the right to rule. His method of ruling is best. His purpose for the earth and for mankind will be fulfilled.



After 4026 B.C.E.

“The serpent” questions Jehovah’s right to rule and his way of ruling. Jehovah promises to raise up an “offspring,” or a “seed,” who will eventually crush the serpent, Satan. (Genesis 3:1-5, 15, footnote) However, Jehovah allows time for humans to rule themselves under the serpent’s influence.



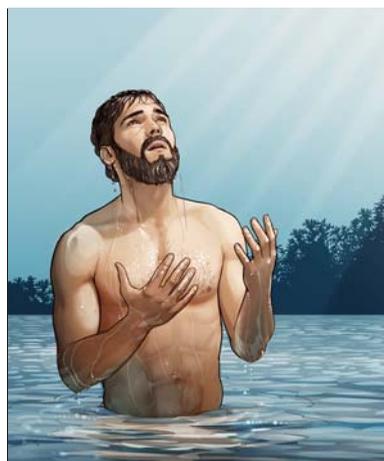
1943 B.C.E.

Jehovah tells Abraham that the promised “offspring” will be one of his descendants. —Genesis 22:18.



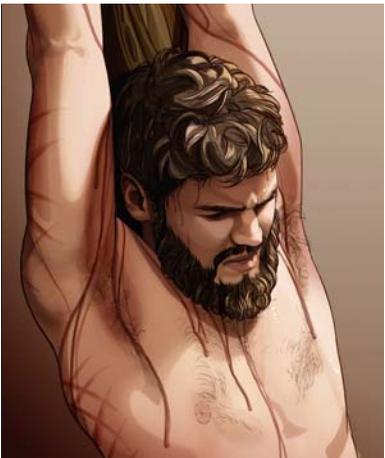
After 1070 B.C.E.

Jehovah assures King David and later his son Solomon that the promised “offspring” would come through their family line.—2 Samuel 7:12, 16; 1 Kings 9:3-5; Isaiah 9:6, 7.



29 C.E.

Jehovah identifies Jesus as the promised “offspring” who is the Heir to David’s throne. —Galatians 3:16; Luke 1:31-33; 3:21, 22.



33 C.E.

The serpent, Satan, briefly cripples the promised “offspring” by having Jesus killed. Jehovah raises Jesus to life in heaven and accepts the value of Jesus’ perfect life, thus providing the basis to forgive sins and to give Adam’s descendants everlasting life.—Genesis 3:15; Acts 2:32-36; 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22.



About 1914 C.E.

Jesus hurls the serpent, Satan, to the earth, confining him there for a short time.—Revelation 12:7-9, 12.

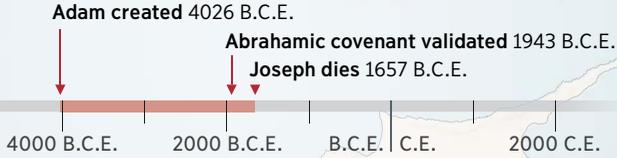


Future

Jesus imprisons Satan for 1,000 years and then destroys him, symbolically crushing his head. Jehovah’s original purpose for the earth and for mankind is fulfilled, his name is cleared of reproach, and his way of ruling is vindicated.—Revelation 20:1-3, 10; 21:3, 4.

B2

Genesis and the Travels of the Patriarchs

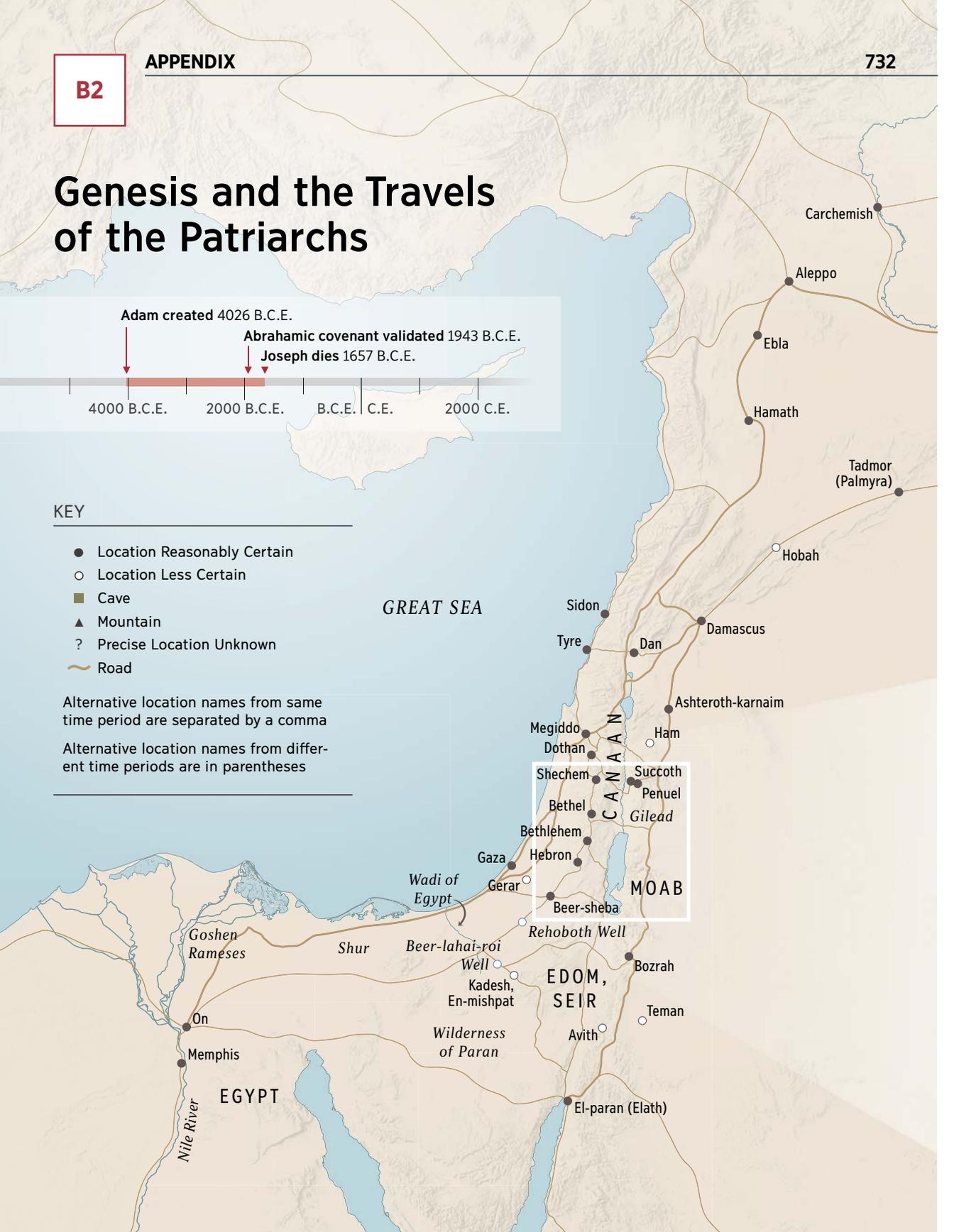


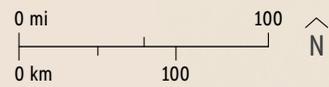
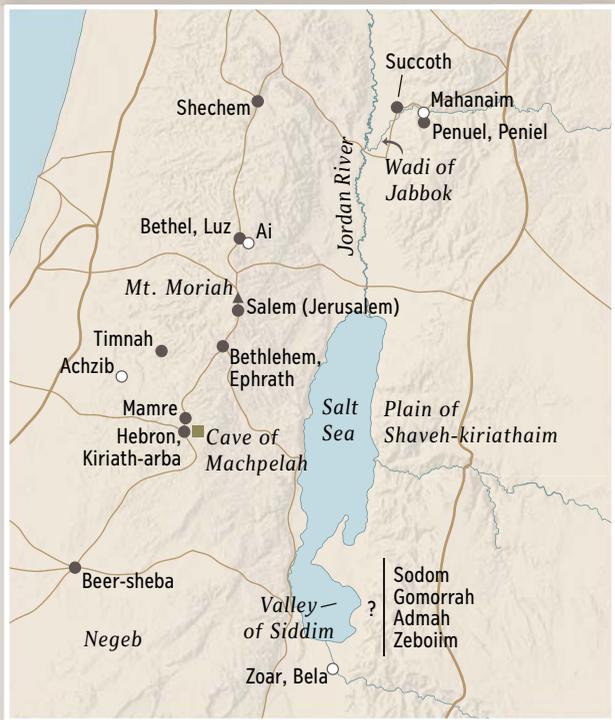
KEY

- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain
- Cave
- ▲ Mountain
- ? Precise Location Unknown
- Road

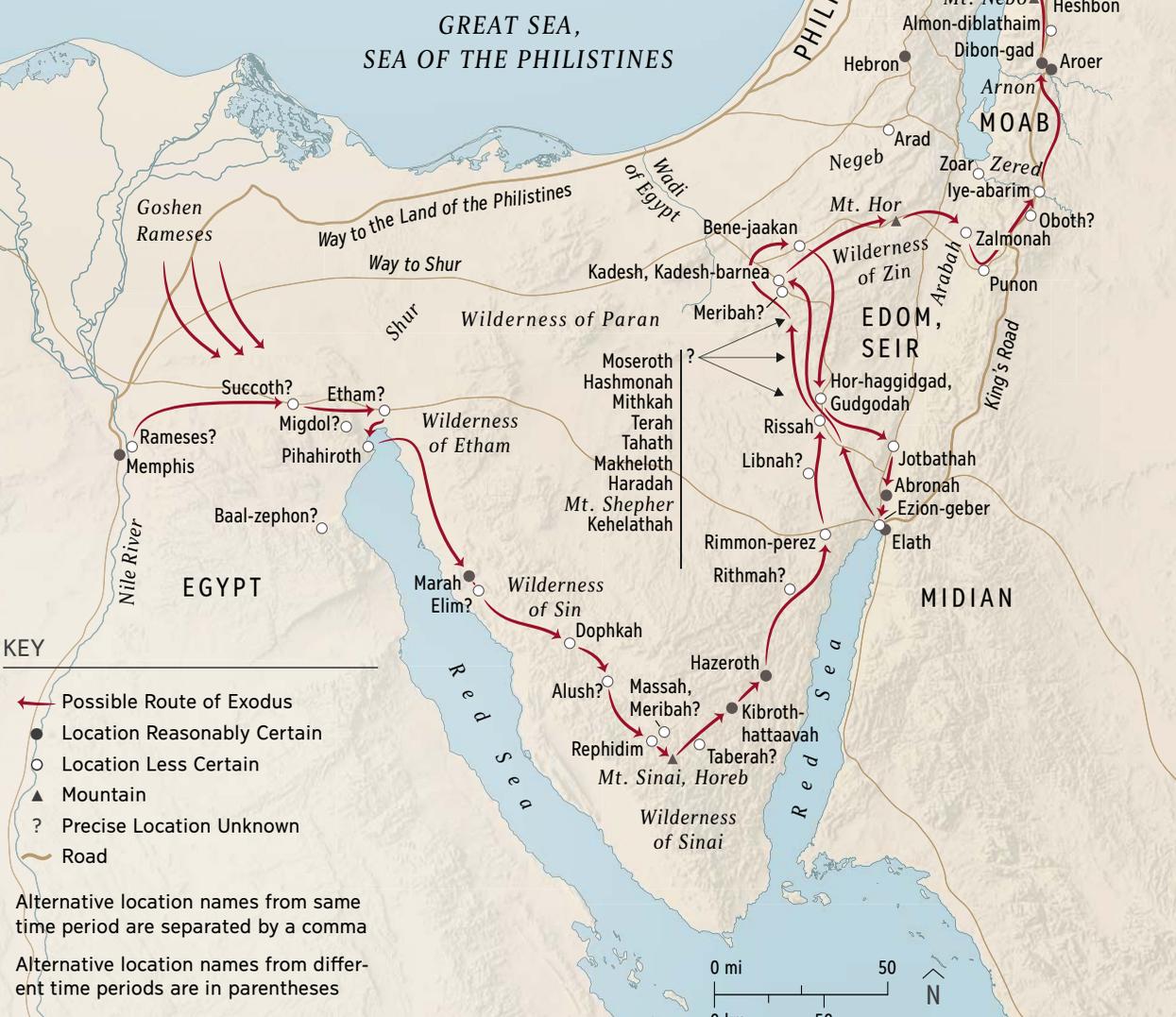
Alternative location names from same time period are separated by a comma

Alternative location names from different time periods are in parentheses





The Exodus From Egypt



- KEY**
- ← Possible Route of Exodus
 - Location Reasonably Certain
 - Location Less Certain
 - ▲ Mountain
 - ? Precise Location Unknown
 - Road
- Alternative location names from same time period are separated by a comma
- Alternative location names from different time periods are in parentheses

Conquest of the Promised Land

Israel enters Canaan 1473 B.C.E.
Major conquest of the land completed 1467 B.C.E.



KEY

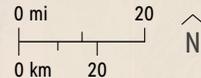
- Campaign Route
- Canaan
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain
- Mountain
- Precise Location Unknown
- Road

Alternative location names from same time period are separated by a comma

Alternative location names from different time periods are in parentheses



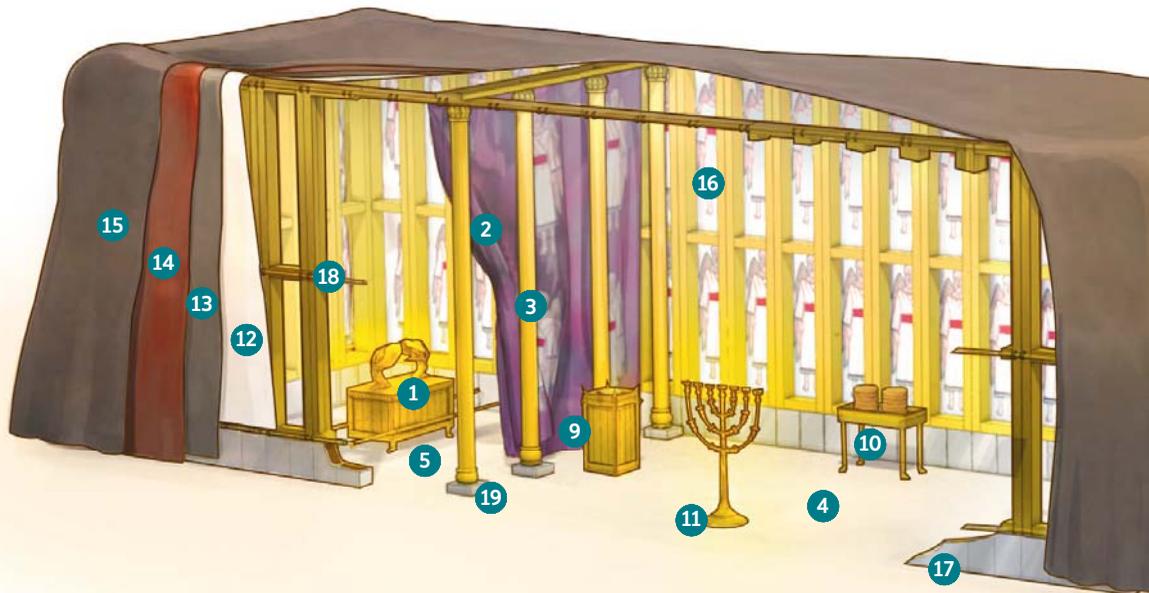
GREAT SEA,
WESTERN SEA



Tabernacle and High Priest

Tabernacle completed 1512 B.C.E. Temple inaugurated 1026 B.C.E.

4000 B.C.E. 2000 B.C.E. B.C.E. C.E. 2000 C.E.



Tabernacle Features

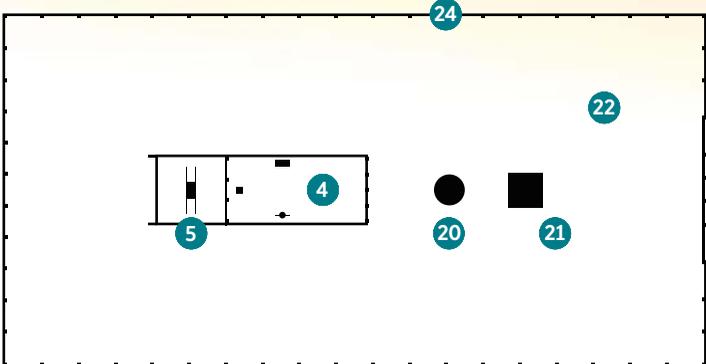
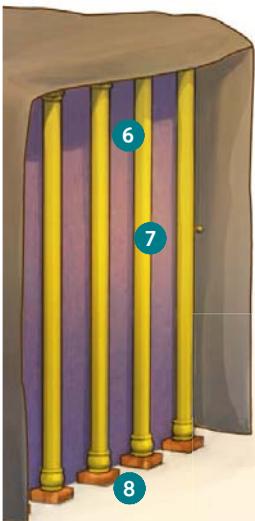
- 1 Ark (Ex 25:10-22; 26:33)
- 2 Curtain (Ex 26:31-33)
- 3 Pillar for the Curtain (Ex 26:31, 32)
- 4 Holy (Ex 26:33)
- 5 Most Holy (Ex 26:33)
- 6 Screen (Ex 26:36)
- 7 Pillar for the Screen (Ex 26:37)
- 8 Copper Socket Pedestal (Ex 26:37)
- 9 Incense Altar (Ex 30:1-6)
- 10 Table of Showbread (Ex 25:23-30; 26:35)
- 11 Lampstand (Ex 25:31-40; 26:35)
- 12 Tent Cloth of Linen (Ex 26:1-6)
- 13 Tent Cloth of Goat Hair (Ex 26:7-13)
- 14 Covering of Ram Skins (Ex 26:14)
- 15 Covering of Sealskins (Ex 26:14)
- 16 Panel Frame (Ex 26:15-18, 29)
- 17 Silver Socket Pedestal Under Panel Frame (Ex 26:19-21)
- 18 Bar (Ex 26:26-29)
- 19 Silver Socket Pedestal (Ex 26:32)
- 20 Copper Basin (Ex 30:18-21)
- 21 Altar of Burnt Offering (Ex 27:1-8)
- 22 Courtyard (Ex 27:17, 18)
- 23 Entrance (Ex 27:16)
- 24 Linen Hanging Curtains (Ex 27:9-15)

High Priest

Exodus chapter 28 describes in detail the garments of Israel's high priest



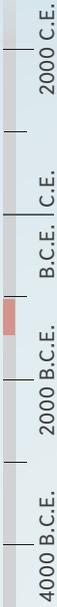
- Turban (Ex 28:39)
- Holy Sign of Dedication (Ex 28:36; 29:6)
- Onyx Stone (Ex 28:9)
- Chain (Ex 28:14)
- Breastpiece of Judgment With 12 Precious Stones (Ex 28:15-21)
- Ephod and Its Woven Belt (Ex 28:6, 8)
- Blue Sleeveless Coat (Ex 28:31)
- Hem of Bells and Pomegranates (Ex 28:33-35)
- Checkered Robe of Fine Linen (Ex 28:39)



Settlement of the Promised Land

B6

Tribes receive land after conquest
 1467 B.C.E. ▶ Saul anointed as king
 1117 B.C.E. ▶

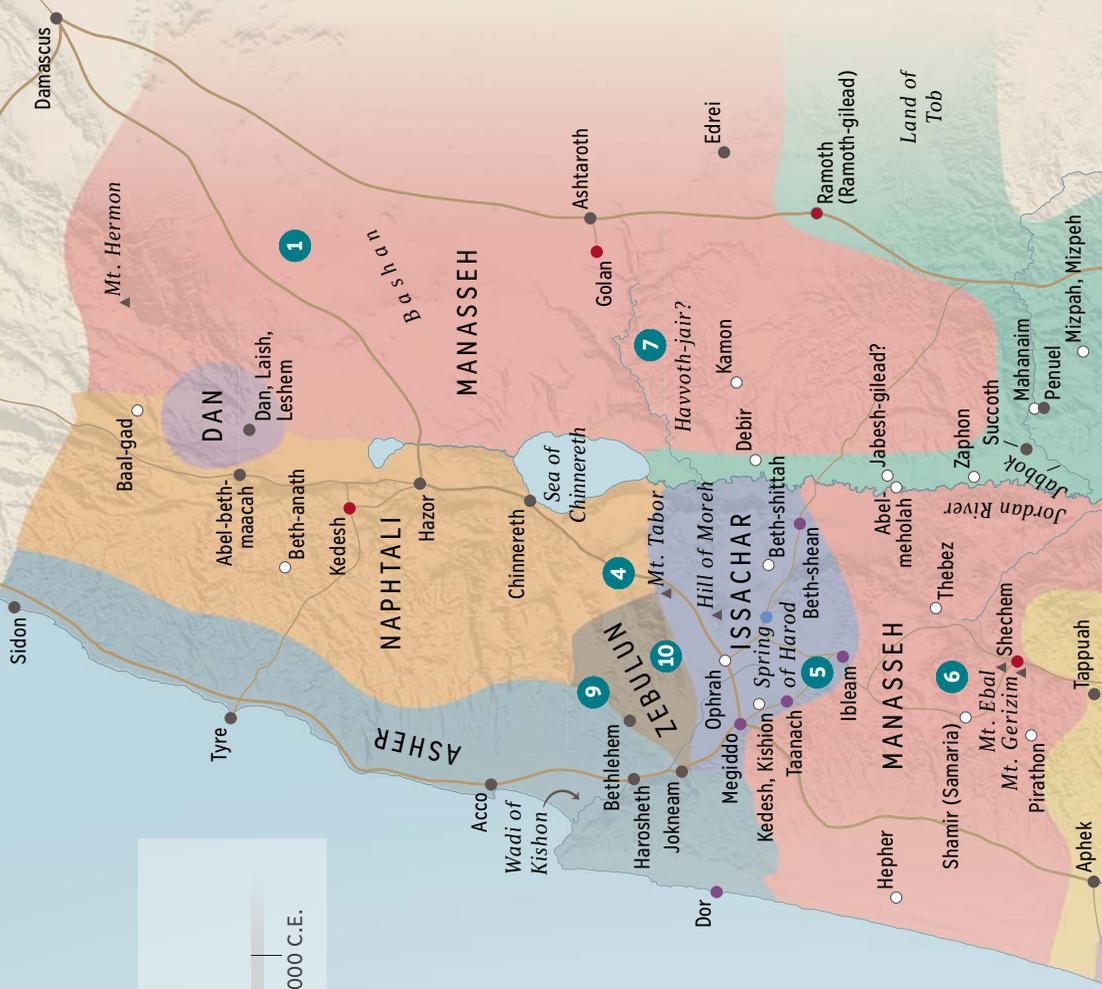


KEY

- Enclave Cities of Simeon
- Enclave Cities of Manasseh
- Cities of Refuge
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain
- ▲ Mountain
- ? Precise Location Unknown
- Road

Alternative location names from same time period are separated by a comma
 Alternative location names from different time periods are in parentheses

GREAT SEA,
 WESTERN SEA





N

AMMON

GAD

REUBEN

MOAB

EDOM, SEIR

EPHRAIM

BENJAMIN

(SIMEON)

JUDAH

DAN

Wadi of Sorek

Wadi of Egypt

Ascent of Akabbim

Mt. Halak

Wilderness of Zin

Negeb

Jogbehah

Rabbah

Abel-keramim

Mephaath

Bezer

Minnith

Heshbon

Beth-haram(n)

Kedemoth

Dibon

Aroer

Arnon

Salt Sea

Zered

Shiloh

Gilgal

Bethel

Gibeah

Jerusalem

Bethlehem, Ephrathah

Er-gedi

Hebron

Chesil, Bethul

Baalath-beer, Ramah, Baal

Beth-marcaboth

Baath-beer, Ramah, Baal

Ezem

Timnath-serah

Mizpah, Mizpeh

Eshtaol

Lehi

Adullam

Ether, Tochen

Lachish

Etam

Debir

Goshen

Anab

Ziklag

Ain

Hazar-susah

Beth-marcaboth

Hazar-shual

Beer-sheba

Ashan, Ain

Hazar-addar

Kadesh, Kadesh-barnea

Joppa

Jabneel

Timmah

Ekron

Ashdod

Libnah

Eglon

Gaza

Beer-sheba

Ashan, Ain

Beer-sheba

Hazar-shual

Beer-sheba

Azmon

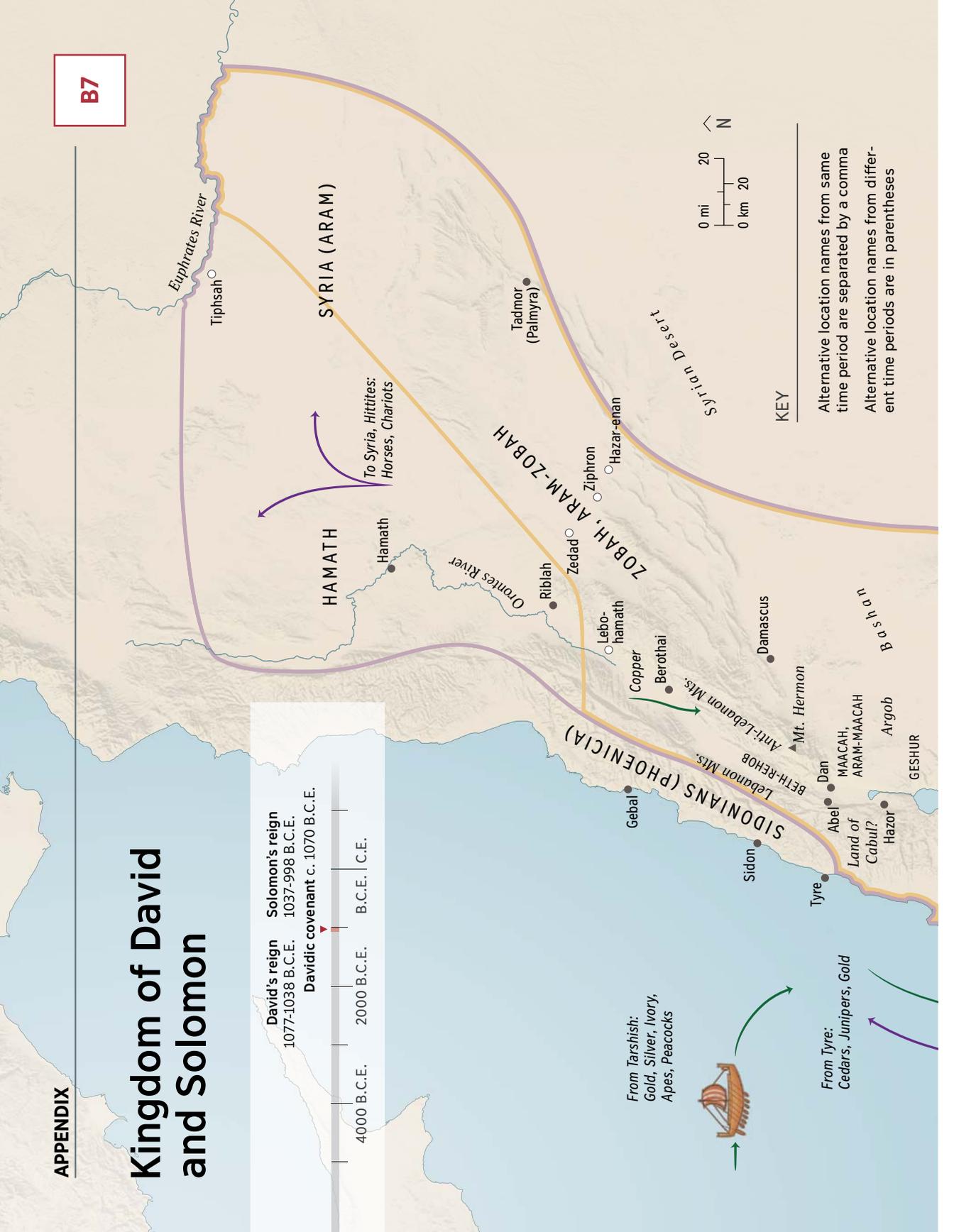
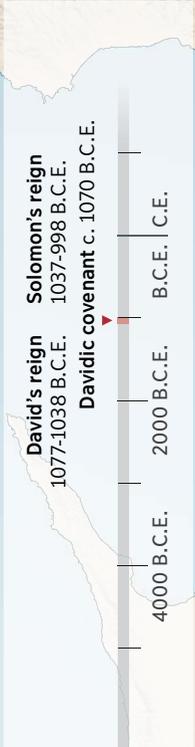
Karka

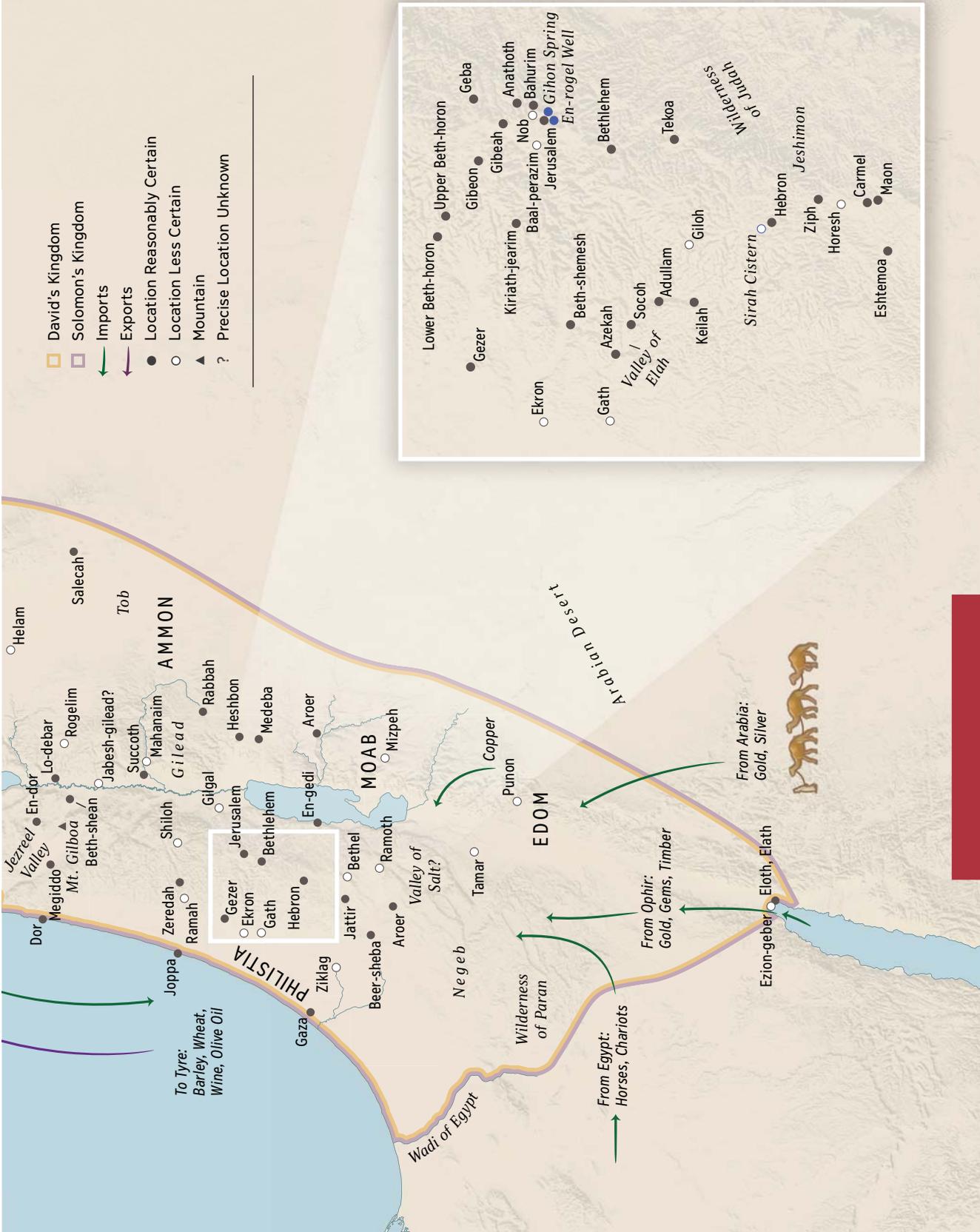
Hazar-addar

Kadesh, Kadesh-barnea

Wadi of Egypt

Kingdom of David and Solomon





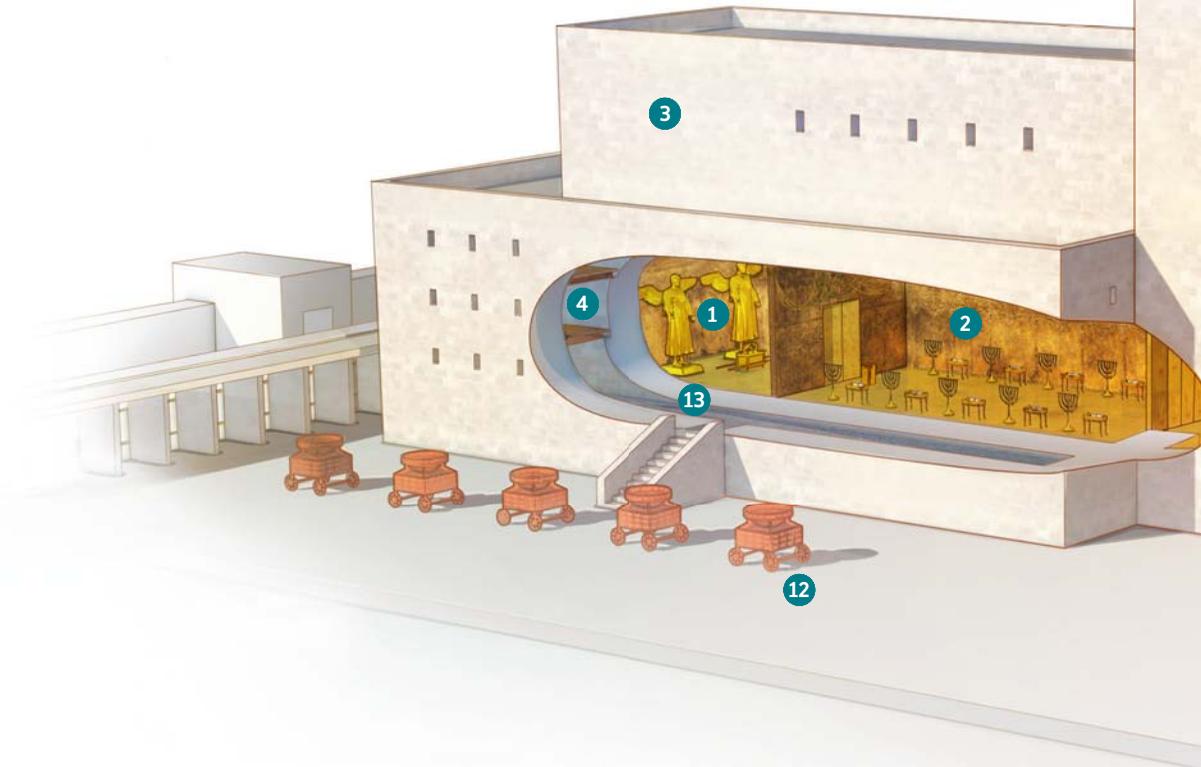
- David's Kingdom
- Solomon's Kingdom
- Imports
- Exports
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain
- Mountain
- Precise Location Unknown



Temple Built by Solomon

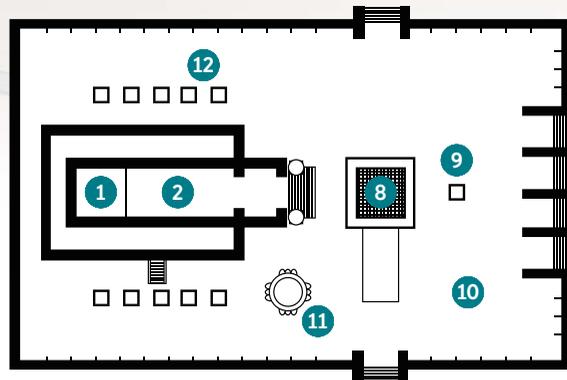
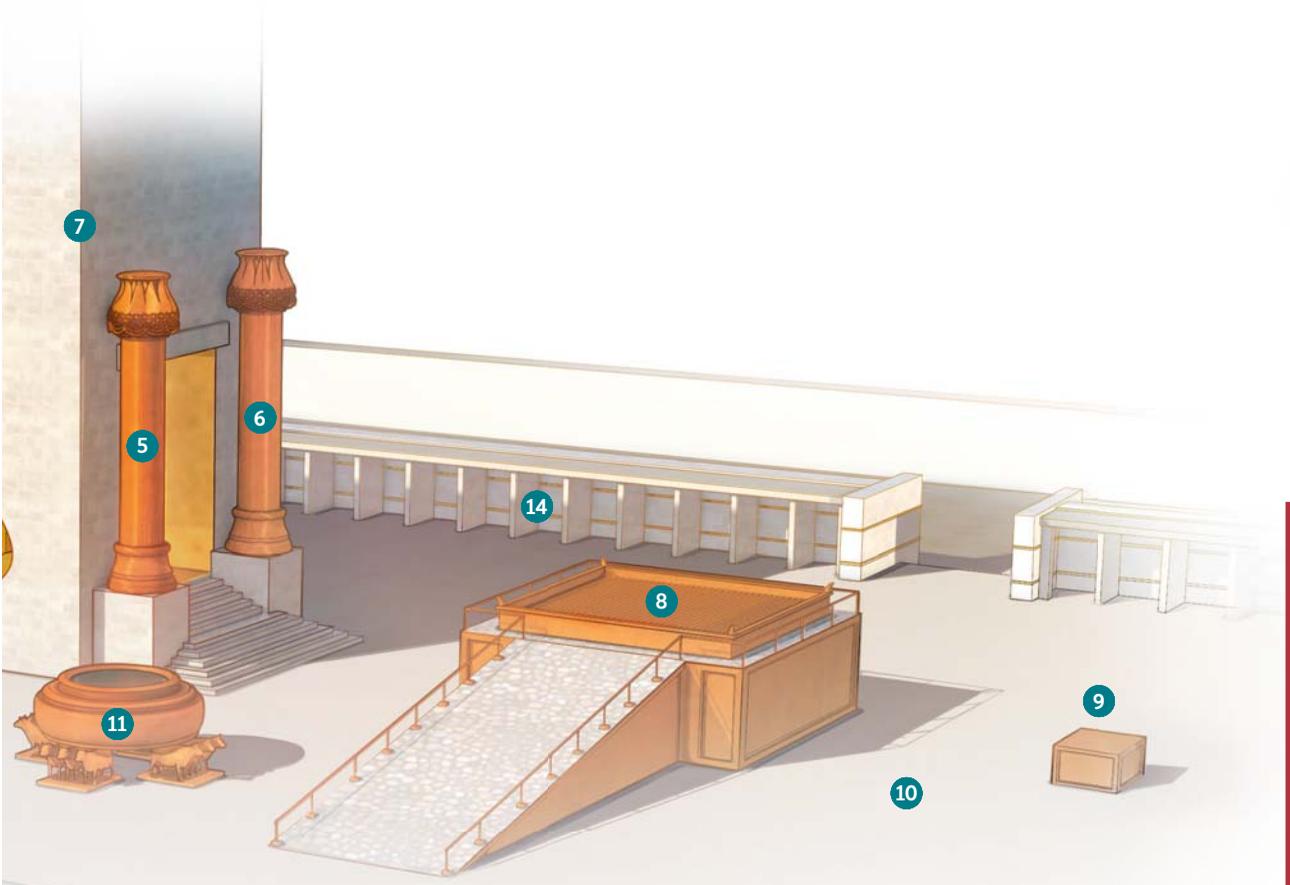
Temple inaugurated 1026 B.C.E. Temple destroyed 607 B.C.E.

4000 B.C.E. 2000 B.C.E. B.C.E. C.E. 2000 C.E.



Temple Features

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 Most Holy (1Ki 6:16, 20) | 8 Copper Altar (2Ch 4:1) |
| 2 Holy (2Ch 5:9) | 9 Platform of Copper (2Ch 6:13) |
| 3 Roof Chambers (1Ch 28:11) | 10 Inner Courtyard (1Ki 6:36) |
| 4 Side Chambers (1Ki 6:5, 6, 10) | 11 Sea of Cast Metal (1Ki 7:23) |
| 5 Jachin (1Ki 7:21; 2Ch 3:17) | 12 Carriages (1Ki 7:27) |
| 6 Boaz (1Ki 7:21; 2Ch 3:17) | 13 Side Entrance (1Ki 6:8) |
| 7 Porch (1Ki 6:3; 2Ch 3:4)
(Height uncertain) | 14 Dining Rooms (1Ch 28:12) |



B9

World Powers Foretold by Daniel

Babylon destroys Jerusalem 607 B.C.E.

4000 B.C.E. 2000 B.C.E. B.C.E. | C.E.



Babylon Daniel 2:32, 36-38; 7:4
607 B.C.E. King Nebuchadnezzar destroys Jerusalem



Medo-Persia Daniel 2:32, 39; 7:5
539 B.C.E. Conquers Babylon
537 B.C.E. Cyrus decrees return of Jews to Jerusalem



Greece Daniel 2:32, 39; 7:6
331 B.C.E. Alexander the Great conquers Persia



Rome Daniel 2:33, 40; 7:7
63 B.C.E. Rules over Israel
70 C.E. Destroys Jerusalem

Anglo-America Daniel 2:33, 41-43
1914-1918 C.E. During World War I, Anglo-American World Power comes into being

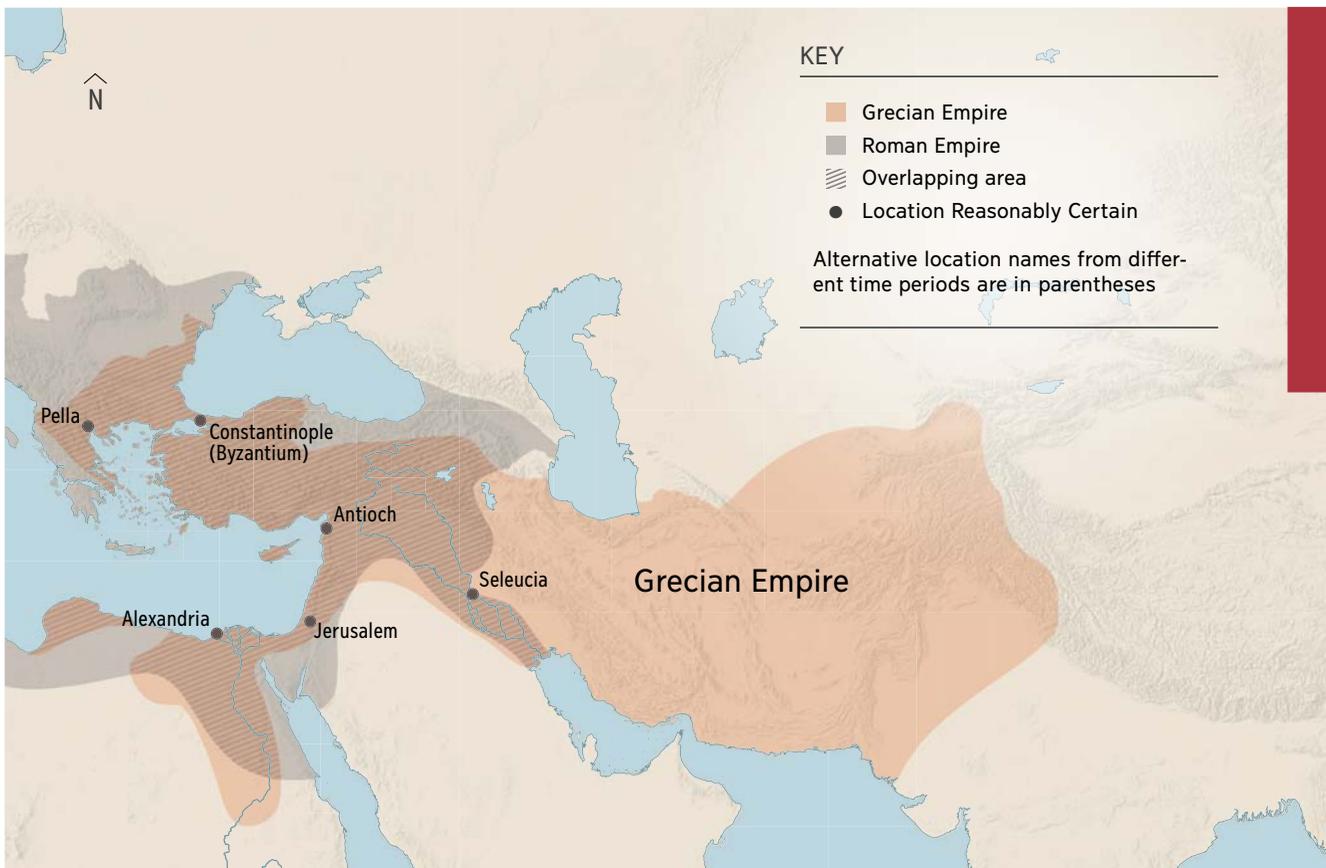
KEY

- Babylonian Empire
- Medo-Persian Empire
- ▨ Overlapping area
- Location Reasonably Certain

Alternative location names from same time period are separated by a comma

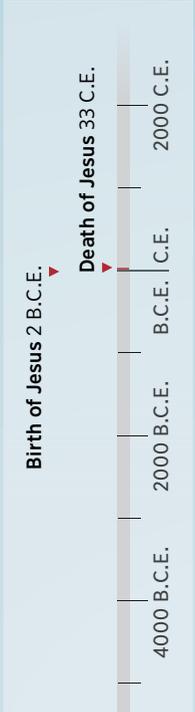
Roman Empire

Rome



Israel During the Time of Jesus

B10



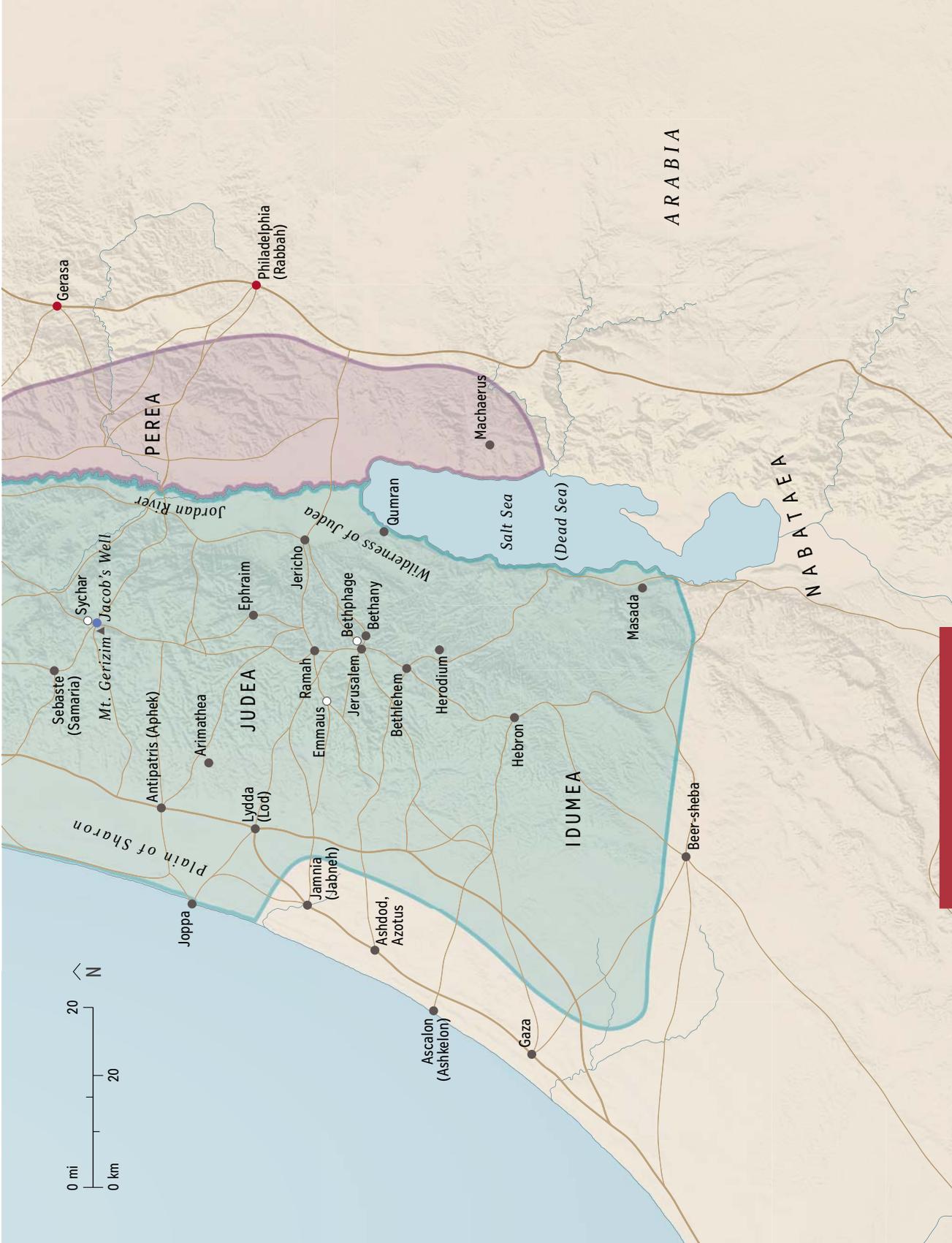
KEY

- Ruled by Herod Archelaus, later by Roman Governor Pontius Pilate
- Ruled by Herod Antipas
- Ruled by Philip
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Location Less Certain
- Mountain
- Cities of the Decapolis
- Precise Location Unknown
- Road

Alternative location names from same time period are separated by a comma

Alternative location names from different time periods are in parentheses





Gerasa

Philadelpia
(Rabbah)

PEREA

ARABIA

Jordan River

Machaerus

Sychar
Jacob's Well

Qumran

Salt Sea
(Dead Sea)

Mt. Gerizim

Wilderness of Judea

Ephraim

Bethphage

Bethany

Masada

NABATAEA

Sebaste
(Samarita)

JUDEA

Jericho

Ramah

Jerusalem

Bethlehem

Herodium

Hebron

Plain of Sharon

Antipatris (Aphek)

Arimathea

Emmaus

Jamnia
(Jabneh)

Ashdod,
Azotus

IDUMEA

Beer-sheba

Joppa

Lydda
(Lod)

N

20

20

0 mi

0 km

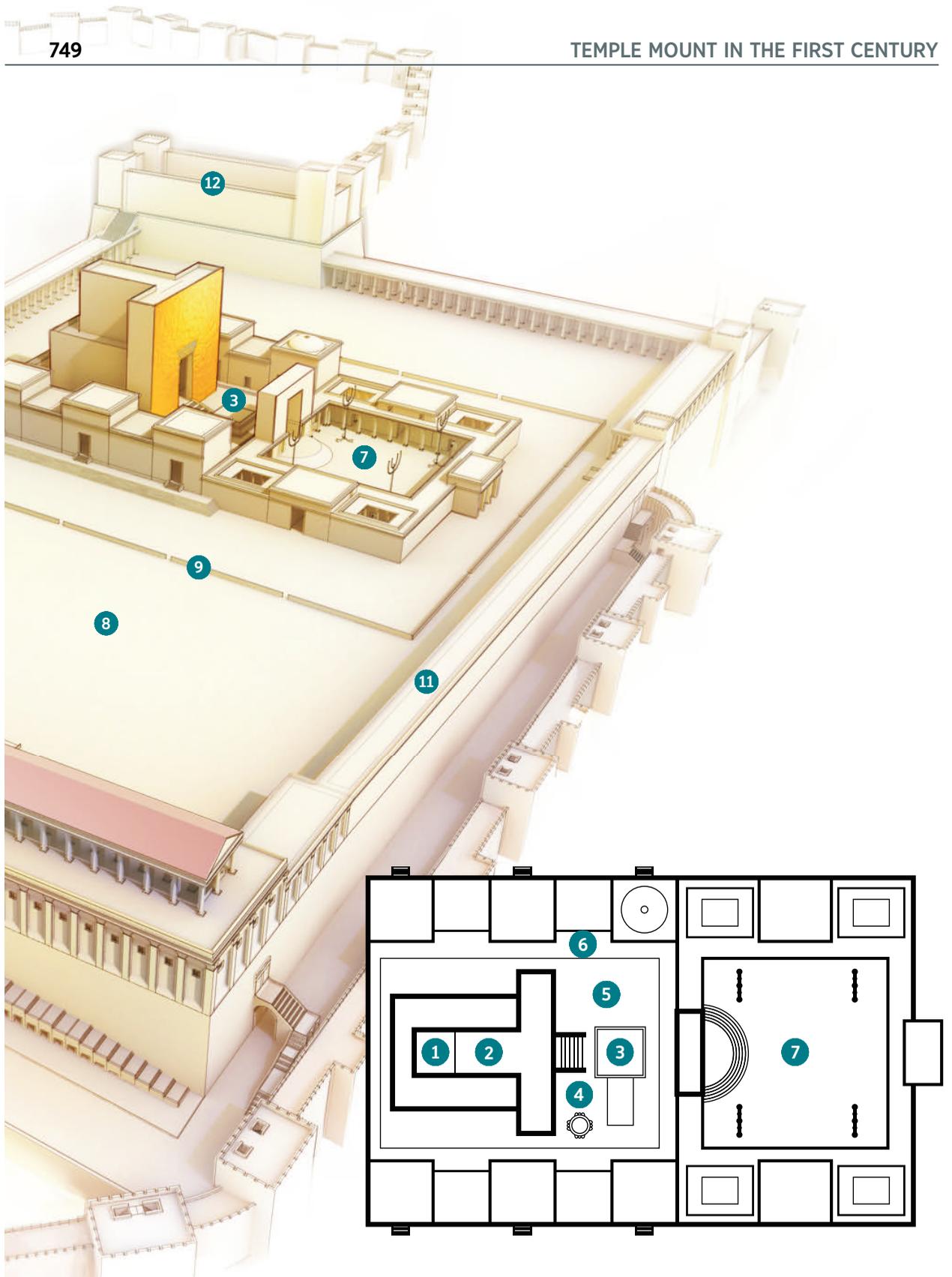
Temple Mount in the First Century

Foundation of second temple laid
536 B.C.E. Temple destroyed 70 C.E.

4000 B.C.E. 2000 B.C.E. B.C.E. C.E. 2000 C.E.

Temple Features

- 1 Most Holy
- 2 Holy
- 3 Altar of Burnt Offering
- 4 Sea of Cast Metal
- 5 Court of Priests
- 6 Court of Israel
- 7 Court of Women
- 8 Court of the Gentiles
- 9 Barrier (Soreg)
- 10 Royal Colonnade
- 11 Solomon's Colonnade
- 12 Fortress of Antonia



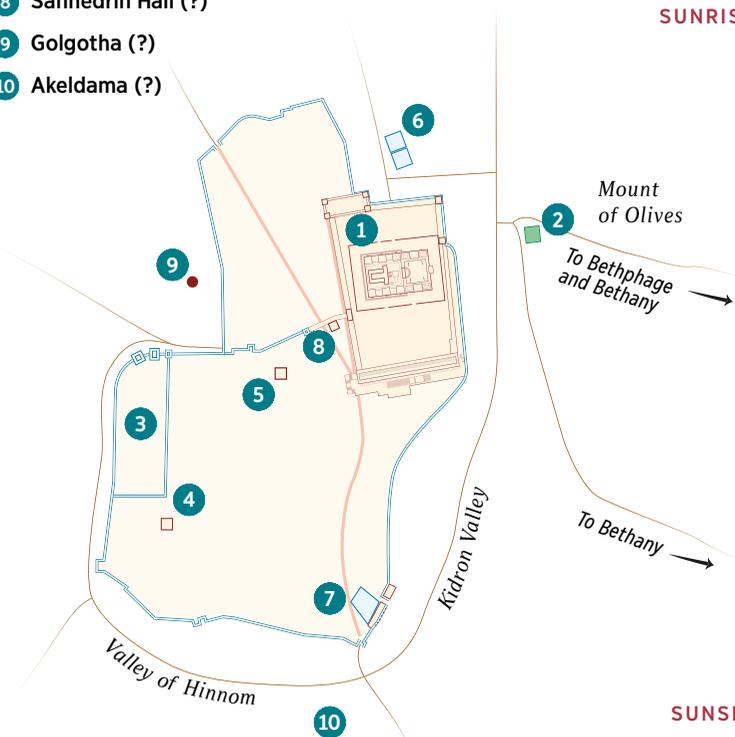
The Final Week of Jesus' Life on Earth

Death of Jesus 33 C.E.



Jerusalem and Surrounding Area

- 1 Temple
- 2 Garden of Gethsemane (?)
- 3 Governor's Palace
- 4 House of Caiaphas (?)
- 5 Palace Used by Herod Antipas (?)
- 6 Pool of Bethzatha
- 7 Pool of Siloam
- 8 Sanhedrin Hall (?)
- 9 Golgotha (?)
- 10 Akeldama (?)



Nisan 8 (Sabbath)

SUNSET ▶

Jewish days start and end at sunset

- Arrives in Bethany six days before the Passover

John 11:55-12:1

SUNRISE ▶

SUNSET ▶

Nisan 9

- Dines with Simon the leper
- Mary anoints Jesus with nard
- Jews come to visit Jesus and Lazarus

Matthew 26:6-13

Mark 14:3-9

John 12:2-11



- Triumphal entry into Jerusalem
- Teaches in the temple ①

Matthew 21:1-11, 14-17

Mark 11:1-11

Luke 19:29-44

John 12:12-19

Nisan 10

- Spends the night in Bethany



- Early trip into Jerusalem
- Cleanses the temple
- Jehovah speaks from heaven

Matthew 21:18, 19; 21:12, 13

Mark 11:12-19

Luke 19:45-48

John 12:20-50

Nisan 11



- Teaches in the temple, using illustrations
- Condemns Pharisees
- Notes widow's contribution
- On Mount of Olives, foretells Jerusalem's fall and gives sign of future presence

Matthew 21:19-25:46

Mark 11:20-13:37

Luke 20:1-21:38

Nisan 12



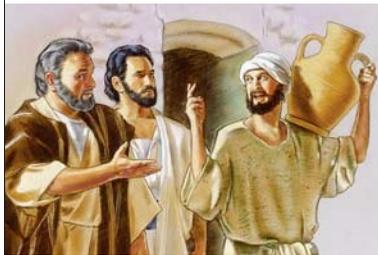
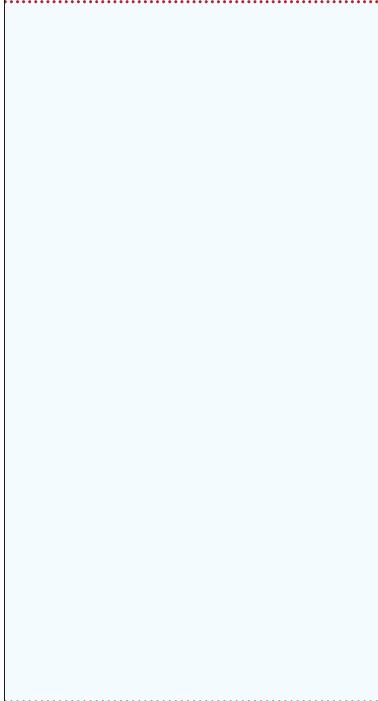
- Quiet day with disciples
- Judas arranges betrayal

Matthew 26:1-5, 14-16

Mark 14:1, 2, 10, 11

Luke 22:1-6

Nisan 13



- Peter and John prepare for the Passover
- Jesus and other apostles arrive in late afternoon

Matthew 26:17-19

Mark 14:12-16

Luke 22:7-13

Nisan 14



Nisan 15 (Sabbath)

- Eats the Passover with the apostles
- Washes the feet of the apostles
- Dismisses Judas
- Institutes the Lord's Evening Meal

Matthew 26:20-35

Mark 14:17-31

Luke 22:14-38

John 13:1-17:26

- Betrayed and arrested in the garden of Gethsemane 2
- Apostles flee
- Tried by the Sanhedrin at the house of Caiaphas 4
- Peter denies Jesus

Matthew 26:36-75

Mark 14:32-72

Luke 22:39-65

John 18:1-27

- Stands before the Sanhedrin again 8
- Taken to Pilate, 3 then to Herod, 5 then back to Pilate 3
- Sentenced to death and executed at Golgotha 9
- Dies about three o'clock in the afternoon
- Body removed and buried

Matthew 27:1-61

Mark 15:1-47

Luke 22:66-23:56

John 18:28-19:42

- Pilate approves posting guards at Jesus' grave

Matthew 27:62-66

Nisan 16

- Additional burial spices are purchased

Mark 16:1



- Resurrected
- Appears to disciples

Matthew 28:1-15

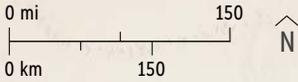
Mark 16:2-8

Luke 24:1-49

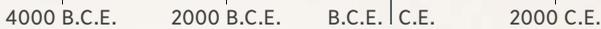
John 20:1-25

B13

The Spread of Christianity



Outpouring of holy spirit Pentecost 33 C.E.



Paul's Travels

- ← c. 47-48 C.E. 1st missionary tour
- ← c. 49-52 C.E. 2nd missionary tour
- ← c. 52-56 C.E. 3rd missionary tour
- - - c. 59-61 C.E. 1st imprisonment in Rome

- ⊕ Starting point of missionary tours
- Cities mentioned in Revelation
- Location Reasonably Certain
- Road

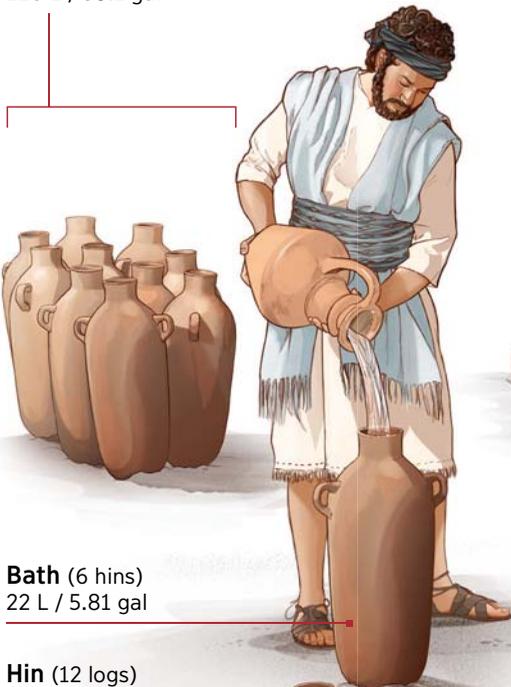


B14

Trade and Commerce

Liquid Measures

Cor (10 baths / 60 hins)
220 L / 58.1 gal



Bath (6 hins)
22 L / 5.81 gal

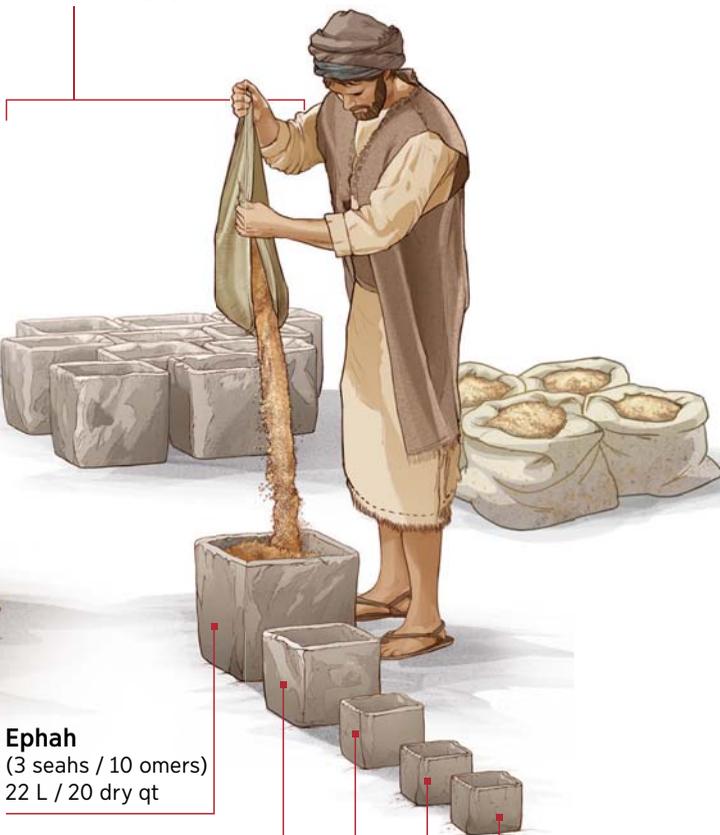
Hin (12 logs)
3.67 L / 7.75 pt

Log ($\frac{1}{12}$ hin)
0.31 L / 0.66 pt



Dry Measures

Homer (1 cor / 10 ephahs)
220 L / 200 dry qt



Ephah
(3 seahs / 10 omers)
22 L / 20 dry qt

Seah ($3\frac{1}{2}$ omers)
7.33 L / 6.66 dry qt

Omer ($1\frac{1}{2}$ cabs)
2.2 L / 2 dry qt

Cab
1.22 L / 1.11 dry qt

Quart
1.08 L / 0.98 dry qt

Linear Measures

Long reed (6 long cubits)
3.11 m / 10.2 ft

Reed (6 cubits)
2.67 m / 8.75 ft



Fathom
1.8 m / 6 ft

Long cubit
(7 handbreadths)
51.8 cm / 20.4 in.

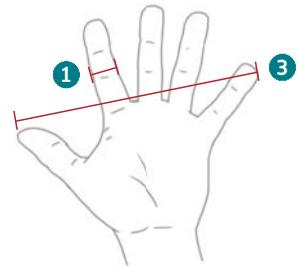
Cubit
(2 spans / 6 handbreadths)
44.5 cm / 17.5 in.

Short cubit
38 cm / 15 in.

1 Fingerbreadth
($\frac{1}{4}$ handbreadth)
1.85 cm / 0.73 in.

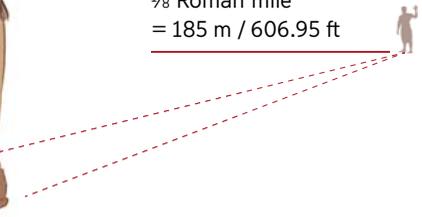
2 Handbreadth
(4 fingerbreadths)
7.4 cm / 2.9 in.

3 Span
(3 handbreadths)
22.2 cm / 8.75 in.



Cubit

1 Roman stadium
 $\frac{1}{8}$ Roman mile
= 185 m / 606.95 ft



Currency and Weight in the Hebrew Scriptures



Gerah (½ shekel)
0.57 g / 0.01835 oz t
10 gerahs = 1 bekah

Bekah
5.7 g / 0.1835 oz t
2 bekahs = 1 shekel

Pim
7.8 g / 0.2508 oz t
1 pim = ⅔ shekel

Shekel
11.4 g / 0.367 oz t
50 shekels = 1 mina

Mina
570 g / 18.35 oz t
60 minas = 1 talent

Talent
34.2 kg / 1,101 oz t



Shekel weight



Daric
(Persian, gold)
8.4 g / 0.27 oz t
Ezra 8:27

Currency and Weight in the Christian Greek Scriptures



Lepton
(Jewish, copper or bronze)
½ quadrans
Luke 21:2



Quadrans
(Roman, copper or bronze)
2 lepta
Matthew 5:26



Assarion
(Roman and provincial, copper or bronze)
4 quadrantes
Matthew 10:29



Denarius
(Roman, silver)
64 quadrantes
3.85 g / 0.124 oz t
Matthew 20:10

1 Day's Wages (12 hours)

2 Days' Wages

**Mina**

100 drachmas
340 g / 10.9 oz t
Luke 19:13
= about 100 days' wages

Talent

60 minas
20.4 kg / 654 oz t
Matthew 18:24
Revelation 16:21
= about 20 years' wages

Pound (Roman)

327 g / 11.5 oz
John 12:3
"A pound of perfumed oil, genuine nard"

Tetradrachma
of AntiochTetradrachma of Tyre
(Silver shekel of Tyre)**Drachma**

(Greek, silver)
3.4 g / 0.109 oz t
Luke 15:8

Didrachma

(Greek, silver)
2 drachmas
6.8 g / 0.218 oz t
Matthew 17:24

Tetradrachma

(Greek, silver; also
called silver stater)
4 drachmas
13.6 g / 0.436 oz t
Matthew 17:27

3 Days' Wages

4 Days' Wages

AVERAGE TEMPERATURE



0°C 32°F 10°C 50°F 20°C 68°F 30°C 86°F

Hebrew Calendar

APR.	NISAN (ABIB)	14 Passover 15-21 Unleavened Bread 16 Offering of firstfruits	Jordan swells from rains, melting snow		Barley	
	IYYAR (ZIV)	14 Late Passover	Dry season begins, mostly clear skies		Wheat	
MAY	SIVAN	6 Festival of Weeks (Pentecost)	Summer heat, clear air		Wheat, early figs	
JUNE	TAMMUZ		Heat increases, heavy dews in areas		First grapes	
JULY	AB		Heat reaches maximum		Summer fruits	
AUG.	ELUL		Heat continues		Dates, grapes, and figs	
SEPT.	TISHRI (ETHANIM)	1 Trumpet blast 10 Day of Atonement 15-21 Festival of Booths 22 Solemn assembly	Summer ends, early rains begin		Plowing	
OCT.	HESHVAN (BUL)		Light rains		Olives	
NOV.	CHISLEV	25 Festival of Dedication	Rain increases, frost, mountain snows		Flocks wintered	
DEC.	TEBETH		Maximum cold, rainy, mountain snows		Vegetation developing	
JAN.	SHEBAT		Cold weather lessens, rain continues		Almond blossoms	
FEB.	ADAR	14, 15 Purim	Frequent thunder and hail		Flax	
MAR.	VEADAR	Intercalary month added seven times in 19 years				



The Restoration of the Divine Name in the “New Testament”

When Jesus and his apostles were on earth, the divine name, or Tetragrammaton, appeared in the Hebrew manuscripts of the “Old Testament.” (See Appendixes A4 and A5.) The divine name also appeared in the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the “Old Testament” that was widely used in the first century C.E. At that time, the divine name was represented in the *Septuagint* by either the Hebrew characters (YHWH) or the Greek transliteration of those characters (*IAO*). Some portions of manuscripts of the *Septuagint* from the first century C.E. and earlier still exist today, and they prove this fact. So when the inspired writers of the “New Testament” quoted from the “Old Testament,” they must have seen the Tetragrammaton, whether they were quoting directly from the Hebrew text of the “Old Testament” or the Greek translation of that text, the *Septuagint*.

Today, however, no manuscripts of the “New Testament” from the first century C.E. are available for us to examine. So no one can check the original Greek manuscripts of the “New Testament” to see whether the Bible writers used the Tetragrammaton. The Greek manuscripts of the “New Testament” that would have a bearing on this issue are copies that were made from about 200 C.E. onward. The more complete manuscripts are from the fourth century C.E., long after the originals were composed. However, sometime during the second or early third century C.E., a practice had developed where those copying the manuscripts either replaced the Tetragrammaton with a title such as Lord or God or copied from manuscripts where this had already been done.*

* In most cases, they either replaced the divine name with the Greek word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord), *The-os'* (God), or an abbreviation of one of these words. Many standard dictionaries of ancient Greek state that these two Greek words have been used as equivalents of the divine name.—See *A Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament*, by J. Parkhurst, revised edition of 1845; *The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, by J. H. Thayer, 1981; *A Greek-English Lexicon*, by Liddell and Scott, 1996; *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Third Edition, 2000.

That practice creates a special challenge for anyone who translates the “New Testament.” For example, when a translator examines an “Old Testament” quotation in the Greek text of the “New Testament,” he will not see the Tetragrammaton anywhere in the Greek text from which he is translating. However, he should be aware of two basic facts: (1) The original quotation from the “Old Testament” may contain the Tetragrammaton, and (2) the Greek text that he is using is based on manuscripts from a period of time when copyists regularly substituted titles for the divine name. Realizing this, he must make an important decision. Will he follow the Greek text that uses *Ky’ri-os* or *The-os*’ instead of the Tetragrammaton, or will he endeavor to ascertain where the Tetragrammaton would have appeared in the original Greek manuscripts?



Both the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts used by the Christian Bible writers contained the Tetragrammaton.

The basic question that needs to be answered is this: Since the Tetragrammaton appeared in the original Hebrew text that was being quoted by the first-century Bible writers, did those writers deliberately substitute the word *Ky’ri-os* or *The-os*’ for the Tetragrammaton each time they quoted from the “Old Testament”? Throughout the centuries, numerous Bible translators have concluded that such a substitution would not have taken place. Therefore, such translators have felt compelled to restore the divine name in their translations of the “New Testament.” The translators of the Christian Greek Scriptures of the *New World Translation* agree with that viewpoint.*

Where Should the Divine Name Be Restored?

The following two sections of Appendix C list the verses where the name Jehovah occurs in the main text of the Christian Greek

* A number of scholars, however, strongly disagree with this viewpoint. One of these is Jason BeDuhn, who authored the book *Truth in Translation: Accuracy and Bias in English Translations of the New Testament*. Yet, even BeDuhn acknowledges: “It may be that some day a Greek manuscript of some portion of the New Testament will be found, let’s say a particularly early one, that has the Hebrew letters YHWH in some of the verses [of the “New Testament.”] When that happens, when evidence is at hand, biblical researchers will have to give due consideration to the views held by the NW [New World Translation] editors.”

Scriptures of the *New World Translation*.^{*} Appendix C2 lists verses that contain either direct quotations from or indirect references to scriptures that use the Tetragrammaton in the original Hebrew text of the “Old Testament.” Appendix C3 lists verses that do not contain a direct quotation from the “Old Testament” and provides reasons for restoring the divine name in those verses.

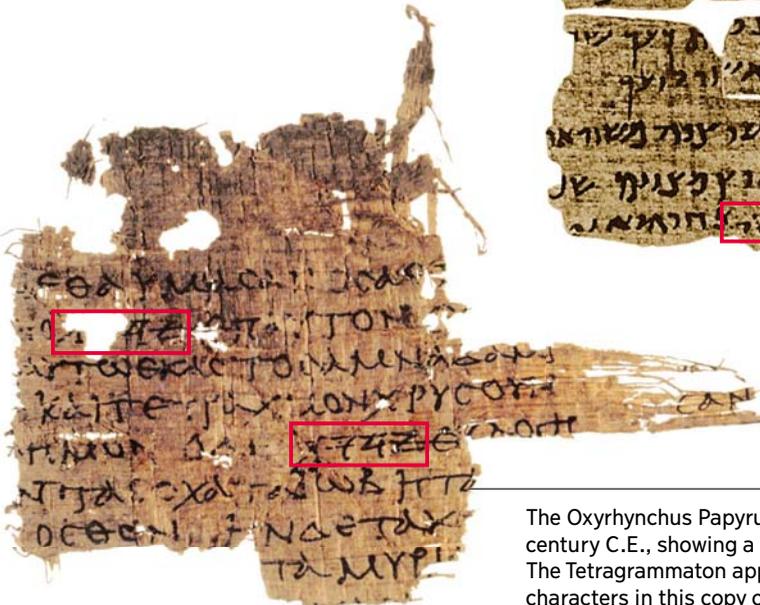
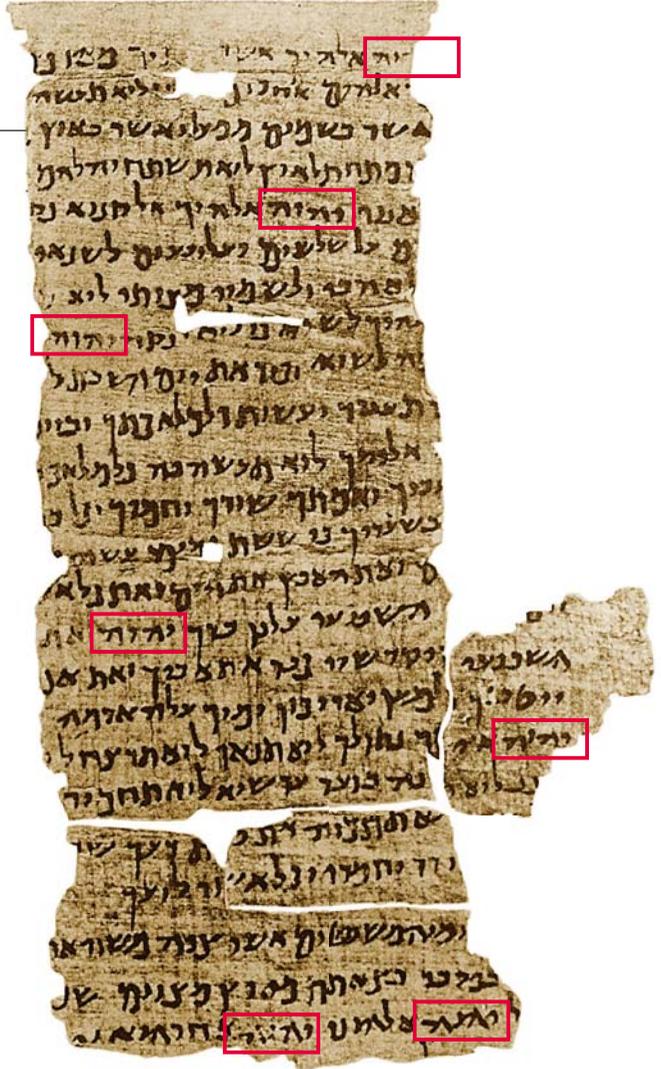
Appendix C4 provides a list of some of the translations of the “New Testament” that have restored the divine name in various verses.[#] (These are referred to in Appendixes C2 and C3.) Not only have some of these translations restored the divine name in direct quotations from the “Old Testament” but they have also restored that name in other verses where the context or other factors give a valid reason for doing so. None of these translations have been produced by Jehovah’s Witnesses.[^] Included in these are a number of translations that were made into Hebrew, as well as those made into many other languages. For ease of reference, these have been designated by the letter *J* followed by a number. For a list of over 120 languages and dialects in which the divine name can be found in the main text of the “New Testament,” or the Christian Greek Scriptures, see Appendix A5.

^{*} These lists cover only the Bible books published as of this printing in the online Study Edition.

[#] Also included in the list is a reference work that indicates that the words *Ky’ri-os* and *The-os’* are used as equivalents of the Tetragrammaton.

[^] Although Jehovah’s Witnesses printed an edition of *The Emphatic Diaglott* (J21), the translation was made by Benjamin Wilson.

Nash Papyrus, dated from the second or first century B.C.E., showing portions of Exodus and Deuteronomy. The divine name appears a number of times in the Hebrew text.



The Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 3522, dated from the first century C.E., showing a portion of the book of Job. The Tetragrammaton copy appears in ancient Hebrew characters in this copy of the Septuagint.

Verses Where the Name Jehovah Appears as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations

The following list shows some of the verses where the name Jehovah occurs in the main text of the Christian Greek Scriptures of the *New World Translation*. These verses contain either direct or indirect quotations from the original Hebrew text that uses the Tetragrammaton. Under the heading “Supporting References,”* a list is provided of Bible translations that have restored the divine name in a particular verse or that have indicated that this verse is a reference to Jehovah God. These translations into different languages use such renderings as Jehovah, Yahveh, Yahweh, יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton), LORD, and ADONAI in the main text. Or they otherwise, in footnotes and marginal notes, indicate that this is a reference to Jehovah God.

* A complete listing of the References J1-105 is found in Appendix C4.

MATTHEW

Verse	Quote or Reference	Supporting References
3:3	Isaiah 40:3	J1-4, 7-14, 16-18, 20, 22-24, 26, 28-35, 39-42, 46, 48, 49, 52, 53, 56, 57, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-96, 98, 100-102, 104, 105
4:4	Deuteronomy 8:3	J1-14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 31, 32, 37, 48, 65, 66, 94, 95, 100, 101
4:7	Deuteronomy 6:16	J1-14, 16-18, 20, 22-24, 28-41, 43, 45-50, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59-63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 98-105
4:10	Deuteronomy 6:13	J1-14, 16-18, 20, 22-24, 28-41, 43-50, 52, 54-57, 59-63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 98-105
5:33	Leviticus 19:12; Numbers 30:2; Deuteronomy 23:21	J1-4, 7-14, 16-18, 22, 23, 28-36, 38-40, 42, 43, 45-47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 56, 59, 60, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 105
21:9	Psalms 118:25, 26	J1-4, 16-18, 20-24, 28-36, 38-47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 60, 61, 63-66, 78, 88, 90, 93, 95, 96, 98-102, 104, 105

MATTHEW

Verse	Quote or Reference	Supporting References
21:42	Psalms 118:22, 23	J 1-4, 7-14, 16-18, 20-24, 28-36, 38, 40-43, 45-50, 52, 54, 57, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 78, 88, 90, 93-96, 98-102, 104, 105
22:37	Deuteronomy 6:5	J 1-14, 16-18, 20-24, 28-50, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59-63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 96, 98-105
22:44	Psalms 110:1	J 1-14, 16-18, 20-24, 27-36, 38-43, 45-47, 49, 50, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59-66, 71, 75, 76, 78, 79, 81, 84, 85, 88, 90, 93-96, 98, 100-102, 104, 105
23:39	Psalms 118:26	J 1, 3-14, 16-18, 21-24, 28-36, 39-43, 45-47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 78, 88, 90, 93, 95, 98, 100-102, 104, 105
27:10	Zechariah 11:13	J 1-4, 7-14, 16, 17, 22-24, 28-34, 36, 38-40, 42, 43, 45, 47, 49, 50, 52, 54, 57, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 78, 88, 90, 93-96, 98, 100-102, 104, 105

MARK

Verse	Quote or Reference	Supporting References
1:3	Isaiah 40:3	J 7-14, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 39-44, 46, 49, 52, 53, 56, 57, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 75, 88, 90, 93-96, 98, 100-102, 105
11:9	Psalms 118:25, 26	J 7, 8, 10-14, 16-18, 21-24, 28-35, 38-44, 46, 47, 49, 52, 53, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 92, 93, 95, 96, 98, 100-102, 104, 105
12:11	Psalms 118:22, 23	J 7-14, 16-18, 21-24, 28-36, 38, 40-44, 46, 47, 49, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 96, 98-105
12:29a	Deuteronomy 6:4	J 7-14, 16-18, 20-24, 27-44, 46-49, 52, 54-57, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 73, 80, 86, 88, 90-93, 95, 98, 100-105
12:29b	Deuteronomy 6:4	J 7-14, 16-18, 20-24, 28, 29, 31-33, 36, 38-43, 46, 47, 49, 52, 54, 57, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 80, 86, 88, 90, 92, 93, 95, 98-101, 103-105
12:30	Deuteronomy 6:5	J 7-14, 16-18, 21-24, 28-35, 37-44, 46-49, 52, 54-57, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 80, 88, 90, 92, 93, 95, 98-105
12:36	Psalms 110:1	J 7-14, 16-18, 21-24, 28-36, 38-44, 46, 47, 49, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59-61, 63, 64-66, 71, 75, 79-81, 85, 88, 90, 92-96, 98, 100-105

LUKE

Verse	Quote or Reference	Supporting References
2:23b	Exodus 13:2, 12	J 5-18, 22, 23, 28-36, 38-40, 42, 43, 46, 47, 49, 52, 55, 56, 58-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105
3:4	Isaiah 40:3	J 7-18, 22-24, 28-36, 39-44, 46, 48, 49, 52-57, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 98, 100-105
4:8	Deuteronomy 6:13	J 7-18, 22-24, 27-44, 46-49, 52, 54, 57, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 98, 100-105
4:12	Deuteronomy 6:16	J 7-18, 22-24, 28-44, 46-49, 52, 54, 57, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 98, 100-105
4:18	Isaiah 61:1	J 7-15, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 29-36, 38-41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 49, 52, 54-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 91, 93-96, 98, 100-105
4:19	Isaiah 61:2	J 7-18, 20, 22-24, 28-36, 38-40, 42, 43, 46, 47, 49, 52, 54, 55, 57, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 98, 100-104
10:27	Deuteronomy 6:5	J 5-18, 21-24, 27-41, 43, 44, 46-49, 52, 54, 55, 57, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 98, 100-103, 105
13:35	Psalms 118:26	J 7-18, 21-24, 27-36, 39-44, 46, 47, 49, 52, 54, 57, 60, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 96, 98, 100-102, 104, 105
19:38	Psalms 118:26	J 7-18, 21-24, 27-36, 38-44, 46-49, 52-54, 57-61, 64-66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 96, 100-102, 104, 105
20:42	Psalms 110:1	J 7-18, 21-24, 28-36, 38-43, 46, 47, 49, 52, 54, 56-61, 64-66, 71, 79-81, 85, 88, 90, 93-95, 98-105

JOHN

Verse	Quote or Reference	Supporting References
1:23	Isaiah 40:3	J 5-14, 16-19, 22-24, 28-36, 38-43, 46, 52, 56, 57, 59, 61, 65, 66, 75, 88, 90, 93-96, 98, 100-103, 105
6:45	Isaiah 54:13	J 7, 8, 10, 14, 17-20, 22, 23, 32, 37, 48, 65, 66, 90, 94, 95, 97, 100, 101
12:13	Psalms 118:25, 26	J 7-14, 16-19, 21-24, 28-36, 38-44, 46, 47, 52, 57, 59-61, 64-66, 72, 88, 90, 93, 95, 98, 100-102, 105
12:38b	Isaiah 53:1	J 7-14, 16-20, 22-24, 28-36, 38-43, 46-48, 52, 56, 59, 65, 66, 72, 88, 90, 93-95, 98, 100-102, 105

ACTS

Verse	Quote or Reference	Supporting References
2:20	Joel 2:31	J 7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 20, 22-24, 28-35, 38, 40, 42-44, 46, 47, 52, 54, 57, 60, 61, 65, 66, 88-90, 93-96, 100-103, 105
2:21	Joel 2:32	J 7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 20, 22-24, 28-35, 38, 40-44, 46, 48, 52, 54, 57, 61, 65, 66, 88-90, 93, 95, 96, 100-102, 105
2:25	Psalms 16:8	J 7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 20, 22, 23, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35, 38, 40-44, 46, 52, 54, 57, 60, 61, 66, 88-90, 93-95, 100-102, 105
2:34	Psalms 110:1	J 7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 21-24, 28-36, 38, 40-44, 46, 47, 52, 54, 57, 59-61, 64-66, 71, 73, 79-81, 85, 88-90, 93-96, 100-102, 105
3:22	Deuteronomy 18:15	J 7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 20, 22-24, 28-38, 40-44, 46-48, 51, 52, 54, 57, 59-61, 65, 66, 80, 88, 90, 93-95, 99-105
4:26	Psalms 2:2	J 7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 20, 22, 23, 28-36, 38, 40-43, 46, 47, 52, 54, 57, 59, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 99-102, 104, 105
7:49	Isaiah 66:1	J 11, 12, 14-18, 20, 22-24, 28-36, 38, 40-44, 46, 47, 52, 59, 61, 65, 66, 79, 80, 88, 90, 93-95, 99-103, 105
15:17b	Amos 9:12	J 7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 20, 22-24, 28-36, 38, 40-43, 47, 52, 57, 59, 61, 65, 66, 73, 81, 82, 88, 90, 93, 95, 96, 100-105

Verses Where the Name Jehovah Does Not Appear as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations

The following list shows the remaining verses where the name Jehovah occurs in the main text of the Christian Greek Scriptures of the *New World Translation*. These verses do not contain either a direct or an indirect quotation from the “Old Testament” that uses the Tetragrammaton. However, there are either strong contextual grounds or linguistic reasons for restoring the divine name in these verses. After each occurrence, reasons are provided for restoring the divine name in that particular verse.—See the section “Summary of Reasons for Restoring the Divine Name in the Christian Greek Scriptures.”

Under the heading “Support,” examples are given of **lexicons**, **reference works**, or **commentaries** that support the use of the divine name in a particular verse in the Christian Greek Scriptures, commonly called the New Testament, or that indicate that the verse makes reference to the divine name. Although some of these publications may reflect a belief in the unscriptural teaching of the Trinity, they do agree on the use of the divine name in certain verses.

This support also includes a number of **Bible translations** into different languages that use such renderings as Jehovah, Yahveh, Yahweh, יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton), LORD, and ADONAI in the main text or that otherwise, in footnotes and marginal notes, indicate that this is a reference to Jehovah God. Under the heading “Supporting References,” a list is provided of such Bible translations that have restored the divine name in a particular verse or that have indicated that this verse is a reference to Jehovah God. These translations may not always use the divine name in the same verses as the *New World Translation*, but they do use some form of the divine name

in the Christian Greek Scriptures. These translations have been designated by the letter *J* followed by a number. (The letter *J* stands for the name Jehovah.) The complete listing of these references is found in Appendix C4.

It should be noted, though, that the New World Bible Translation Committee did not rely on these translations as the basis for restoring the divine name in the Christian Greek Scriptures. Rather, these J-References provide proof that other translators have made similar decisions when using the divine name in their versions of the “New Testament.” For further background information, see Appendix C1.

Summary of Reasons for Restoring the Divine Name in the Christian Greek Scriptures

Factors to Consider:

- Is this wording **a quote from a verse in the Hebrew Scriptures** that contains the divine name? (See Appendix C2.)
- Does this involve **a Hebrew idiom or an expression** that normally includes the divine name? (For example, “Jehovah’s angel,” Mt 1:20)
- Does the divine name appear in **the context surrounding a quotation** taken from the Hebrew Scriptures? (For example, “spoken by Jehovah,” Mt 1:22; 2:15)
- In Greek, is **the definite article missing** from before *Ky’ri-os* (Lord), where it would normally be expected grammatically, thus indicating that a proper name may originally have appeared in the Greek text? (For example, Mr 13:20)
- Would the divine name have been used in the verse to **avoid ambiguity**? (For example, “all the things Jehovah has done for you,” Mr 5:19)

Verses Where the Divine Name Does Not Appear as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations in the Book of Matthew

MATTHEW 1:20

“Jehovah’s angel”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the term *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context indicates that the one referred to is God. The expression “Jehovah’s angel” occurs many times in Hebrew in the “Old Testament,” starting at Genesis 16:7. When “Jehovah’s angel” occurs in early copies of the Greek *Septuagint*, a translation of the “Old Testament,” the Greek word *ag’ge·los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written with Hebrew characters. That is how this expression is handled at Zechariah 3:5, 6 in a copy of the Greek *Septuagint* found in Nahal Hever, Israel, which some scholars have dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. It is noteworthy that when later copies of the Greek *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky’ri-os* in this and many other verses, the definite article was not included before *Ky’ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. So the Hebrew Scripture background and the unexpected absence of the definite article indicate that *Ky’ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name, and therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.

Support:

- *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, revised and edited by F. W. Danker, 2000, (pp. 576-577) lists Matthew 1:20, 24; 2:13, 19; 28:2 under the definition of “lord” as “a designation of God.” It goes on to say: “Without the art[icle] . . . , like a personal name.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Matthew 1:20, 24; 2:13, 19; 28:2

as verses where *Ky'ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”

- *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 44 says of this verse: “We have no article with [the Greek words *ag'ge-los Ky-ri'ou*, “Lord's angel”], and thus this is one of Yahweh's angels . . . We may well assume that this angel is Gabriel, the same one who appeared to Mary, ‘the Mighty One of Jehovah,’ or, ‘Hero of Jehovah.’”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on this verse (as well as in footnotes on Matthew 1:24 and 2:13): “‘Lord’ without the article, signifying, as often, ‘Jehovah.’”
- *The Restored New Testament*, by Willis Barnstone, 2009, states in a footnote on the expression “an angel of the Lord”: “From the Greek . . . (*angelos kyriou*), from the Hebrew . . . (*malakh yahweh*), . . . A literal rendering would be *Yahweh's malakh* or ‘messenger.’” In the main text of Matthew 28:2, this translation reads: “An angel of Yahweh.”
- *The Complete Jewish Bible*, by David H. Stern, 1998, uses capital and small capitals for the word “ADONAI” in this verse. In the introduction to this Bible, the translator explains: “The word ‘ADONAI’ is used . . . wherever I, as the translator, believe ‘*ku-rios*’ is the Greek representation of the tetragrammaton.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD in the main text of Matthew 1:20 and adds this footnote: “the LORD = Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 3, 4, 7-14, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-41, 43, 45-52, 55, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-96, 100-102, 104, 105

MATTHEW 1:22

“spoken by Jehovah”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the term *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context indicates that the one referred to is God. The quotation that

immediately follows (Matthew 1:23) is taken from Isaiah 7:14, which is the prophetic message spoken by Jehovah through Isaiah. Also, it is noteworthy that in this verse the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky'ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. So the Hebrew Scripture background and the unexpected absence of the definite article indicate that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Matthew 1:22 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 52 says of this verse: “The formula here used: ‘in order that it be fulfilled what was spoken by the Lord (Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] for Yahweh) through the prophet,’ is used almost constantly by Matthew throughout his Gospel with only occasional variation. . . . The actual speaker thus is Yahweh, and the prophet the medium or mouthpiece through (διὰ [*di-a'*]) which he speaks.”
- *The 'Holy Scriptures,'* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on this verse and on Matthew 2:15: “‘Lord’ without the article, signifying, as often, ‘Jehovah.’”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD in the main text of Matthew 1:22 and adds this explanation in Appendix 98: “Used of Jehovah . . . and printed ‘LORD’ throughout.”
- *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, 1985, by Vine, Unger, and White, makes this comment on the use of the divine name in this verse: “*Kurios* is the Sept. and NT representative of Heb. Jehovah (‘LORD’ in Eng. versions), see Matt. 4:7; Jas. 5:11, e.g., of *adon*, Lord, Matt. 22:44, and of *Adonay*, Lord, 1:22.”
- *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, 2006, by William D. Mounce, makes this definition under listing number 3261: “*Kyrios* . . . the Lord, Jehovah, Mt. 1:22.”

Supporting References:

J¹⁻⁴, 7-14, 16-18, 22-24, 26, 28-36, 38-41, 43, 45-50, 52, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105

MATTHEW

Verse		Reason(s)	Supporting References
1:24	“the angel of Jehovah”	See comment on Matthew 1:20.	J ¹⁻⁴ , 7-14, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-41, 43, 45-50, 52, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105
2:13	“Jehovah’s angel”	See comment on Matthew 1:20.	J ¹⁻⁴ , 6-14, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 39, 40, 43, 45-50, 52, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105
2:15	“spoken by Jehovah”	The quotation that immediately follows in this verse is taken from Hosea 11:1, and Hosea 11:11 clearly shows that this is a statement made by Jehovah God.—See comment on Matthew 1:22.	J ¹ , 3, 4, 6-14, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-41, 43, 45-50, 52, 59, 61-63, 65, 66, 88, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105
2:19	“Jehovah’s angel”	See comment on Matthew 1:20.	J ¹⁻⁴ , 6-14, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-40, 43, 45-50, 52, 59-61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105
28:2	“Jehovah’s angel”	See comment on Matthew 1:20.	J ¹⁻⁴ , 7-13, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38, 40, 41, 43, 45-47, 49-52, 55, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105

Verses Where the Divine Name Does Not Appear as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations in the Book of Mark

MARK 5:19

“things Jehovah has done”

Reason(s): Although most Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*ho Ky’ri-os*) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context shows that *Ky’ri-os* is used with reference to God. Speaking to the man who had been healed, Jesus is attributing the miracle, not to himself, but to his heavenly Father. In recording the same event, Luke (8:39) uses the Greek word *The-os*’ (God), supporting the thought that *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) at Mark 5:19 is used with reference to God. Additionally, the phrases “the things . . . done for you” and “mercy . . . shown you” have a bearing on the matter, as corresponding Hebrew verbs are often used in the Hebrew Scriptures, along with the divine name, with reference to Jehovah’s dealings with humans.—Genesis 21:1; Exodus 13:8; Deuteronomy 4:34; 13:17; 30:3; 1 Samuel 12:7; 25:30; 2 Kings 13:23.

Support:

- *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, revised and edited by F. W. Danker, 2000, (pp. 576-577) lists Mark 5:19 under the definition of “lord” as “a designation of God.” It goes on to say concerning the use of the expression in the *Septuagint* [LXX]: “It freq. [frequently] replaces the name Yahweh in the MT [Masoretic Text].”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Mark 5:19 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is possibly “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Gospel According to St Mark* (The Greek Text With Introduction Notes and Indices), by Henry Barclay Swete, 1902,

gives יהוה (YHWH, or the Tetragrammaton) as one possible rendering.

- *The Interpretation of St. Mark's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 216 says of this verse: “Ο Κύριος [*Ho Ky'ri-os*] is Yahweh, the Old Testament name for the covenant God. . . . The man himself and all who hear his message are to know that Jehovah has come into their land and has done this great deed through his servant Jesus.”
- In the book *The Principles and Practice of New Testament Textual Criticism*, G. D. Kilpatrick lists Mark 5:19 as an occurrence where “Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] = Yahweh.”
- *The Complete Jewish Bible*, by David H. Stern, 1998, uses capital and small capitals for the word “ADONAI” in this verse. In the introduction to this Bible, the translator explains: “The word ‘ADONAI’ is used . . . wherever I, as the translator, believe ‘ku-rios’ is the Greek representation of the tetragrammaton.”
- *The Gospel According to St. Mark: The Greek Text With Introduction, Notes, and Indexes*, by Vincent Taylor, 1952, on page 285 says that this occurrence of *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) “is used of God.”
- In his book *The Gospel According to Mark*, 1858, Joseph Addison Alexander expresses his opinion that the “ambiguous expression,” “*the Lord*,” in this verse describes Christ. However, he goes on to acknowledge that “the hearers may have understood [this expression] more vaguely, as denoting God, perhaps with special reference to his covenant relations with his people, as expressed by the Hebrew name *Jehovah*, for which the constant equivalent or rather substitute both in the Septuagint and the New Testament is (ο κύριος) the Lord.”

Supporting References:

J 7-10, 13, 17, 18, 22, 28-32, 34, 36, 41, 44, 52, 63, 93-96, 100, 104, 105

MARK 13:20

“unless Jehovah had cut short the days”

Reason(s): Although most Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the

main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context shows that *Ky'ri-os* is used with reference to God, since Jesus was explaining to his disciples what his Father will do during the great tribulation. The wording of Jesus' prophecy here is similar to that of prophetic statements in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name is used. (Isaiah 1:9; 65:8; Jeremiah 46:28 [26:28, *Septuagint*]; Amos 9:8) In these four prophetic verses where the Hebrew text contains the Tetragrammaton, existing copies of the *Septuagint* use *Ky'ri-os* without the definite article, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage. Similarly, scholars have noted the unexpected lack of the definite article before *Ky'ri-os* at Mark 13:20. This is another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, revised and edited by F. W. Danker, 2000, (pp. 576-577) lists Mark 13:20 under the definition of “lord” as “a designation of God.” It goes on to say: “Without the article] . . . , like a personal name.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Mark 13:20 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- In the book *The Principles and Practice of New Testament Textual Criticism*, G. D. Kilpatrick lists Mark 13:20 as an occurrence where “Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] = Yahweh.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on “Lord” in this verse: “Without the article, ‘Jehovah.’”
- *The Gospel According to St Mark* (The Greek Text With Introduction Notes and Indices), by Henry Barclay Swete, 1902, gives יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton) as one possible rendering.
- *The Gospel According to St. Mark: The Greek Text With Introduction, Notes, and Indexes*, by Vincent Taylor, 1952, on page 514 says of this occurrence of *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) in the Greek text: “Here the idea found in many apocalyptic writings, that in His mercy and for the sake of the elect God has shortened

the period of tribulation for mankind . . . is strongly expressed.” Taylor goes on to say on page 515: “The use of the anarthrous *Κύριος* is characteristic of [Old Testament] quotations.”

- In his expositional commentary *The Gospel of Mark*, 1994, (p. 378) D. Edmond Hiebert makes this comment on Mark 13:20: “*The Lord*, Jehovah God of the Old Covenant, is in sovereign control of the affairs of this world, and He has graciously decreed a limitation on those days.”
- *The Gospel According to Mark*, by scholar Joseph Addison Alexander, 1858, says of Mark 13:20: “*The Lord*, the Sovereign God, Jehovah.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD in the main text of Mark 13:20 and adds this explanation in Appendix 98: “Used of Jehovah . . . and printed ‘LORD’ throughout.”
- *The Holy Bible, Containing the Authorized Version of the Old and New Testaments*, by J. T. Conquest, 1841, capitalizes LORD in the main text of Mark 13:20.
- The following English translations use “God” instead of “Lord” at Mark 13:20: *The Complete Jewish Bible, A Translator’s Translation of the New Testament, The Expanded Bible, and The Word New Century Version, New Testament*.
- *A Translator’s Handbook on the Gospel of Mark*, produced by the United Bible Societies, says regarding this verse: “‘The Lord’: here, of course, God.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 39-43, 46-48, 52, 61, 63, 65, 88, 90, 92-97, 100-102, 104

Verses Where the Divine Name Does Not Appear as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations in the Book of Luke

LUKE 1:6

“the commandments and legal requirements of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Although existing Greek manuscripts read “of the Lord” (*tou Ky-ri’ou*) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context shows that *Ky’ri-os* is used with reference to God. The first two chapters of Luke’s account are rich with references to and allusions to expressions and passages in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. For example, the phrase “commandments and legal requirements” and similar combinations of legal terms can be found in the Hebrew Scriptures in contexts where the divine name is used or where Jehovah is speaking. (Genesis 26:2, 5; Numbers 36:13; Deuteronomy 4:40; Ezekiel 36:23, 27) It is worth noting that these two Greek legal terms occur in the *Septuagint* at Deuteronomy 27:10. In an early papyrus fragment of the Greek *Septuagint* (in the collection Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266) showing parts of the verse, the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters. This fragment is dated to the first century B.C.E. The Hebrew Scripture background for these terms related to Jehovah’s standards is an indication that *Ky’ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- *A Translator’s Handbook on the Gospel of Luke*, produced by the United Bible Societies (1971) and written by J. Reiling and J. L. Swellengrebel, makes this comment on Luke 1:6: “‘The Lord,’ following Septuagint usage, where *kurios* renders Hebrew *’adonay* when standing for Yahweh. It has this meaning in all occurrences in chs. 1 and 2 (except 1:43 and 2:11), and in 5:17.”

- *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 1982, (Vol. 2, p. 508) states: “Greek *kyrios* is usually translated ‘Lord’ in the English versions and is the equivalent of Heb. *YHWH* in the LXX [*Septuagint*] . . . ‘Lord’ may denote God (the Father; Mt. 5:33; Lk. 1:6).”
- *A Theology of Luke’s Gospel and Acts*, by Darrell L. Bock, 2011, (p. 126) states: “The common *κύριος* (*kyrios*) has its roots in the LXX [*Septuagint*] name for Yahweh. This usage is especially prominent in the infancy section [of Luke’s account], appearing twenty five times.”
- *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, revised and edited by F. W. Danker, 2000, (pp. 576-577) lists Luke 1:6, 9, 28, 46; 2:15, 22 under the definition of “lord” as “a designation of God.” It goes on to say concerning the use of the expression in the *Septuagint* (LXX): “It [frequently] replaces the name Yahweh in the MT [Masoretic Text].” It also lists Luke 1:17, 58 after the following explanation: “Without the art[icle] . . . , like a personal name.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:6, 9, 15, 16, 17, 25, 28, 32, 38, 45, 46, 58, 66, 68; 2:9b, 15, 22, 23a, b, 24, 26, 39; 3:4; 4:8, 12, 18, 19; 5:17; 10:21, 27; 13:35; 19:38; 20:37, 42a as verses where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of Luke 1:6: “As often in the rest of the infancy narrative, *kyrios* is here used of Yahweh. . . . The rest of the phrase is formulated in imitation of OT [Old Testament] expressions.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 40 says of this verse: “‘Walking in all the commandments and legal ordinances of the Lord (i.e., Jehovah) blameless.’ The [Greek words rendered “commandments and legal ordinances (requirements)”] remind us of the commandments and statutes of Jehovah recorded in Deut. 4:1, 40; 6:2.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD in the main text of

Luke 1:6 and adds this explanation in the margin: “The LORD. Must here and elsewhere be often rendered Jehovah.”

- The *Complete Jewish Bible*, by David H. Stern, 1998, uses capital and small capitals for the word “ADONAI” in this verse and most of the other verses where “Jehovah” appears in the text of Luke in the *New World Translation*. In the introduction to the *Complete Jewish Bible*, the translator explains: “The word ‘ADONAI’ is used . . . wherever I, as the translator, believe ‘kurios’ is the Greek representation of the tetragrammaton.”

Supporting References:

J 7-17, 23, 28-35, 37-40, 42-44, 46-49, 52, 58-60, 65, 66, 88, 93-97, 100-102, 105

LUKE 1:9

“sanctuary of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “of the Lord” (*tou Ky-ri’ou*) here; a few manuscripts read “of God.” However, as mentioned in the comment on Luke 1:6, the first two chapters of Luke’s account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. Although existing Greek manuscripts use *Ky’ri-os* here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Hebrew Scriptures, expressions corresponding to the combination “sanctuary [or “temple”] of Jehovah” often include the Tetragrammaton. (Numbers 19:20; 2 Kings 18:16; 23:4; 24:13; 2 Chronicles 26:16; 27:2; Jeremiah 24:1; Ezekiel 8:16; Haggai 2:15) Therefore, the Hebrew Scripture background for this expression is an indication that *Ky’ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:9 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 43 says of this verse: “Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] is the translation of *Yahweh*.”

- *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*, by Philip W. Comfort, 2008, makes this comment on Luke 1:9: “‘The Lord’ in this verse is not ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’ but ‘Yahweh.’”

Supporting References:

J 7-18, 22, 23, 28-36, 38-40, 42-44, 46-49, 52, 59, 60, 65, 66, 88, 93, 95, 100-102, 105

LUKE 1:11

“Jehovah’s angel”

Reason(s): This expression occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures, starting at Genesis 16:7. When it occurs in early copies of the Greek *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag’ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. It is noteworthy that when later copies of the *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) in this and many other verses, the Greek definite article was often not included where standard grammatical usage would normally call for it. The absence of the definite article here and in other verses may therefore be another indication that *Ky’ri-os* is used as a substitute for the divine name.—See comment on Matthew 1:20.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:11 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of Luke 1:11: “‘The angel of the Lord’ also appears to the barren wife of Manoah, the father of Samson in Judg 13:3. . . . The Greek phrase *angelos kyriou* is a Semitism, reflecting the Hebrew construct chain, *mal’ak Yhwh*, ‘messenger of Yahweh,’ as the lack of Greek def[inite] art[icle]s reveals. This is the exalted OT [Old Testament] figure who appears at times to be indistinguishable from Yahweh himself.”

Supporting References:

J 7-13, 16-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-43, 46-49, 52, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-103, 105

LUKE 1:15

“in the sight of Jehovah”

Reason(s): As mentioned in the comment on Luke 1:6, the first two chapters of Luke’s account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. Most existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) in this verse; a few manuscripts read “God.” However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The context shows that *Ky’ri-os* is here used with reference to God. The Greek expression *e-no’pi-on Ky’ri’ou* (lit., “in sight of [before] Lord”) reflects a Hebrew idiom and occurs over 100 times in existing copies of the *Septuagint* as a translation of Hebrew phrases where the Tetragrammaton is used in the original text. (Judges 11:11; 1 Samuel 10:19; 2 Samuel 5:3; 6:5) The Hebrew Scripture background for this expression is an indication that *Ky’ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:15 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 46 says of this verse: “In the sight of the Lord’ (*Yahweh*, as before).”
- *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*, by Philip W. Comfort, 2008, says of Luke 1:15: “The Lord here is Yahweh, not the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of Luke 1:15: “John’s greatness (see Luke 7:28) is here measured in terms of the *Kyrios*, who in this context is to be understood as Yahweh.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:15: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10-18, 22, 23, 28-36, 38-43, 46-49, 52, 53, 59, 60, 65, 66, 73, 88, 93-95, 100-102, 104

LUKE 1:16

“turn back many of the sons
of Israel to Jehovah their God”

Reason(s): Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The angel's message to Zechariah (verses 13-17) strongly reflects language used in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, the combination of *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) and *The-os'* (God) along with a personal pronoun (here rendered “Jehovah their God”) is common in quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures. (Compare the expression “Jehovah your God” at Luke 4:8, 12; 10:27.) In the Hebrew Scriptures, the combination “Jehovah their God” occurs over 30 times, whereas the expression “the Lord their God” is never used. Also, the term “the sons of Israel,” used many times in the Hebrew Scriptures, reflects a Hebrew idiom meaning “the people of Israel” or “the Israelites.” (Genesis 36:31, footnote) A Greek expression similar to the one used here for “turn back [someone] to Jehovah” is used in the *Septuagint* at 2 Chronicles 19:4 as a translation of the Hebrew phrase “to bring [people] back to Jehovah.”—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:16 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 48 says of this verse: “Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] is *Yahweh* as it was before.”
- *A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Luke*, produced by the United Bible Societies (1971) and written by J. Reiling and J. L. Swellengrebel, comments on Luke 1:16: “Here and [Luke] 1:32, 68 in passages strongly reminiscent of the Old Testament. The term is, therefore, to be understood from the Old Testament background as the Greek rendering of *Yahweh 'Elohim* in which *Yahweh* is a proper name and *'Elohim* a class noun.”

- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of Luke 1:16: “Fitted out with prophetic spirit and power, John will become Yahweh’s instrument to convert Israel from its estrangement. . . . Here *Kyrios* clearly refers to Yahweh.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:16: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 7-18, 22-24, 28-43, 46-49, 52-55, 57, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 97, 100-105

LUKE 1:17

“get ready for Jehovah a prepared people”

Reason(s): The angel’s words to Zechariah (verses 13-17) contain allusions to such verses as Malachi 3:1; 4:5, 6; and Isaiah 40:3, where the divine name is used. (See comments on Luke 1:15, 16.) Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, the Hebrew Scripture background provides good reasons for using the divine name in the text. Additionally, an expression similar to the Greek phrase for “to get ready . . . a people” can be found in the *Septuagint* at 2 Samuel 7:24, where the Hebrew text reads: “You established your people Israel . . . , O Jehovah.”—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:17 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) makes these comments on Luke 1:17: “Go before him. I.e. before Yahweh, as the messenger of Mal 3:1. . . . In Mal [4:5, 6] he is identified as the messenger to be sent before ‘the great and awesome day of Yahweh’ (cf. Mal 3:2). . . . It is in this sense that the angel now tells Zechariah that his son John is to go before the Lord (= Yahweh). See Luke 1:76. . . . to make ready a people fit for the Lord. The first part of the clause is an OT [Old Testament] expression, ‘to make ready a people’ (2 Sam 7:24).”
- The French reference work *Évangile Selon Saint Luc* (The Gospel According to St. Luke), by M. J. Lagrange, 1921, says of Luke

1:17: “Κυρίῳ [form of *Ky’ri-os*] without the article corresponds to *lahvé*.”

- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:17: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 7-18, 22-24, 28-36, 39, 40-44, 46-49, 52, 53, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 100-105

LUKE 1:25

“Jehovah has dealt with me”

Reason(s): Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. Here Elizabeth expresses her gratitude in a way that may bring to mind Sarah’s experience as described at Genesis 21:1, in which verse the divine name occurs. To describe Jehovah’s dealings with humans, the Hebrew Scriptures often use the corresponding Hebrew verb for “has dealt with me” (or, “has done for me”) along with the divine name. (Exodus 13:8; Deuteronomy 4:34; 1 Samuel 12:7; 25:30) Also, before *Ky’ri-os* there is no Greek definite article, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. Elizabeth’s comment about how her reproach of being childless was taken away echoes the words of Rachel, recorded at Genesis 30:23.—See comments on Mark 5:19 and Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:25 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 58 says of this verse: “The Lord (*Yahweh* as before, with or without the article).”
- *Word Biblical Commentary*, by John Nolland, 1989, (Vol. 35A, p. 34) explains this about Luke 1:25: “Elizabeth expresses her wonderment at God’s graciousness to her in terms reminiscent of the experience of Sarah (Gen 21:1) and Rachel (Gen 30:23). . . . The infancy narratives are reported with almost constant

echoing of OT [Old Testament] items: what happens here is to be understood in terms of what happened there.”

- The French reference work *Évangile Selon Saint Luc* (The Gospel According to St. Luke), by M. J. Lagrange, 1921, says of Luke 1:25: “The critical editions omit the article in front of Κύριος [Ky’ri-os], which here stands for Iahvé.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:25: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 7-18, 22, 23, 28-36, 38-44, 46, 47, 52-54, 59, 60, 65, 66, 90, 93-95, 100-105

LUKE 1:28

“Jehovah is with you”

Reason(s): This and similar phrases that include the divine name often occur in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Ruth 2:4; 2 Samuel 7:3; 2 Chronicles 15:2; Jeremiah 1:19) The angel’s greeting to Mary is similar to the words used when Jehovah’s angel addressed Gideon at Judges 6:12: “Jehovah is with you, you mighty warrior.” Although existing Greek manuscripts use the term “the Lord” (*ho Ky’ri-os*) at Luke 1:28, the Hebrew Scripture background for this expression is an indication that *Ky’ri-os* is here a substitute for the divine name.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:28 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 62 says of this verse: “The fact that a godly Jewess enjoyed *Yahweh’s* grace (ὁ Κύριος [*ho Ky’ri-os*] as before) and helpful presence needed no angelic announcement.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of this expression at Luke 1:28: “*The Lord is with you!* This is a frequently used OT [Old Testament] phrase, but it occurs as a greeting only in two places in the OT, Ruth 2:4 and Judg 6:12.

. . . In the OT the phrase often expresses Yahweh’s help and assistance and carries a military connotation. Obviously, *kyrios* here is to be understood of Yahweh.”

- *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, by W. Robertson Nicoll, 2002, (Vol. I, p. 463) makes this comment on Luke 1:28: “The Lord (Jehovah) *is* or *be* with thee.”

Supporting References:

J 5, 7-18, 22, 23, 32-36, 38-44, 46, 48, 52, 59, 60, 64, 65, 88, 94, 95, 100-105

LUKE 1:32

“Jehovah God will give him the throne”

Reason(s): As mentioned in the comment on Luke 1:6, the first two chapters of Luke’s account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. Although existing Greek manuscripts use the expression *Ky’ri-os ho The-os’*, literally, “Lord the God,” there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The angel’s words about “the throne of David” are an allusion to the promise at 2 Samuel 7:12, 13, 16, where Jehovah is speaking to David through the prophet Nathan and where the Tetragrammaton occurs several times in the immediate context. (2 Samuel 7:4-16) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the expression here rendered “Jehovah God” and similar combinations occur mainly in quotes from the Hebrew Scriptures or in passages reflecting Hebrew language style. “Jehovah God,” not “the Lord God,” is the standard combination used in the Hebrew Scriptures, and this expression occurs about 40 times. Including such similar combinations as “Jehovah [my; our; your; his; their] God” or “Jehovah the God of . . .” would bring the number of occurrences to over 800. It is true that later copies of the *Septuagint* used the combination *Ky’ri-os ho The-os’* (Lord the God) as the equivalent of the Hebrew expression for “Jehovah God.” However, a vellum leaf dated to the third century C.E. containing a portion of the *Septuagint* translation of Genesis (Papyrus Oxyrhynchus vii. 1007) renders the divine name in the expression “Jehovah God” at Genesis 2:8, 18, not by *Ky’ri-os*, but by an abbreviation of the Tetragrammaton in the form of a doubling of the Hebrew letter *yod* written as יי. It is also interesting

to note that when the combinations “Jehovah your God” and “Jehovah his God” occur at Deuteronomy 18:5, 7 in an early fragment of the *Septuagint* (in the collection Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266), the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters within the Greek text. This fragment is dated to the first century B.C.E. So in view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the divine name has been used in the main text.—See comments on Luke 1:6, 16.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:32 as a verse where *Ky'-ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 101 says of Luke 1:68: “Κύριος ὁ Θεός [*Ky'ri-os ho The-os*] is the same as it was in v. 16 and 32, the Greek for *Yahweh Elohim*.”
- *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, 2002, (Vol. 1, pp. 331-332) makes this comment on Luke 1:32: **“Most High . . . the Lord God (1:32)**. Both of these are Greek translations of Old Testament names for God. The first is from *El Elyon*, ‘God Most High,’ and the second from *Yahweh Elohim*, ‘Yahweh God.’”
- *New Testament Commentary*, by William Hendriksen, 2007, comments on the expression “the Most High” found at Luke 1:32: “The first use of the designation which stresses Jehovah's majesty and sovereignty is found in Gen. 14:18.”
- *The Moody Bible Commentary*, by Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham, 2014, says with regard to Luke 1:31-33: **“The Lord God** (Yahweh of the OT [Old Testament]).”
- *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler, 2011, says with regard to Luke 1:32: “‘Most High’ translates the Heb ‘El Elyon’ or ‘YHWH Elyon.’”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on the expression “Lord God” at Luke 1:32: “Jehovah Elohim: only occurrence in the Gospels.”

Supporting References:

LUKE 1:38

“Jehovah’s slave girl”

Reason(s): With these words, Mary echoes expressions of other servants of Jehovah mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Hannah says in her prayer recorded at 1 Samuel 1:11: “O Jehovah of armies, if you look upon the affliction of your servant [or, “slave girl”].” At 1 Samuel 1:11, the *Septuagint* uses the same Greek word for “slave girl” as is used in Luke’s account. Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) at Luke 1:38, the divine name is used in the main text of this verse in view of the context (*Ky’ri-os* refers to God) and the Hebrew Scripture background. Additionally, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky’ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. This is another indication that *Ky’ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:38 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 76 says of this verse: “Mary pronounces herself ‘the slave-maid’ of *Yahweh* (Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] as throughout this chapter). She is Jehovah’s willing property for him to use as he in his covenant grace desires; she declares this of herself.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of this expression at Luke 1:38: “Mary is made to identify herself with the OT [Old Testament] term used by Hannah in 1 Sam 1:11, expressive of her lowly condition before Yahweh, who is here the *Kyrios*.” The same volume on p. 203 makes this point: “Elizabeth is made to refer to Mary as ‘the mother of my Lord’ in 1:43, whereas Mary in calling herself the ‘handmaid of the Lord’ (1:38) is rather referring to Yahweh with this title.”
- *The Gospel of Luke—A Commentary on the Greek Text* (The New International Greek Testament Commentary), by I. H. Marshall, 1978, says that at Luke 1:38, *Ky’ri-os* “can be used without the article since it is tantamount to a proper name.”

- *The 'Holy Scriptures,'* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:38: "Jehovah."

Supporting References:

J 5, 7-18, 22-24, 28-35, 38-40, 42, 43, 46, 47, 52, 53, 55, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105

LUKE 1:45

"things spoken to her from Jehovah"

Reason(s): The things spoken to Mary by the angel had their origin with Jehovah God. The Greek expression *pa-ra' Ky-ri'ou*, here rendered "from Jehovah," occurs in existing copies of the *Septuagint* as a translation of Hebrew expressions in which the divine name is typically used. (Genesis 24:50; Judges 14:4; 1 Samuel 1:20; Isaiah 21:10; Jeremiah 11:1; 18:1; 21:1) As in other occurrences of *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) in Luke chapter 1, scholars have noted that the unexpected absence of a definite article before *Ky'ri-os* makes the term tantamount to a proper name. Also, when the equivalent of this Greek expression occurs at Deuteronomy 18:16 in an early fragment of the *Septuagint* (Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266), the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters within the Greek text. This fragment is dated to the first century B.C.E. Although existing Greek manuscripts of Luke's Gospel use the word *Ky'ri-os* here, the context and the Hebrew Scripture background provide good reasons for using the divine name in the main text.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:45 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is "used of Yahweh."
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 82 says of this verse: "The completion of all that was thus spoken 'from the Lord' (*Yahweh*) through the angel."
- *The 'Holy Scriptures,'* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:45: "Jehovah."

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-43, 46, 47, 52, 53, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105

LUKE 1:46**“My soul magnifies Jehovah”**

Reason(s): These words of Mary may echo passages in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as Psalm 34:3 and 69:30, where the divine name is used in the same verse or in the context. (Psalm 69:31) In these verses, the same Greek word for “magnify” (*me-ga-ly’no*) is used in the *Septuagint*. It is worth noting that one fragment of a parchment roll (P. Vindobonensis Greek 39777, dated to the third or fourth century C.E.) contains, according to Symmachus’ Greek translation, part of Psalm 69 (68 in the *Septuagint*). At Psalm 69:13, 30, 31, this fragment renders the divine name using, not *Ky’ri-os*, but the Tetragrammaton written in archaic Hebrew characters (יהוה or יהוה). This evidence, along with the Hebrew Scripture background, supports using the divine name.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:46 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 84 says of this verse: “Already Mary’s first line announces her theme: she magnifies *Yahweh* (Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*]).”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of this phrase at Luke 1:46: “It expresses praise and thanksgiving for *Yahweh*’s greatness and majesty which are recognized as the source of the blessings that have come to Mary.” A note on the expression “God my Savior” found at Luke 1:47 says: “This phrase is parallel to ‘Lord’ in v. 46, showing that *kyrios* there is to be understood of *Yahweh*, the source of blessing to Mary.”
- *New Testament Commentary*, by William Hendriksen, 2007, makes this comment on Luke 1:46-48: “Mary says, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord,’ that is, proclaims the greatness of *Jehovah*.”

Supporting References:

LUKE 1:58**“Jehovah had magnified his mercy”**

Reason(s): The expression rendered “that Jehovah had magnified his mercy to her” reflects a typical Hebrew way of expressing things and evidently echoes the wording of Genesis 19:18-20. There Lot is addressing Jehovah, saying: “Jehovah! . . . You are showing great kindness to me [lit., “You are magnifying your kindness”].” The context, as well as the Hebrew Scripture background, supports the use of the divine name in this verse.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:58 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 94 says of this verse: “Yahweh considered Elizabeth’s grief over her barrenness.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:58: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 32-35, 38-44, 46, 52, 55, 59, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 95, 97, 100-102, 104

LUKE 1:66**“The hand of Jehovah”**

Reason(s): This phrase is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “hand” and the Tetragrammaton. (Exodus 9:3; Numbers 11:23; Judges 2:15; Ruth 1:13; 1 Samuel 5:6, 9; 7:13; 12:15; 1 Kings 18:46; Ezra 7:6; Job 12:9; Isaiah 19:16; 40:2; Ezekiel 1:3) Although existing Greek manuscripts of Luke’s Gospel use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) in this verse, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text in view of this Hebrew Scripture background. In connection with Luke 1:66, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky’ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. This is

noteworthy because even though the earliest copies of the *Septuagint* contained the divine name, when later copies of the *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky'ri-os*, the definite article was in a similar way often not included, where standard grammatical usage would call for it. This unexpected absence of the definite article before *Ky'ri-os* is another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name. The Greek expression rendered “hand of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s hand”) also occurs at Acts 11:21; 13:11.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:66 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 98 says of this verse: “‘The Lord’s hand’ is his directing and upholding power, and Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] is *Yahweh*.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of this expression at Luke 1:66: “There is little doubt that *kyri-os* here refers to *Yahweh*.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:66: “*Jehovah*.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 28-35, 38-44, 46, 47, 49, 52, 55, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-97, 100-102, 104

LUKE 1:68

“Let Jehovah be praised, the God of Israel”

Reason(s): This expression of praise is common in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it is often used with the divine name. (1 Samuel 25:32; 1 Kings 1:48; 8:15; Psalm 41:13; 72:18; 106:48) Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The context shows that *Ky'ri-os* is used with reference to “the God of Israel.” This fact together with the Hebrew Scripture background of this phrase is an indication that *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) is used here as a substitute for the divine name.—See comment on Luke 1:6, 16.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:68 as a verse where *Ky'-ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 101 says of this verse: “Κύριος ὁ Θεός [*Ky'-ri-os ho The-os'*] is the same as it was in v. 16 and 32, the Greek for *Yahweh Elohim*.”
- *A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Luke*, produced by the United Bible Societies (1971) and written by J. Reiling and J. L. Swellengrebel, comments on Luke 1:68: “Because of the Old Testament background of the phrase it is best to understand *kurios* as representing the name *Yahweh* and not as a title.”
- *New Testament Commentary*, by William Hendriksen, 2007, comments on Luke 1:68: “Zechariah begins with a doxology. He praises *Jehovah*.”
- *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, edited by Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy, 1968, says with regard to Zechariah's speech that starts to be recorded at Luke 1:68: “The hymn blesses *Yahweh* for what he has achieved of salvation.”
- *The Scofield Reference Bible*, by C. I. Scofield, 1909, says in a marginal note on Luke 1:68: “*Jehovah*. *Psa. 106.48*.”
- *The 'Holy Scriptures,'* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:68: “*Jehovah*.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 27-44, 46-49, 52-55, 57, 59-61, 64-66, 73, 88, 90, 93-95, 97, 100-105

LUKE 1:76**“go ahead of *Jehovah*”**

Reason(s): The prophetic words of Zechariah in the second part of this verse reflect the wording of Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1, where the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text. In view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the divine name has been used in the

main text, although existing Greek manuscripts use *Ky'ri-os* (Lord). (See comments on Luke 1:6, 16, 17; 3:4.) Additionally, it is noteworthy that in this verse, as in many other occurrences of *Ky'ri-os* in Luke chapter 1, the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky'ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name.

Support:

- *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*, edited by J. R. Dummelow, 1936, says of Luke 1:76: “Of the Lord] Zacharias understood it of Jehovah.”
- *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*, by Alfred Plummer, 1920, says of Luke 1:76: “Here Κυρίου [form of *Ky'ri-os*] means Jehovah, not the Christ, as is clear from vv. 16, 17.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 1:76 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is possibly “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, by W. Robertson Nicoll, 2002, (Vol. I, p. 469) makes this comment on the verse: “John will go before the Lord (Jehovah).”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 109 says of this verse: “Throughout this chapter Κύριος is the Greek word for Yahweh.”
- *The 'Holy Scriptures,'* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 1:76: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 28-35, 39-43, 46, 48, 49, 52, 53, 60, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 105

LUKE 2:9a

“Jehovah’s angel”

Reason(s): See comments on Matthew 1:20 and Luke 1:11.

Supporting References:

J 5-13, 16, 17, 22-24, 32-36, 38-43, 46, 48, 49, 52, 55, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 94-96, 100-105

LUKE 2:9b

“Jehovah’s glory”

Reason(s): The first two chapters of Luke’s account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions from the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. Most existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) in this verse; a few manuscripts use “God.” However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the corresponding Hebrew expression for “glory” occurs along with the Tetragrammaton more than 30 times. (Some examples are found at Exodus 16:7; 40:34; Leviticus 9:6, 23; Numbers 14:10; 16:19; 20:6; 1 Kings 8:11; 2 Chronicles 5:14; 7:1; Psalm 104:31; 138:5; Isaiah 35:2; 40:5; 60:1; Ezekiel 1:28; 3:12; 10:4; 43:4; Habakkuk 2:14.) An early copy of the Greek *Septuagint* found in a cave in Nahal Hever in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E., contains the Tetragrammaton written in ancient Hebrew characters within the Greek text at Habakkuk 2:14. Also, it is noteworthy that when later copies of the *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky’ri-os* in this and many other verses, the definite article was not included, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. So in view of the Hebrew Scripture background as well as the absence of the Greek definite article, the divine name has been used in the main text of Luke 2:9. —See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 2:9 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- With regard to the expression “angel of the Lord” and “glory of the Lord,” R.C.H. Lenski makes this comment on Luke 2:9 in *The Interpretation of Luke’s Gospel* (pp. 128-129): “As is the case throughout the first chapter, Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] is the Greek term for *Yahweh* and as a genitive with unarticulated nouns forms one concept with them: ‘Jehovah-angel,’ ‘Jehovah-glory.’ . . . It was Jehovah’s angel who came upon them like a flash.”

- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of this expression at Luke 2:9: “In the LXX [*Septuagint*] *doxa* translates Hebrew *kābōd*, the ‘splendor, brilliance,’ associated with Yahweh’s perceptible presence to his people.”
- *The Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Gospels of Mark and Luke*, by Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, (Sixth edition of 1884), says of this expression at Luke 2:9: “— δόξα κυρίου יהוה [YHWH] כְּבוֹד, radiance by which God is surrounded.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 2:9: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5-8, 10-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-43, 46-49, 52, 55, 59, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 91, 93-96, 100-104

LUKE 2:15

“Jehovah has made known to us”

Reason(s): The angels conveyed the message, but the shepherds recognized the Source as being Jehovah God. Although existing Greek manuscripts use “the Lord” (*ho Ky’ri-os*) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the *Septuagint*, the Greek verb rendered “has made known” is used to translate a corresponding Hebrew verb in contexts where the divine name is used and where Jehovah communicates his will to humans. (Psalm 25:4; 39:4; 98:2; 103:6, 7) Therefore, it would be natural to connect the divine name with what the Jewish shepherds are here saying.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 2:15 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of this expression at Luke 2:15: “Which the Lord has made known to us. I.e. Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 137 says of this verse: “Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] is again the translation of Yahweh.”

- *The Holy Scriptures*, by J. N. Darby, 1991 printing, says in a footnote on Luke 2:15: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5, 7, 8, 10-12, 14-18, 22, 23, 28-31, 33-36, 39-44, 46, 47, 49, 52, 59-61, 65, 88, 93-96, 100-102, 104, 105

LUKE 2:22

“To present him to Jehovah”

Reason(s): Existing Greek manuscripts read “to the Lord” (*toi Ky-ri’-oi*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. As the following verse shows, Jesus’ being brought to the temple after his birth is in accord with Jehovah’s words to Moses at Exodus 13:1, 2, 12, where parents were commanded to “devote to Jehovah every first-born male.” Also, the expression “to present him to Jehovah” is similar to what is described at 1 Samuel 1:22-28, where young Samuel is presented “before Jehovah” and dedicated to His service. In view of the context and the Hebrew Scripture background, the divine name is used in the main text of Luke 2:22.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 2:22 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 141 says of this verse: “They brought the child to Jerusalem ‘to present him to the Lord,’ i.e., *Yahweh*, Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] being used in this sense throughout these first chapters of Luke. . . . Every first-born son had to be presented to Jehovah.”
- *The Holy Scriptures*, by J. N. Darby, 1991 printing, says in a footnote on Luke 2:22: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22, 23, 28-36, 38-43, 47, 49, 52, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 93-95, 100-102, 104, 105

LUKE 2:23a

“just as it is written in Jehovah’s Law”

Reason(s): Although existing Greek manuscripts read *no'moi Ky-ri'-ou*, “Lord’s Law,” there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. This expression occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “law” and the Tetragrammaton. (For example: Exodus 13:9; 2 Kings 10:31; 1 Chronicles 16:40; 22:12; 2 Chronicles 17:9; 31:3; 34:14; 35:26; Nehemiah 9:3; Psalm 1:2; 119:1; Isaiah 5:24; Jeremiah 8:8; Amos 2:4.) The expression “just as it is written” is a common introduction to Hebrew Scripture quotes in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (Mark 1:2; Acts 7:42; 15:15; Romans 1:17; 9:33; 10:15) It is also used in the *Septuagint* at 2 Kings 14:6 to introduce a scripture quote. The full expression “just as it is written in Jehovah’s Law” reflects an expression in the Hebrew Scriptures that can be found at 2 Chronicles 31:3 and 35:26, where the divine name is used. Additionally, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article is not included before *Ky'ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name in this context. In view of the context, the Hebrew Scripture background, and the absence of the Greek definite article, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text of Luke 2:23.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 2:23 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 142 says of this verse: “Holy ‘to the Lord,’ to Yahweh.”
- The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by Gerhard Kittel, 1967, says of this expression at Luke 2:23: “In Lk. 2:23 there is no art[icle], but we have the combination νόμος κυρίου [*no'mos ky-ri'ou*], which is to be defined in the light of יהוה [YHWH] תורה.”

- *The Scofield Reference Bible*, by C. I. Scofield, 1909, says in a marginal note on Luke 2:23: “Jehovah. Ex. 13.2, 12.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 2:23: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 28-31, 33-36, 38-43, 46, 47, 49, 52, 55, 58-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104

LUKE 2:24

“in the Law of Jehovah”

Reason(s): See comments on Luke 1:6; 2:23.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 2:24 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 2:24: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-43, 46, 47, 49, 52, 55, 56, 58-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-102, 104

LUKE 2:26

“the Christ of Jehovah”

Reason(s): There are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts literally read “the Christ of Lord” (*ton khri-ston’ Ky-ri’ou*). In existing copies of the *Septuagint*, this expression corresponds to the Hebrew term *ma-shi’ach YHWH*, that is, “anointed (one) of Jehovah,” used 11 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. (1 Samuel 24:6 [twice], 10; 26:9, 11, 16, 23; 2 Samuel 1:14, 16; 19:21; Lamentations 4:20) In connection with both Luke’s account and the *Septuagint*, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky’ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* in

these contexts tantamount to a proper name. Therefore, both the Hebrew Scripture background and the absence of the Greek article are valid reasons for treating *Ky'ri-os* in these expressions, not as a title, but as an equivalent of the divine name.—See comment on Luke 1:6.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 2:26 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 145 says of this verse: “To see the Lord's (*Yahweh*, Κύριος in this sense throughout these two chapters) Christ.”
- *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, 2002, (Vol. 1, pp. 345-346) says of Luke 2:26: “This phrase is equivalent to the Old Testament expression ‘the LORD's Anointed’ . . . and carries the sense, ‘Yahweh's chosen agent of redemption.’”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of this expression at Luke 2:26: “The OT [Old Testament] expression, ‘the Anointed of Yahweh’ (see e.g. 1 Sam 24:7, 11; 26:9, 11, 16, 23), is used here in the strictly messianic sense, of a future, expected David.”
- *The 'Holy Scriptures,'* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 2:26: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-43, 46, 47, 49, 52, 58-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-105

LUKE 2:39

“Law of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Although existing Greek manuscripts read *no'mon Ky-ri'-ou*, “Lord's Law,” there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. This expression occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “law” and the Tetragrammaton. (For example: Exodus 13:9; 2 Kings 10:31; 1 Chronicles 16:40; 22:12; 2 Chronicles 17:9; 31:3; Nehemiah 9:3; Psalm 1:2; 119:1;

Isaiah 5:24; Jeremiah 8:8; Amos 2:4.) It is also noteworthy that the Greek definite article is not included before *Ky'ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name in this context. In view of the Hebrew Scripture background and the absence of the Greek definite article, the divine name is used in the main text.—See comments on Luke 1:6; 2:23.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 2:39 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 2:39: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 5-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38, 40-44, 46-49, 52, 55, 59-61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-95, 100-104

LUKE 5:17

“Jehovah’s power”

Reason(s): Although Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context clearly shows that *Ky'ri-os* is used with reference to God, and the Greek word *dy'na-mis*, which could be rendered “power” or “strength,” appears in the *Septuagint* where the Hebrew text refers to Jehovah’s power, or strength, and uses the Tetragrammaton in the context. (Psalm 21:1, 13; 93:1; 118:15) In connection with Luke 5:17, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky'ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. This is noteworthy because even though early copies of the *Septuagint* contained the divine name, when later copies of the *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky'ri-os*, the definite article was in a similar way often not included, where standard grammatical usage would call for it. This unexpected absence of the definite article be-

fore *Ky'ri-os* is another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is used as a substitute for the divine name. So in view of the Hebrew Scripture background and the absence of the Greek definite article, the divine name is used in the main text.—See comments on Luke 1:6, 16.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 5:17 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 292 says of this verse: “The unarticulated Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*], as the first chapters in Luke show, denotes *Yahweh*.”
- *New Testament Commentary*, by William Hendriksen, 2007, makes this comment on Luke 5:17: “Significantly Luke adds that the power of the Lord—that is, of *Jehovah*—was with Jesus ‘for healing.’”
- *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*, by Alfred Plummer, 1920, says of Luke 5:17: “‘The power of *Jehovah* was present for Him to heal with’ . . . Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] without the article means *Jehovah*.”
- *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, by Archibald Thomas Robertson, 1930, (Vol. 2) says of Luke 5:17: “Here *Kuriou* refers to *Jehovah*.”
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1981, (Vol. 28) says of this expression at Luke 5:17: “This phrase is clearly a Lucan creation, a description of *Yahweh*'s power present in Jesus for the sake of curing people. In effect, it echoes 4:14, 36 and prepares for the miracle and the pronouncement that are to come. Here *Kyrios* is clearly distinguished from Jesus and means *Yahweh*.”
- *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke*, by Alfred Plummer, 1916, comments on this expression at Luke 5:17: “[Luke] often calls Christ ‘the Lord’; but in such cases Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] always has the article [7:13; 10:1; 11:39; 12:42; 13:15; 17:5, 6; 18:6; 19:8; 22:61]. Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] without the article means *Jehovah* [1:11; 2:9; 4:18; Acts 5:19; 8:26, 39; 12:7].”

- *The New American Commentary*, by Robert H. Stein, 1992, (Vol. 24) says with regard to Luke 5:17: “The term ‘Lord’ here refers to God/YHWH as in 1:6, 9, 11, 15, 16.”
- The French reference work *Évangile Selon Saint Luc* (The Gospel According to St. Luke), by M. J. Lagrange, 1921, says of Luke 5:17: “But when Luke does not use the article, Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] is *lahvé*.” It then lists similar occurrences at Luke 1:11; 2:9; 4:18; Acts 5:19; 8:26, 39; 12:7.
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 5:17: “Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 7-12, 14-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38-44, 46, 47, 52, 55, 58, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93-96, 100-104

LUKE 20:37

“when he calls Jehovah”

Reason(s): Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The context shows that *Ky’ri-os* is used with reference to God. The quote in this verse is taken from Exodus 3:6, where in the preceding verses, “Jehovah” is the one speaking. (Exodus 3:4, 5) In view of this Hebrew Scripture background, the divine name has been used in the main text. In connection with Luke 20:37, scholars have noted the absence of the Greek definite article before *Ky’ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage. This is noteworthy because even though early copies of the Greek *Septuagint* contained the divine name, when later copies of the *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky’ri-os*, the definite article was in a similar way not included, where standard grammatical usage would normally call for it. Therefore, the unexpected absence of the definite article here is another indication that *Ky’ri-os* is used as a substitute for the divine name.—See comments on Luke 1:6, 16.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Luke 20:37 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

- *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R.C.H. Lenski, on page 999 says of this verse: "It was, however, the Lord (*Yahweh*) himself who used this covenant name concerning himself there at the bush."
- *A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Luke*, produced by the United Bible Societies (1971) and written by J. Reiling and J. L. Swellengrebel, makes this comment on Luke 20:37: "*Kurios* (cp. on 1:6) is without article as if a personal name."
- *The Anchor Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1985, (Vol. 28-28A) says of this verse: "*When he speaks of the Lord*. I.e. *Yahweh* (see Exod 3:4)." It goes on to explain with regard to this verse: "The main point in the argument is that *Yahweh* identifies himself to Moses as the God of the patriarchs long after they have died."
- *The 'Holy Scriptures,'* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Luke 20:37: "Jehovah."

Supporting References:

J 9, 11-18, 21-24, 27, 28-44, 46-49, 52, 54, 55, 57-61, 65, 66, 86, 88, 90, 91, 93, 95, 96, 100-103, 105

Verses Where the Divine Name Does Not Appear as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations in the Book of John

JOHN 12:38a

“Jehovah, who has put faith . . . ?”

Reason(s): In this quote from Isaiah 53:1, the original Hebrew text uses the divine name only once, in the expression “the arm of Jehovah.” John, however, under divine inspiration quotes from the *Septuagint* translation of Isaiah’s prophecy, where the Greek text begins with the form of the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) used for direct address. (See Romans 10:16, where Isaiah 53:1 is also quoted.) The translators of the *Septuagint* may have inserted the divine name in this first occurrence in order to clarify that the prophet addresses his questions to God. Since *Ky’ri-os* in later copies of the *Septuagint* is often used as a substitute for the Tetragrammaton in the original Hebrew text (as is the case in the second occurrence of *Ky’ri-os* in this quote), the divine name has been used here in the main text.—See John 12:38b.

Support:

- When commenting on the same quotation from Isaiah 53:1 that is found at Romans 10:16, *The Bible Commentary*, edited by F. C. Cook, 1981 reprint, makes this comment on the first occurrence of “Lord” in that quotation: “The word ‘Lord,’ added here and in the Greek versions of Isai. liii. 1 [53:1], shows the prophet turning to Jehovah, as the sender of the message . . . The addition is in harmony with the original meaning of the passage, and with St. Paul’s comment upon it in v. 17.”
- *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, by R.C.H. Lenski, says of the same quotation from Isaiah 53:1 that is found at Romans 10:16: “Paul adds ‘Lord’ to the quotation since the prophet’s question was addressed to *Yahweh*.”
- In the book *The Principles and Practice of New Testament Textual Criticism*, G. D. Kilpatrick lists John 12:38 as having two occurrences of “Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] = *Yahweh*.”

- The *Complete Jewish Bible*, by David H. Stern, 1998, uses capital and small capitals for the word “ADONAI” twice in this verse. In the introduction to this Bible, the translator explains: “The word ‘ADONAI’ is used . . . wherever I, as the translator, believe ‘kurios’ is the Greek representation of the tetragrammaton.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD twice in the main text of John 12:38 to show that both occurrences refer to Jehovah. In Appendix 98, “Divine Names and Titles in New Testament,” on p. 142, it lists John 12:38 twice under the heading “LORD . . . Used of Jehovah.”
- *The Scofield Reference Bible*, 1909, by C. I. Scofield, says in a marginal note on the first occurrence of “Lord” at John 12:38: “*Jehovah. Isa. 53.1.*”
- The *NLT Study Bible*, Second Edition, 2008, puts “LORD” in capital and small capitals in both occurrences at John 12:38. The translation committee for this Bible makes this comment in the “Introduction to the New Living Translation”: “We have generally rendered the tetragrammaton (YHWH) consistently as ‘the LORD,’ utilizing a form . . . that is common among English translations.” Commenting on the New Testament, the committee says: “The Greek word *kurios* is consistently translated ‘Lord,’ except that it is translated ‘LORD’ wherever the New Testament text explicitly quotes from the Old Testament, and the text there has it in small capitals.” (Italics ours.)

Supporting References:

J 12, 14, 16-18, 22, 23, 34-36, 39, 46, 52, 61, 65, 66, 88, 93, 100-102, 105

Verses Where the Divine Name Does Not Appear as Part of Direct or Indirect Quotations in the Book of Acts

ACTS 1:24

“You, O Jehovah, who know the hearts of all”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the term “Lord” (*Ky’ri-os*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The Hebrew Scriptures frequently identify Jehovah God as the one with the ability to read hearts. (Deuteronomy 8:2; 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chronicles 28:9; Psalm 44:21; Jeremiah 11:20; 17:10) It would have been natural in this context, then, for those Hebrew-speaking Jews to use the divine name when praying to God. The Greek word *kar-di-o-gno’stes* (lit., “knower of hearts”) occurs only here and at Acts 15:8, where it clearly refers to God. Although existing Greek manuscripts of Acts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, the context and the Hebrew Scripture background, as well as the ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, provide good reasons for using the divine name in the main text.

Support:

- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) says of Acts 1:24: “*Lord, you know the hearts of all.* God is addressed by the Christian community as *Kyrie* [a form of *Ky’ri-os*], a title used by Luke elsewhere for Yahweh of the OT [Old Testament] (Luke 1:16, 32, 68; 4:8, 12; 10:27; 19:38; 20:37, 44; Acts 2:39; 3:22; 5:9).” With regard to the expression “know the hearts,” this reference work goes on to acknowledge that “it is a title for God appearing only in Christian writings.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 1:24 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, in Appendix 98, “Divine Names and Titles in New Testament,” lists Acts 1:24 on page 143, under the heading “LORD . . . Used of Jehovah.”
- The *Aramaic English New Testament* (Third Edition), by Andrew Gabriel Roth, 2008, says in this verse: “You Master YHWH know that which is in the hearts of all.” The footnote on this verse says: “The early talmidim called on the Name of YHWH in prayer; however, this was obscured when generic Greek terms were implemented to replace the Personal and Covenant Name of YHWH. This was done in violation of the Commandments: Do not add to, nor take away from the Word D’varim/Deut. 4:2 and do not take the Name of YHWH in vain, Sh’mot [Ex] 20:7.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 17, 22, 23, 29, 30, 32, 36, 44, 65, 66, 93, 96, 100

ACTS 2:39

“to all those whom Jehovah our God may call to himself”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the term *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, but as shown by the context (Acts 2:33-38), “the promise” Peter mentions in this verse refers to what is stated at Joel 2:28-32 about the outpouring of holy spirit. The phrase “to all those whom Jehovah our God may call to himself” therefore seems to echo the words found at the end of Joel 2:32. The Hebrew text of Joel 2:32 uses the divine name three times, specifically stating that Jehovah is the one who does the calling. Additionally, the combination of *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) and *The-os’* (God) along with a personal pronoun (here rendered “Jehovah our God”) is common in quotations from or allusions to the Hebrew Scriptures. (Compare the expressions “Jehovah your God” at Luke 4:8, 12; 10:27; and Acts 3:22.) It is also worth noting that the unexpected absence of the definite article before *Ky’ri-os* makes the term tantamount to a proper name. So the Hebrew Scripture background of these words, the absence of the Greek definite article, and the ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os* provide good reasons for using the divine name in the main text.—See comment on Luke 1:16.

Support:

- *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, by R.C.H. Lenski, 1934, on page 110, says of this verse: “Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς [Ky’ri-os ho The-os’] = Yahweh Haelohim . . . this covenant Lord and omnipotent God exercises his power in favor of Israel.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 2:39 as a verse where Ky’ri-os is “used of Yahweh.”
- ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [I-e-sous’ Ky’ri-os] *Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, lists Acts 2:39 as one of the passages in which “the Omission of the Article before Κυριος [Ky’ri-os] . . . determines the Appellation to have reference to Almighty God.”
- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) in a note on Acts 1:24 lists Acts 2:39 as an example of where the title Ky’ri-os is “used by Luke elsewhere for Yahweh of the OT [Old Testament].”—See comment on Acts 1:24.
- *The Complete Jewish Bible*, by David H. Stern, 1998, uses capital and small capitals for the word “ADONAI” in this verse. In the introduction to this Bible, the translator explains: “The word ‘ADONAI’ is used . . . wherever I, as the translator, believe ‘kurios’ is the Greek representation of the tetragrammaton.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD in the main text of Acts 2:39 to show that this occurrence refers to Jehovah. Appendix 98, “Divine Names and Titles in New Testament,” lists Acts 2:39 on page 143, under the heading “LORD . . . Used of Jehovah.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Acts 2:21: “‘Jehovah;’ so [verse] 39.”
- *The Scofield Reference Bible*, by C. I. Scofield, 1909, says in a marginal note on Acts 2:39: “Jehovah. Joel 2.32.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 17, 18, 22-24, 32-35, 37, 40, 41, 43, 44, 46, 48, 52, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 95, 100-102, 105

ACTS 2:47

“Jehovah continued to add to them daily those being saved”

Reason(s): Although existing Greek manuscripts use the term “the Lord” (*ho Ky’ri-os*) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In Acts chapter 2, *Ky’ri-os* occurs eight times. Two of these occurrences clearly refer to Jesus and are therefore rendered “Lord.” (Acts 2:34b, 36) Of the remaining six occurrences, four are in quotes from the Hebrew Scriptures (Acts 2:20, 21, 25, 34a), where the divine name occurs in the original Hebrew text, and are therefore rendered “Jehovah.” Another occurrence (Acts 2:39) clearly alludes to the words of Joel 2:32, where the divine name is used three times. Here at Acts 2:47, the context indicates that God is the one referred to by the word *Ky’ri-os*. Also, the phrase rendered “those being saved” echoes the last clause of Joel 2:32, the first part of which Peter quoted at Acts 2:21. Therefore, in view of the context and the Hebrew Scripture background, as well as the ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.—See comment on Acts 2:39.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 2:47 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, in Appendix 98, “Divine Names and Titles in New Testament,” lists Acts 2:47 on page 143, under the heading “LORD . . . Used of Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 31-33, 37, 41, 44, 48, 65, 94, 99-102

ACTS 3:19

“seasons of refreshing may come from Jehovah himself”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts literally read “from face of the Lord.” However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The Greek word used here for “Lord” (*Ky’ri-os*) is also used at Acts 3:22 in a quote from Deuteronomy 18:15, where the Tetragrammaton occurs in the original Hebrew text. (See study note on Acts 3:22.) Peter is explaining that if Jews who acted in ignorance when rejecting Jesus repented, God would grant them forgiveness. So the context of Acts 3:17-22 indicates that the Lord mentioned at Acts 3:19 refers to Jehovah God. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the phrase “the face of Jehovah” is a combination of the Hebrew word for “face” and the Tetragrammaton. (Genesis 3:8; Exodus 34:24; Judges 5:5; Psalm 34:16; Lamentations 4:16) Although existing copies of the *Septuagint* have *Ky’ri-os* in these verses, there is manuscript evidence that early copies of the *Septuagint* did contain the divine name. So both the context and the Hebrew Scripture background of this expression provide support for viewing *Ky’ri-os* here as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, by R.C.H. Lenski, 1934, on page 141, says of this verse: “Seasons of refreshing or cooling from the presence of the Lord (*Yahweh*).”
- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) says in a comment on Acts 3:20 regarding this expression found at Acts 3:19: “*Kyrios* is used of *Yahweh*, the God of the OT [Old Testament], as in 2:39; Luke 1:16, 32, 68; 4:12; 10:27; 20:37.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD in the main text of Acts 3:19 to show that this occurrence refers to Jehovah.

Supporting References:

J 14-18, 22, 23, 28-32, 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 52, 65, 88, 93, 95, 96, 100-102, 105

ACTS 4:29

“Now, Jehovah, give attention to their threats”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the term “Lord” (*Ky’ri-os*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. For example, these words are part of a prayer addressed to the “Sovereign Lord” (Acts 4:24b), a term that is rendered from the Greek word *de·spo’tes* and that is also used to address God in a prayer recorded at Luke 2:29. In the prayer recorded at Acts 4:24b-30, Jesus is called “your holy servant.” This indicates that here *Ky’ri-os* refers, not to Jesus, but to Jehovah God. The disciples’ prayer recorded here includes a quote from Psalm 2:1, 2, where the divine name is used. (See study note on Acts 4:26.) In addition, this request that Jehovah “give attention to their threats,” that is, the threats of the Sanhedrin, uses terms that are similar to those used in prayers recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. Examples can be found at 2 Kings 19:16, 19 and Isaiah 37:17, 20, where the divine name is used.—See comment on Acts 1:24.

Support:

- *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, by W. Robertson Nicoll, 2002, (Vol. II, p. 68) makes this comment on Acts 1:24: “It is quite true that in [Ac 4:29] Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] is used in prayer plainly addressed to the Lord Jehovah.”
- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) says of Acts 4:29: “Compare 2 Kgs 19:19. The Christians call upon God to take notice of the threats that the Sanhedrin has leveled against Peter and John, and through them against all the rest of their number. They beseech God to be concerned about the ‘threats’ leveled against them.” The divine name appears in the Hebrew text of 2 Kings 19:19.
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 4:29 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 29-36, 40, 41, 43, 46, 61, 65, 66, 88, 93, 100-102

ACTS 5:9

“the spirit of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the spirit of Lord” (*to pneúma Ky-ri’ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The same expression is found at Luke 4:18 as part of a quote from Isaiah 61:1, where the original Hebrew text uses the Tetragrammaton together with the word for “spirit.” (See study note on Luke 4:18.) The expression “the spirit of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s spirit”) occurs several times in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Some examples are found at Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6; 15:14; 1 Samuel 10:6; 16:13; 2 Samuel 23:2; 1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16; 2 Chronicles 20:14; Isaiah 11:2; 40:13; 63:14; Ezekiel 11:5; Micah 2:7; 3:8.) The combination of the Hebrew words for “spirit” and “Lord” appears only once in the Hebrew Scriptures. Even in that case, it is combined with the Tetragrammaton and reads “the spirit of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah.” (Isaiah 61:1) Also, it is noteworthy that in this verse (Acts 5:9) the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky’ri-os* (Lord), where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. So the Hebrew Scripture background and the unexpected absence of the definite article before *Ky’ri-os* indicate that *Ky’ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) says of Acts 5:9: “The ‘testing’ of God has an OT [Old Testament] background in Exod 17:2; Num 20:13, 24 (Israel’s rebellious tempting of God in the desert); Ps 106:32. Luke uses the same verb (*peirazein*) as is used of Israel in Deut 33:8 (LXX). *Kyrios* refers to Yahweh, whose Spirit has been put to the test.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 5:9 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- When commenting on the same expression that appears at 2 Corinthians 3:17, Margaret E. Thrall says in her book *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*: “This is the only occasion when he [Paul] designates

the Spirit as the πνεῦμα κυρίου [*pneu'ma ky-ri'ou*], and the designation indicates that he still has the OT [Old Testament] background in mind, since πνεῦμα κυρίου occurs frequently in the LXX as the rendering of *ruah yhwh*, the Spirit of Yahweh.”

- ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [*I-e-sous' Ky'ri-os*] *Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, lists Acts 5:9 as one of the passages in which “the Omission of the Article before Κυριος [*Ky'ri-os*] . . . determines the Appellation to have reference to Almighty God.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD in the main text of Acts 5:9 to show that this occurrence refers to Jehovah. Appendix 98, “Divine Names and Titles in New Testament,” lists Acts 5:9 on page 143, under the heading “LORD . . . Used of Jehovah.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22-24, 29-34, 40-43, 46, 47, 52, 61, 65, 66, 88, 93-96, 100-102

ACTS 5:19

“Jehovah’s angel”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts read “Lord’s angel” here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. Starting at Genesis 16:7, this expression is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “angel” and the Tetragrammaton. When it occurs in early copies of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. That is how the expression is handled at Zechariah 3:5, 6 in a copy of the *Septuagint* found in a cave in Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert. This fragment is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. It is noteworthy that when later copies of the Greek *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) in this and many other verses, the definite article was not included where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. So in view of the Hebrew Scripture background and the absence of the definite article here, the divine name is used in the main text. A number

of Bible translations retain the divine name when rendering the expression “Jehovah’s angel” in this verse.

Support:

- With regard to the expression “angel of the Lord,” R.C.H. Lenski also makes this comment on Luke 2:9 in *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel* (pp. 128-129): “Κύριος [*Ky’ri-os*] is the Greek term for *Yahweh* and as a genitive with unarticulated nouns forms one concept with them: ‘Jehovah-angel,’ ‘Jehovah-glory.’ . . . It was Jehovah’s angel who came upon them like a flash.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 5:19; 8:26; 12:7, 23 as verses where *Ky’ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of *Yahweh*/God.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22-24, 28-35, 41, 43, 46, 47, 52, 61, 65, 66, 88, 93-95, 100-104

ACTS 7:31

“Jehovah’s voice”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “voice of Lord” (*pho-ne’ Ky-ri’ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. This part of Stephen’s speech (Acts 7:30-33) refers to the account at Exodus 3:2-10. From the context of that account, it is clear that Jehovah is the one speaking by means of his angel. According to Exodus 3:6, Jehovah tells Moses what is quoted at Acts 7:32. The phrase “the voice of Jehovah” is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “voice” and the Tetragrammaton. (Some examples are Genesis 3:8; Exodus 15:26; Deuteronomy 5:25; 8:20; 15:5; 18:16; 26:14; 27:10; 28:1, 62; Joshua 5:6; 1 Samuel 12:15; 1 Kings 20:36; Psalm 106:25; Isaiah 30:31; Jeremiah 3:25; Daniel 9:10; Zechariah 6:15.) It is worth noting that when the expression “voice of Jehovah” occurs at Deuteronomy 26:14; 27:10; 28:1, 62 in an early fragment of the *Septuagint* (Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266), the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters within the Greek text. This fragment is dated to the first century B.C.E. The expression “the voice of Jehovah” also occurs at Psalm 29:3 in a codex called Ambrosian O 39 sup., dated to the end of the

ninth century C.E. That manuscript is kept at the Ambrosian Library in Milan, Italy. The codex contains five columns with different Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, and in all those columns, the divine name is rendered by the Tetragrammaton written in square Hebrew characters (*יהוה*) within the Greek text. It is noteworthy that here at Acts 7:31, the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky'ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. So the context, the Hebrew Scripture background, the manuscript evidence of how this expression is handled in ancient translations, and the absence of the Greek definite article all support the use of the divine name here.

Support:

- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31), says of Acts 7:31: “Lit., ‘there occurred the voice of the Lord.’ Again *Kyrios* is used for Yahweh.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 7:31 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, by Archibald Thomas Robertson, 1930, (Vol. III) says on this verse: “Here the angel of Jehovah of verse 30 is termed Jehovah himself.” On verse 30, it says: “In Ex. 3:20 it is Jehovah who speaks.”
- *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, by W. Robertson Nicoll, 2002, (Vol. II, p. 191) makes this comment on Acts 7:30: “Otherwise we can only say that Jehovah Himself speaks through the Angel.”
- *ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [I·e·sous’ Ky’ri-os] Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, lists Acts 7:31 as one of the passages in which “the Omission of the Article before *Κυριος* [*Ky’ri-os*] . . . determines the Appellation to have reference to Almighty God.”
- *The Companion Bible*, with notes by E. W. Bullinger, 1999 printing, uses capital and small capitals for LORD in the main text of Acts 7:31 to show that this occurrence refers to Jehovah. Appendix 98, “Divine Names and Titles in New Testament,” lists Acts 7:31 on page 143, under the heading “LORD . . . Used of Jehovah.”

- The *Complete Jewish Bible*, by David H. Stern, 1998, uses capital and small capitals for the word “ADONAI” in this verse. In the introduction to this Bible, the translator explains: “The word ‘ADONAI’ is used . . . wherever I, as the translator, believe ‘ku-rios’ is the Greek representation of the tetragrammaton.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on Acts 7:31: “The sentence is without the article and therefore much more emphatic. ‘Lord’ is a solemn title. The expression amounts to ‘there came an utterance of Jehovah.’”

Supporting References:

J 11, 12, 14-18, 22-24, 28-36, 38, 40-44, 46, 47, 52, 61, 65, 66, 80, 88-90, 93-96, 100-103, 105

ACTS 7:33

“Jehovah said to him”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*ho Ky’ri-os*) here, but the background of Stephen’s speech (Acts 7:30-34) gives support for using the divine name in the main text. The context of the original account referred to by Stephen is Exodus 3:2-10, where it is clear that Jehovah is the one speaking by means of His angel. Although most of the content of this verse is taken from Exodus 3:5, an equivalent of the introductory phrase can be found in the original Hebrew text at Exodus 3:7, literally reading: “And Jehovah said.” So the context and the Hebrew Scripture background, as well as the ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, provide good reasons to view *Ky’ri-os* here as an equivalent of the divine name.

Support:

- See comment on Acts 7:31.
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 7:33 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The New King James Version*, first printed in 1979, uses capital and small capitals for “LORD” in the main text of Acts 7:33. The Preface to this edition explains: “The covenant name of God was usually translated from the Hebrew as ‘LORD’ (using capital let-

ters as shown) in the King James Old Testament. This tradition is maintained. In the present edition the name is so capitalized whenever the covenant name is quoted in the New Testament from a passage in the Old Testament.”

- The *NLT Study Bible*, (Second Edition), 2008, uses capital and small capitals for “LORD” in the main text of Acts 7:33. In its “Introduction to the New Living Translation,” we find this explanation: “The Greek word *kurios* is consistently translated ‘Lord,’ except that it is translated ‘LORD’ wherever the New Testament text explicitly quotes from the Old Testament, and the text there has it in small capitals.” Explaining the significance of this, the Introduction also says: “We have generally rendered the tetragrammaton (*YHWH*) consistently as ‘the LORD,’ utilizing a form with small capitals that is common among English translations.”

Supporting References:

J 11, 12, 14-18, 22, 23, 27-36, 38, 40-44, 46, 47, 52, 61, 65, 66, 80, 88, 93-95, 100-102, 105

ACTS 7:60

“Jehovah, do not charge this sin against them”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the term “Lord” (*Ky’ri-os*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Stephen here echoes Jesus’ words to his Father at Luke 23:34: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” In Luke’s account of Stephen’s speech, recorded at Acts 7:2-53, the term *Ky’ri-os* is used three times—all in quotations from or allusions to the Hebrew Scriptures that clearly refer to God. (See comments on Acts 7:31, 33 and study note on Acts 7:49.) Many commentators and translators support the view that in these contexts, *Ky’ri-os* refers to Jehovah. The term *Ky’ri-os* also occurs at Acts 7:59, where Stephen specifically says “Lord Jesus,” but this statement does not mean, as some claim, that Jesus is the one addressed as *Ky’ri-os* at Acts 7:60. There is a natural break between Stephen’s words in verse 59 and his words in verse 60. Stephen had been standing, so when he knelt in front of

his enemies, it was likely in order to address Jehovah in prayer. (Compare Luke 22:41; Acts 9:40; 20:36; 21:5, where kneeling is connected with prayer to God.) Therefore, it seems that Stephen's last words were a prayer to the almighty God, Jehovah. In addition, Acts 7:56 says that Stephen saw "the heavens opened up and the Son of man standing at God's right hand," so it is understandable that he would first address Jesus in verse 59 and then Jehovah in verse 60. A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton in verse 60 but not in verse 59 when rendering the expression "Lord Jesus."

Support:

- *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, by W. Robertson Nicoll, 2002, (Vol. II, p. 204) makes this comment regarding Stephen's speech as a whole: "The speech opens with a declaration of the divine majesty of Jehovah."
- Regarding the use of the Greek term *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) at Ac 7:59, 60, a German commentary on the book of Acts, *Kommentar und Studien zur Apostelgeschichte* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 22), by Otto Bauernfeind, 1980, (p. 120) says: "In verse 59, Jesus is the *κύριος*; in verse 60, probably God."

Supporting References:

J 17, 18, 22, 23, 41, 46, 95, 96, 100, 101

ACTS 8:22

"supplicate Jehovah"

Reason(s): Many Greek manuscripts read "the Lord" (*tou Ky-ri'ou*) here; others read "God." However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context indicates that God was the one whom Simon needed to supplicate. Simon had tried to buy something that was "the free gift of God." (Acts 8:20) Peter then responded that Simon's heart was "not straight in the sight of God." (Acts 8:21) Also, the Greek verb for "supplicate" is used in the *Septuagint*

in connection with prayers, requests, and pleadings addressed to Jehovah, and in these scriptures the divine name is often used in the Hebrew text. (Genesis 25:21; Exodus 32:11; Numbers 21:7; Deuteronomy 3:23; 1 Kings 8:59; 13:6) Some ancient translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures use the term “God” here, and some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton. So both the context and the Hebrew Scripture background support the conclusion that “the Lord” (*tu Ky’ri’ou*) in this verse refers to God and could be viewed as a substitute for the divine name.—See comment on Acts 8:24.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 8:22 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

Supporting References:

J 18, 22, 23, 36, 43, 46, 48, 65, 94, 95, 100, 101

ACTS 8:24

“Make supplication for me to Jehovah”

Reason(s): Many Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*ton Ky’ri-on*) here; others read “God.” However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ; here, the context points to God as the one referred to as “the Lord.” (See comment on Acts 8:22.) Some ancient translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures use the term “God” in this verse, and some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton. So both the context and the Hebrew Scripture background support the conclusion that “the Lord” (*ton Ky’ri-on*) in this verse refers to God and can be viewed as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 8:24 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

- ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [*I-e-sous' Ky'ri-os*] *Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, makes this comment on Acts 8:39: “The context will not sanction our supposing that, Simon imagined he had sinned against Jesus; or that Jesus was to be prayed to, (see v. 22), in order that the thought of his heart might be forgiven.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22, 23, 36, 43, 46, 65, 94, 95, 100, 101

ACTS 8:25

“the word of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Many Greek manuscripts read “the word of the Lord” (*ton lo'gon tou Ky-ri'ou*) here; a few manuscripts read “the word of God.” However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The book of Acts also uses a synonymous expression, “the word of God,” supporting the conclusion that *Ky'ri-os* at Acts 8:25 refers to God. (Acts 4:31; 6:2, 7; 8:14; 11:1; 13:5, 7, 46; 17:13; 18:11) Both expressions have their background in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, the expression “the word of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s word”) occurs far more often as a combination of the Hebrew term for “word” and the Tetragrammaton than does the expression “the word of God.” (The phrase “the word of Jehovah” [or, “Jehovah’s word”] appears in some 200 verses. Some examples are found at 2 Samuel 12:9; 24:11; 2 Kings 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isaiah 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jeremiah 1:4; 2:4; Ezekiel 1:3; 6:1; Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zechariah 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zechariah 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo'gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here. In view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the above-mentioned manuscript evidence, and the background and ambiguity of the term *Ky'ri-os*, the divine name is used here in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 8:25 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 17, 18, 32, 41, 43, 46, 61, 65, 66, 95, 100, 101

ACTS 8:26**“Jehovah’s angel”**

Reason(s): Starting at Genesis 16:7, this expression occurs a number of times in the Hebrew Scriptures. When it occurs in early copies of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. It is noteworthy that when later copies of the Greek *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) in this and many other verses, the definite article was often not included where standard grammatical usage would normally call for it. The absence of the definite article here and in other verses may therefore be another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- See comments on Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:11; and Acts 5:19; 12:11.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22-24, 28-36, 40-43, 46, 47, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 100-103

ACTS 8:39**“Jehovah’s spirit”**

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “Lord’s spirit” (*pneu'ma Ky-ri'ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The same expression is found at Luke 4:18 as part of a quote from Isaiah 61:1, where the original Hebrew text has the Tetragrammaton together with the word for “spirit.” (See study note on Luke 4:18.) The expression “spirit of Jehovah” (or, Jehovah’s spirit)

occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Some examples are found at Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6; 15:14; 1 Samuel 10:6; 16:13; 2 Samuel 23:2; 1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16; 2 Chronicles 20:14; Isaiah 11:2; 40:13; 63:14; Ezekiel 11:5; Micah 2:7; 3:8.) The combination of the Hebrew words for “spirit” and “Lord” appears only once in the Hebrew Scriptures. Even in that case, it is combined with the Tetragrammaton and reads, “the spirit of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah.” (Isaiah 61:1) Also, it is noteworthy that in this verse (Acts 8:39) the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky’ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. So the Hebrew Scripture background and the unexpected absence of the definite article before *Ky’ri-os* indicate that *Ky’ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 8:39 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [*I-e-sous’ Ky’ri-os*] *Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, lists Acts 8:39 as one of the passages in which “the Omission of the Article before Κυριος [*Ky’ri-os*] . . . determines the Appellation to have reference to Almighty God.”
- *The Scofield Reference Bible*, by C. I. Scofield, 1909, says in a marginal note on Acts 8:39: “*Jehovah*.”

Supporting References:

J 15-18, 22-24, 28-34, 36, 40-42, 46, 47, 52, 61, 65, 66, 88, 93-96, 100-102

ACTS 9:31

“the fear of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the fear of the Lord” (*toi pho’boi tou Ky’ri’ou*). In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ. In view of the Hebrew Scripture background of this expression, however, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The ex-

pression “the fear of Jehovah” is found many times in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of a Hebrew word for “fear” and the Tetragrammaton. (Some examples are found at 2 Chronicles 19:7, 9; Psalm 19:9; 111:10; Proverbs 2:5; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 19:23; Isaiah 11:2, 3.) On the other hand, the expression “fear of the Lord” is never used in the Hebrew Scripture text. Although early copies of the *Septuagint* reflected the Hebrew text and contained the divine name, in later copies it was often replaced with *Ky’ri-os*. This indicates that *Ky’ri-os* came to be used as a substitute for the divine name. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here.

Support:

- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) says of Acts 9:31: “A new element is introduced into the description of the Christian church: the OT [Old Testament] idea of ‘the fear of the Lord’ (Prov 1:7, 29; 2:5; 9:10; 19:23; Ps 19:9).” The divine name appears in each of these citations in the original Hebrew text.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 18, 22, 32, 40-43, 65, 66, 96, 100, 101

ACTS 10:33

“commanded by Jehovah to say”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*tou Ky-ri’ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The context indicates that *Ky’ri-os* here refers to God. At Acts 10:31, Peter says that Cornelius’ gifts of mercy had been “remembered before God.” He also says: “God has shown me that I should call no man defiled or unclean.” (Acts 10:28) Cornelius himself says that “we are all present before God to hear all the things.” (Acts 10:33) That *Ky’ri-os* here refers to God is also supported by some Greek manuscripts that use the Greek word *The-os* (“God”) in this verse. Also, some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here. Therefore, in view of the context and in order to avoid ambiguity regarding whom *Ky’ri-os* refers to in this context, the divine name is used.

Support:

- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) says of Acts 10:33: “*Kyrios* may refer to the risen Christ, but on the lips of Cornelius who has not yet heard the Christian proclamation, it is probably better understood as referring to Yahweh; see NOTES on 2:20, 36.” The note on Acts 2:20 says: “*Kyrios* is used of Yahweh, as in the LXX.”
- *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, by R.C.H. Lenski, 1934, on page 417, says of this verse: “Those present intend to obey what the Lord (here referring to God) will communicate to them through Peter.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 10:33 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

Supporting References:

J 17, 18, 23, 33, 40, 43, 48, 65, 94, 95, 100, 101

ACTS 11:21**“the hand of Jehovah”**

Reason(s): The phrase “the hand of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s hand”) is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “hand” and the Tetragrammaton. (Some examples are found at Exodus 9:3; Numbers 11:23; Judges 2:15; Ruth 1:13; 1 Samuel 5:6, 9; 7:13; 12:15; 1 Kings 18:46; Ezra 7:6; Job 12:9; Isaiah 19:16; 40:2; Ezekiel 1:3.) Available Greek manuscripts of Acts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) in this verse, but the Hebrew Scripture background provides good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In connection with Acts 11:21, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky’ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. This is noteworthy because even though early copies of the *Septuagint* contained the divine name, when later copies of the *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky’ri-os*, the definite article was often not included where standard grammatical usage would call for it. (That is the case in the verses cited above.) This unexpected absence of the definite article before

Ky'ri-os is another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name. The Greek expression rendered “the hand of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s hand”) also occurs at Luke 1:66 and Acts 13:11.—See comments on Luke 1:6, 66.

Support:

- *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, by R.C.H. Lenski, 1934, on page 451, says of this verse: “This was due to ‘the Lord’s hand,’ the anarthrous Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] signifying *Yahweh*, which Luke distinguishes from the articulated Κύριος which precedes and follows.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 11:21 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of *Yahweh/God*.”
- *A Translator’s Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, by Barclay M. Newman and Eugene A. Nida, 1972, United Bible Societies, makes this comment on Acts 11:21: “The Lord’s power translates an Old Testament phrase, ‘the hand of the Lord,’ and probably refers to God the Father rather than to Jesus. On the other hand, in the phrase turned to the Lord, the Lord Jesus is meant.”
- ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [*I-e-sous' Ky'ri-os*] *Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, lists Acts 11:21 as one of the passages in which “the Omission of the Article before Κυριος [*Ky'ri-os*] . . . determines the Appellation to have reference to Almighty God.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22, 23, 28, 29, 32, 34, 41, 47, 65, 93, 95, 96, 100-102

ACTS 12:7

“Jehovah’s angel”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts read “Lord’s angel” (*ag'gelos Ky-ri'ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. Starting at Genesis 16:7, the expression “Jehovah’s angel” is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “angel” and the Tetragrammaton. When

it occurs in early copies of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. That is how the expression is handled at Zechariah 3:5, 6 in a copy of the *Septuagint* found in a cave in Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert. This fragment is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. It is noteworthy that when later copies of the Greek *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky'ri-os* in this and many other verses, the definite article was not included where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here. In view of the Hebrew Scripture background and the absence of the definite article, the divine name is used in the main text. As listed below, a number of other Bible translations also retain the divine name when rendering this verse.

Support:

- See comments on Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:11; and Acts 5:19; 12:11.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22-24, 28-34, 36, 41-43, 47, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 100-102, 104

ACTS 12:11**“Jehovah sent his angel”**

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, but there are a number of good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. First, as mentioned in the comment on Acts 12:7, when the term *Ky'ri-os* appears in that verse, it could appropriately be viewed as a substitute for the divine name. Therefore, when *Ky'ri-os* occurs here in the same context and describing the same event, it is logical to view it as an equivalent of God's personal name. Second, the phrase “sent his angel” calls to mind similar acts of deliverance mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, at Daniel 3:28; 6:22, God is said to have “sent his angel” to rescue Daniel and his companions. (Compare Psalm 34:7.) Third, in several ancient authoritative Greek manuscripts, the definite article is here not included before *Ky'ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage. This gives additional support for viewing *Ky'ri-os*

in this verse as a substitute for the divine name. In addition, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here. In view of the context, the Hebrew Scripture background, and the ambiguity of the term *Ky'ri-os*, the divine name is used here.

Support:

- *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, by R.C.H. Lenski, 1934, on page 475, says of this verse: “Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*] (*Yahweh*) had actually commissioned his angel.”
- *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, by W. Robertson Nicoll, 2002, (Vol. II, p. 275) makes this comment on Acts 12:11: “Κύριος [*Ky'ri-os*], see critical notes, if without the article . . . of God, Jehovah.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 12:11 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [*I.e-sous' Ky'ri-os*] *Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, lists Acts 12:11 as one of the passages in which “the Omission of the Article before Κυριος [*Ky'ri-os*] . . . determines the Appellation to have reference to Almighty God.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 18, 23, 28-34, 36, 41, 42, 47, 61, 65, 66, 88, 93, 95, 96, 100-102

ACTS 12:17

“Jehovah had brought him out of the prison”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*ho Ky'ri-os*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. As mentioned in the comment on Acts 12:7, when the term *Ky'ri-os* appears in that verse, it could appropriately be viewed as a substitute for the divine name. Therefore, when *Ky'ri-os* occurs here in the same context and describing the same event, it is logical to view it as an equivalent of God's personal name. Some translations

of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here. In view of the context, the background of this verse, and the ambiguity of the term *Ky'ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 12:17 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 28-32, 41, 65, 93, 100-102

ACTS 12:23

“the angel of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Starting at Genesis 16:7, this expression occurs a number of times in the Hebrew Scriptures. When it occurs in early copies of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge·los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. It is noteworthy that when later copies of the *Greek Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) in this and many other verses, the Greek definite article was often not included where standard grammatical usage would normally call for one. The absence of the definite article here and in other verses may therefore be another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is used as a substitute for the divine name.

Support:

- See comments on Matthew 1:20 and Luke 1:11.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22-24, 28-36, 41-43, 47, 48, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 95, 96, 100-102, 104

ACTS 12:24

“the word of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Some ancient manuscripts and translations read “word of the Lord,” whereas others read “word of God.” Either way, there are

good reasons for using the divine name in the main text here. Both expressions have their background in the Hebrew Scriptures, where the expression “the word of Jehovah” occurs far more often as a combination of the Hebrew term for “word” and the Tetragrammaton than does the expression “the word of God.” The phrase “the word of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s word”) occurs in some 200 verses. (Some examples are found at 2 Samuel 12:9; 24:11; 2 Kings 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isaiah 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jeremiah 1:4; 2:4; Ezekiel 1:3; 6:1; Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zechariah 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zechariah 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo’gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here. In view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the above-mentioned manuscript evidence, and the background and ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 12:24 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 23, 32, 33, 37, 48, 65, 94, 100, 101

ACTS 13:2

“they were ministering to Jehovah”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the phrase “to the Lord” (*toi Ky’ri’oi*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The Greek word *lei-tour-ge’o*, in this verse rendered “were ministering,” should be understood in the light of the background that this expression has in the Hebrew Scriptures. When used in the *Septuagint* to refer to service to God by priests and Levites at the tabernacle or the temple (Exodus 28:35; Numbers 8:22; 1 Kings 8:11), this

word often appears in passages where the divine name can be found in the original Hebrew text. For example, at 2 Chronicles 13:10, the Greek words for “ministering to the Lord” at Acts 13:2 are used in the *Septuagint* to render the Hebrew phrase for “ministering to Jehovah.” At 2 Chronicles 35:3, the same Greek words are used to render the Hebrew phrase “serve Jehovah.” (See also 1 Samuel 2:11; 3:1; Ezekiel 45:4; Joel 2:17.) It is worth noting that when this expression is used in the *Septuagint* at Deuteronomy 18:5 to render the Hebrew phrase “to minister in the name of Jehovah,” the *Septuagint* rendering found in a first century B.C.E fragment (Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266) has the divine name written in square Hebrew characters within the Greek text. So in view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the manuscript evidence of how this expression is handled in ancient translations, and the ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used here.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 13:2 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* by James D. G. Dunn, 2010, says regarding this verse: “Is ‘the Lord’ here Jesus (as frequently in Acts)? Or does Luke speak of the worship of the Lord God? It is difficult to decide, although, as in the other ‘Lord’ = God references in Acts, the influence of Old Testament usage suggests that Luke was thinking of worship of God.”
- *The Acts of the Apostles—A Commentary*, by Ernst Haenchen, 1971, says of this expression: “In ‘ministered to the Lord’ Luke has borrowed an expression of special solemnity from LXX [*Septuagint*] as an allusion, above all, to prayer.” The footnote on this comment lists the following Scriptures: “II Chron. 5.14, 13.10 and 35.3; . . . Joel 1.13 and 2.17; Ezek. 40.46, 44.16 and 45.4; Dan. 7.10.”
- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) says of this expression found at Acts 13:2: “Again, *Kyrios* is used in the sense of the God of Israel, not the risen Christ.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22, 23, 32, 34, 41, 43, 65, 95, 100, 101

ACTS 13:10**“the right ways of Jehovah”**

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the term *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. Scholars have noted that Paul's reply to the Jewish sorcerer Bar-Jesus (recorded in verses 10 and 11) contains several expressions that have a background in the Hebrew Scriptures. Some examples are: The Greek phrase here rendered “distorting . . . ways” is found at Proverbs 10:9 (“making his ways crooked”) in the *Septuagint*. The Greek words that appear in the phrase “the right ways of Jehovah” also appear in the *Septuagint* rendering of Hosea 14:9. In that verse, the original Hebrew text uses the divine name (“For the ways of Jehovah are upright”). Scholars have also noted that a number of authoritative Greek manuscripts do not have the Greek definite article before the word *Ky'ri-os* in this verse (Acts 13:10), where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage. The absence of the definite article here makes *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. Also, in the following verse (Acts 13:11), *Ky'ri-os* appears in an expression (“Jehovah's hand”) that clearly has a background in the Hebrew Scriptures and can be viewed as an equivalent of the divine name. A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here. So the context (the words are addressed to a Jew) and the Hebrew Scripture background support the use of the divine name in the main text.

Support:

- *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Acts of the Apostles*, by Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, 1884, says of Acts 13:10: “Κυρίου [*Ky-ri'ou*, a form of *Ky'ri-os*] is not to be referred to Christ, but to God, whom the son of the devil resists, as is proved from ver. 11.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 13:10 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”
- *The NET Bible, New English Translation*, 1996, adds this note on the expression “paths of the Lord” as it appears at Acts 13:10: “This rebuke is like ones from the OT [Old Testament] prophets:

Jer 5:27; Gen 32:11; Prov 10:7; Hos 14:9. . . . The closing rhetorical question of v. 10 (“will you not stop . . . ?”) shows how opposed he [Elymas] is to the way of God.”

- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) makes this comment on Acts 13:10: “Kyrios: God or the risen Christ; probably the former, as in v 11.”
- ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [*I-e-sous’ Ky’ri-os*] *Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, lists Acts 13:10 as one of the passages in which “the Omission of the Article before Κυριος [*Ky’ri-os*] . . . determines the Appellation to have reference to Almighty God.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on the expression “the right paths of [the] Lord,” as found at Acts 13:10: “Possibly ‘Jehovah.’”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22, 23, 28-34, 42, 43, 47, 65, 66, 93-96, 100-102

ACTS 13:11

“Jehovah’s hand”

Reason(s): The phrase “Jehovah’s hand,” as well as “the hand of Jehovah,” is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “hand” and the Tetragrammaton. (Some examples are: Exodus 9:3; Numbers 11:23; Judges 2:15; Ruth 1:13; 1 Samuel 5:6, 9; 7:13; 12:15; 1 Kings 18:46; Ezra 7:6; Job 12:9; Isaiah 19:16; 40:2; Ezekiel 1:3.) Available Greek manuscripts of Acts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) in this verse, but in view of the Hebrew Scripture background of this expression, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In connection with Acts 13:11, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky’ri-os*, where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky’ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. This is noteworthy because even though the earliest copies of the *Septuagint* contained the divine name, when later copies of the *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky’ri-os*, the definite article was in a similar way often not included where standard grammatical usage would call for it. (That is the case in the verses cited above.) This unexpect-

ed absence of the definite article before *Ky'ri-os* is another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name. The Greek expression rendered “hand of Jehovah” also occurs at Luke 1:66 and Acts 11:21.

Support:

- ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ [*I.e.-sous' Ky'ri-os*] *Their Usage and Sense in Holy Scripture*, by Herman Heinfetter, 1857, lists Acts 13:11 as one of the passages in which “the Omission of the Article before Κυριος [*Ky'ri-os*] . . . determines the Appellation to have reference to Almighty God.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 13:11 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The ‘Holy Scriptures,’* by J. N. Darby, 1949, says in a footnote on the expression “[the] Lord’s hand,” as found at Acts 13:11: “Possibly ‘Jehovah.’”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22-24, 28-34, 36, 42, 43, 47, 65, 66, 93-96, 100-102, 104

ACTS 13:12

“the teaching of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the teaching of the Lord” (*tei di-da-khei' tou Ky-ri'ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. In the preceding two verses, *Ky'ri-os* occurs twice. In both cases, it refers to God and can be viewed as a substitute for the divine name. (See comments on Acts 13:10, 11.) The expression “the teaching of Jehovah” is synonymous with “the word of God,” used at Acts 13:5. That verse says that when Paul and his companions arrived in Cyprus, they “began proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.” As a result, the proconsul Sergius Paulus was “eager to hear the word of God.” (Acts 13:7) So it is natural to conclude that after witnessing what Paul said and did, Sergius Paulus was astounded at what he had learned about Jehovah

God and the teaching originating from Him. Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here. So in view of the context and the background of the expression and the ambiguity of the term *Ky'ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 13:12 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *Holy Bible From the Ancient Eastern Text—George M. Lamsa’s Translation From the Aramaic of the Peshitta* uses capital and small capitals for “LORD” in this verse and says in a footnote: “Acts. 13:10, 11, 12, 49 - The Syriac and Aramaic form of the Divine Name, ‘Mar-Yah’ or ‘Mor-Yah’ literally means ‘Lord Yah,’ as in ‘Yahweh,’ ‘YHWH.’”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 29-31, 41, 43, 93, 100, 101

ACTS 13:44

“the word of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Many early Greek manuscripts read “the word of the Lord” (*ton lo'gon tou Ky-ri'ou*) here. Some manuscripts read “the word of God” (*ton lo'gon tou The-ou*). However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The book of Acts also uses a synonymous expression, “the word of God,” as at Acts 13:46, supporting the conclusion that *Ky'ri-os* here in verse 44 refers to God. (The expression also appears at Acts 4:31; 6:2, 7; 8:14; 11:1; 13:5, 7; 17:13; 18:11.) Both expressions have their background in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, the expression “the word of Jehovah” occurs far more often as a combination of the Hebrew term for “word” and the Tetragrammaton than does the expression “the word of God.” (The phrase “the word of Jehovah” [or, “Jehovah’s word”] occurs in some 200 verses. Some examples are found at 2 Samuel 12:9; 24:11; 2 Kings 7:1; 20:16;

24:2; Isaiah 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jeremiah 1:4; 2:4; Ezekiel 1:3; 6:1; Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zechariah 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zechariah 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo'gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. Also, some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here. So in view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the above-mentioned manuscript evidence, and the background and ambiguity of the term *Ky'ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 13:44 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

Supporting References:

J 17, 22, 32, 33, 37, 48, 65, 94, 100, 101

ACTS 13:47

“Jehovah has commanded us”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*ho Ky'ri-os*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The quote that follows in this verse is taken from Isaiah 49:6, where the context of the original Hebrew text clearly identifies Jehovah as the one speaking. (Isaiah 49:5; compare Isaiah 42:6.) The fulfillment of the prophecy involves the work that Jehovah’s Servant, Jesus Christ, and his followers would do. (Isaiah 42:1; see study note on Luke 2:32.) Therefore, in this verse, *Ky'ri-os* must refer to God. In view of the context and the background of this expression in the Hebrew Scriptures, the divine name is used to avoid ambiguity.

Support:

- *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, by R.C.H. Lenski, 1934, on page 551, says of this verse: “They must first square accounts with the great *'Ebed Yahweh*, Jehovah’s Servant, who

himself stated what Jehovah declared to him . . . And now the messengers of Jesus are proceeding in accordance with that will of Jehovah.”

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 13:47 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Acts of the Apostles Explained* (Third Edition), by Joseph Addison Alexander, 1872, says of this verse: “*The Lord*, according to New Testament usage, might be understood to mean the Lord Jesus Christ . . . But as the words which follow are addressed to the Messiah, *the Lord* may be regarded as the usual translation of *Jehovah*.”
- *The Commentary on the Book of the Acts*, by F. F. Bruce, 1954, page 283, says of this verse and the quotation from Isaiah 49:6: “It is noteworthy that in the context of this prophecy (the second Servant Song) the nation of Israel is first addressed as the servant of Jehovah . . . But Israel as a whole was a disobedient servant, and the prophecy found its particular fulfilment in the Messiah.”
- *The Complete Jewish Bible*, by David H. Stern, 1998, uses capital and small capitals for the word “*ADONAI*” in this verse. In the introduction to this Bible, the translator explains: “The word ‘*ADONAI*’ is used . . . wherever I, as the translator, believe ‘*ku-rios*’ is the Greek representation of the tetragrammaton.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 17, 22, 23, 32, 35, 41, 43, 65, 68, 94, 100, 101

ACTS 13:48

“the word of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the word of the Lord” (*ton lo’gon tou Ky-ri’ou*) here; other manuscripts read “the word of God” (*ton lo’gon tou The-ou*). However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The context here points to Jehovah God as the

one referred to as “the Lord.” In the preceding verse, *Ky’ri-os* is used about the one who gave the prophetic command recorded at Isaiah 49:6, that is, Jehovah. (See comment on Acts 13:47.) As shown in the comment on Acts 13:44, there is additional support for using the divine name in the expression “the word of Jehovah.” Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 13:48 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-17, 22, 23, 32, 33, 37, 41, 42, 65, 66, 94, 96, 100, 101

ACTS 13:49

“the word of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the word of the Lord” (*ho lo’gos tou Ky’ri’ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text, as shown in the comments on Acts 13:44, 48. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 13:49 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”
- *Holy Bible From the Ancient Eastern Text—George M. Lamsa’s Translation From the Aramaic of the Peshitta* uses capital and small capitals for “LORD” in this verse and says in a footnote: “Acts. 13:10, 11, 12, 49 - The Syriac and Aramaic form of the Divine Name, ‘Mar-Yah’ or ‘Mor-Yah’ literally means ‘Lord Yah,’ as in ‘Yahweh,’ ‘YHWH.’”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 22, 23, 28-32, 41, 65, 66, 93-95, 100, 101

ACTS 14:3**“by the authority of Jehovah”**

Reason(s): Lit., “upon the Lord.” Available Greek manuscripts have the term *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The context here points to God as the one referred to as “the Lord.” In the book of Acts, the expression “undeserved kindness” is often connected with God (Acts 11:23; 13:43; 14:26; 20:24), and Acts 20:32 mentions “God and . . . the word of his undeserved kindness.” Also, at Acts 15:12, God is identified as being the source of “signs and wonders.” (See also Acts 2:19; 19:11.) In the context of Acts 14:3, the preposition *e-pi’* (“upon”) is understood to indicate the grounds, or basis, on which the disciples were speaking boldly. The rest of the verse shows that God was bearing witness, or testifying, that what they preached was really his word and that they had his approval and support in doing so. (Compare Acts 4:29-31.) The Greek expression for “upon the Lord” can also be found in the *Septuagint* to render phrases where the Tetragrammaton appears in the original Hebrew text. (Psalm 31:6 [30:7, LXX]; Jeremiah 17:7) In line with this, some have suggested that this expression also conveys the idea of speaking “in reliance on Jehovah.” So in view of the context and the background of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text of this verse.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 23, 29-31, 41, 93-95, 100, 101

ACTS 14:23**“they entrusted them to Jehovah”**

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts read “to the Lord” (*toi Ky’ri’oi*), but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context points to God as the one referred to as “the Lord.”

At Acts 14:26, the similar expression “entrusted to the undeserved kindness of God” is used. The Greek verb used here (Acts 14:23) is also used at Acts 20:32 in the phrase “I entrust you to God.” One lexicon defines this phrase: to “*entrust someone to the care or protection of someone . . . Of divine protection . . . Ac 14:23; cp. [compare] 20:32.*” The same verb is also used at Luke 23:46 to render Jesus’ words: “Father, into your hands I *entrust* my spirit.” This is a quote from Psalm 31:5, where the *Septuagint* (30:6, *LXX*) uses the same Greek word for “entrust” and where the divine name appears in the immediate context of the original Hebrew text. The concept of entrusting oneself to Jehovah is expressed several times in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Psalm 22:8; 37:5; Proverbs 16:3) In view of the context, the Hebrew Scripture background, and the ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used in this account. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 41, 65, 100, 101

ACTS 15:17a

“so that the men who remain may earnestly seek Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*ton Ky’ri-on*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. According to Acts 15:14, James mentions that Symeon related “how God . . . turned his attention to the nations,” and in verse 19, James refers to “the nations who are turning to God.” James is here quoting from Amos 9:11, 12, and in the original Hebrew text, the divine name appears once in the expression “declares [or, “says”] Jehovah.” Therefore, in view of the context, the Hebrew Scripture background, and the use of the term *Ky’ri-os* in the *Septuagint*, there are also good reasons for using the divine name for the first occurrence of *Ky’ri-os* in this verse, although there is no direct equivalent to it in the Hebrew text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 15:17a as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Acts of the Apostles*, Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, 1884, makes this comment on Acts 15:14-17: “Amos predicts [that] . . . foreign nations will join themselves to it [the Davidic theocracy] and be converted to the worship of Jehovah. . . . Jehovah had withdrawn from His people; but now He promises by the prophet: I will *return and build again* the fallen, by desolation, tabernacle of David.”
- *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, edited by Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy, 1968, says with regard to Acts 15:17: “This OT [Old Testament] expression (see 2 Chr 6:35; 7:14) denotes a consecration to Yahweh; Amos thus spoke of nations that belonged to God.”
- *The New King James Version*, first printed in 1979, uses capital and small capitals for “LORD” twice in the main text of Acts 15:17. The Preface to this edition explains: “The covenant name of God was usually translated from the Hebrew as ‘LORD’ (using capital letters as shown) in the King James Old Testament. This tradition is maintained. In the present edition the name is so capitalized whenever the covenant name is quoted in the New Testament from a passage in the Old Testament.”
- The *NLT Study Bible* (Second Edition), 2008, uses capital and small capitals for “LORD” twice in the main text of Acts 15:17. In its “Introduction to the New Living Translation,” we find this explanation: “The Greek word *kurios* is consistently translated ‘Lord,’ except that it is translated ‘LORD’ wherever the New Testament text explicitly quotes from the Old Testament, and the text there has it in small capitals.” Explaining the significance of this, the Introduction also says: “We have generally rendered the tetragrammaton (*YHWH*) consistently as ‘the LORD,’ utilizing a form with small capitals that is common among English translations.”

Supporting References:

J 11, 12, 14-18, 22, 23, 28-31, 34, 35, 38, 41-43, 47, 59, 61, 65, 66, 88, 90, 93, 94, 96, 100-102, 104, 105

ACTS 15:35**“the word of Jehovah”**

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the word of the Lord” (*ton lo’gon tou Ky’ri’ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The book of Acts also uses a synonymous expression, “the word of God,” supporting the conclusion that *Ky’ri-os* at Acts 15:35 refers to God. (Acts 4:31; 6:2, 7; 8:14; 11:1; 13:5, 7, 46; 17:13; 18:11) Both expressions have their background in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, the expression “the word of Jehovah” occurs as a combination of the Hebrew term for “word” and the Tetragrammaton far more often than the expression “the word of God.” (The phrase “the word of Jehovah” [or, “Jehovah’s word”] occurs in some 200 verses. Some examples are found at 2 Samuel 12:9; 24:11; 2 Kings 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isaiah 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jeremiah 1:4; 2:4; Ezekiel 1:3; 6:1; Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zechariah 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zechariah 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo’gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here. The Syriac *Peshitta* uses the expression “the word of God.” In view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the above-mentioned manuscript evidence, and the background and ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 15:35 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”
- *The New Testament in Basic English*, 1946, says “the word of God.”

Supporting References:

J^{17, 18, 22, 23, 31, 32, 41, 65, 66, 94, 95, 100, 101}

ACTS 15:36

“the word of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the word of the Lord” (*ton lo’gon tou Ky-ri’ou*) here, but as shown in the comment on Acts 15:35, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the expression “the word of Jehovah.” The context of this verse identifies Jehovah as the Source of the word. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here. The Syriac *Peshitta* uses the expression “the word of God.”

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 15:36 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”
- *The New Testament in Basic English*, 1946, says “the word of God.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 17, 18, 22, 23, 32, 41, 65, 66, 94, 95, 100, 101

ACTS 15:40

“the undeserved kindness of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Many Greek manuscripts read “of the Lord” (*tou Ky-ri’ou*); others read “of God.” However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’-ri-os* (Lord) can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context points to God as the one referred to as “the Lord.” In the book of Acts, the expression “undeserved kindness” is most often connected with God. (Acts 11:23; 13:43; 20:24) At Acts 14:26, the similar expression “entrusted to the undeserved kindness of God” is found. Also, some ancient manuscripts and translations into other languages use “God” (*The-os*) here instead of “Lord” (*Ky’ri-os*), supporting the conclusion that “the undeserved kindness” referred to is God’s. A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew also use the divine name here. So in view of

the context and the background and the ambiguity of the term *Ky'ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 15:40 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Orthodox Jewish Bible*, 2011, uses “Hashem” to represent the divine name at Acts 15:40. The term “Hashem” comes from the Hebrew expression *hash-Shem'*, meaning “the Name,” often used by Jews as a substitute for *YHWH*.

Supporting References:

J 17, 18, 22, 32, 48, 65, 94, 95, 100, 101

ACTS 16:14

“Jehovah opened her heart wide”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts use the term “the Lord” (*ho Ky'ri-os*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context points to Jehovah God as the one referred to as “the Lord.” Lydia is identified as “a worshipper of God,” an expression indicating that she was a Jewish proselyte. (Compare Acts 13:43.) On the Sabbath, she had gathered with other women at a place of prayer at a river outside Philippi. (Acts 16:13) She may have become acquainted with the worship of Jehovah in her home city, Thyatira, which had a large Jewish population and a Jewish meeting place. So in view of the context, Lydia’s background, and the ambiguity of the term *Ky'ri-os*, the divine name is used here. A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 16:14 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”

- *The Orthodox Jewish Bible*, 2011, uses “Hashem” to represent the divine name at Acts 16:14. The term “Hashem” comes from the Hebrew expression *hash-Shem’*, meaning “the Name,” often used by Jews as a substitute for *YHWH*.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 17, 18, 23, 32, 33, 48, 65, 94, 95, 100, 101, 105

ACTS 16:15

“faithful to Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts use the phrase “to the Lord” (*toi Ky-ri’oi*) here; a few manuscripts read “to God.” However, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context points to Jehovah God as the one referred to as “the Lord.” As shown in the comment on Acts 16:14, Lydia’s background as a Jewish proselyte makes it logical that she had Jehovah in mind. She had just heard about Jesus Christ from Paul’s preaching but had not yet shown that she was faithful to Jesus. It seems reasonable, then, to assume that she was referring to her faithfulness to Jehovah, the God whom she had already been worshipping. So in view of the context, Lydia’s background, and the background and the ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 16:15 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The Orthodox Jewish Bible*, 2011, uses “Hashem” to represent the divine name at Acts 16:15. The term “Hashem” comes from the Hebrew expression *hash-Shem’*, meaning “the Name,” often used by Jews as a substitute for *YHWH*.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 32, 41, 65, 94, 100, 101

ACTS 16:32**“the word of Jehovah”**

Reason(s): Most ancient manuscripts read “the word of the Lord” (*ton lo’gon tou Ky’ri’ou*). In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Although Jesus is mentioned in the preceding verse as “the Lord Jesus” (*ton Ky’ri-on I-e-soun’*), there are good reasons for using the divine name in this verse. A few Greek manuscripts read “the word of God” (*ton lo’gon tou The-ou’*). In the book of Acts, the expressions “the word of the Lord” and “the word of God” are used as synonymous expressions, supporting the conclusion that *Ky’ri-os* here at Acts 16:32 refers to God. (Acts 4:31; 6:2, 7; 8:14; 11:1; 13:5, 7, 46; 17:13; 18:11) Both expressions have their background in the Hebrew Scriptures, where the expression “the word of Jehovah” as a combination of the Hebrew term for “word” and the Tetragrammaton occurs far more often than does the expression “the word of God.” (The phrase “the word of Jehovah” [or, “Jehovah’s word”] occurs in some 200 verses. Some examples are found at 2 Samuel 12:9; 24:11; 2 Kings 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isaiah 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jeremiah 1:4; 2:4; Ezekiel 1:3; 6:1; Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zechariah 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zechariah 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo’gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here. In view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the above-mentioned manuscript evidence, and the background and ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 16:32 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is possibly “used of Yahweh.”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 17, 18, 22, 23, 28-30, 32, 41, 65, 66, 93-95, 100, 101

ACTS 18:21

“if Jehovah is willing”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts literally read “God willing”; this expression has also been translated “if it is God’s will” or “God willing.” In such expressions, as used in the Christian Greek Scriptures, both the term *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) and the term *The-os’* (God) appear. (Acts 21:14; 1 Corinthians 4:19; 16:7; Hebrews 6:3; James 4:15) In the *Septuagint*, the Greek verb here rendered “is willing” and the Greek noun for “will” are often used to render Hebrew Scripture passages where the divine name appears. Also, some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Tetragrammaton here. Therefore, in view of the Hebrew Scripture background and the similar expressions appearing in the Christian Greek Scriptures, the divine name can appropriately be used here.—See comment on Acts 21:14.

Support:

- *A Handbook on the Letter From James*, by I-Jin Loh and Howard A. Hatton, produced by the United Bible Societies, 1997, makes this comment on the expression “if the Lord wills” as it appears at James 4:15: “**If the Lord wills . . .** is not merely a casual formula but a conviction and acknowledgment that God has the final say on everything, and that the future is in the hand of God . . . The **Lord** here refers not to Jesus as in 2.1, but to God.”

Supporting References:

J 17, 32, 33, 37, 48, 65, 94, 100, 101

ACTS 18:25

“the way of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Available Greek manuscripts read “the way of the Lord” (*ten ho-don’ tou Ky-ri’ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. Here the context points to God as the one referred

to as “the Lord.” At Acts 18:26, the expression “the way of God” is used as a synonym. As shown in the book of Acts, the Christian way of life is centered on worship of the only true God, Jehovah, and on faith in his Son, Jesus Christ, and it is referred to as “The Way” or “this Way.” (Acts 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:22; see study note on Acts 9:2.) Also, the expression rendered “the way of Jehovah” (but without the definite article in Greek) appears four times in the Gospel accounts, where it is part of a quote from Isaiah 40:3. (See study notes on Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23.) At Isaiah 40:3, the original Hebrew text uses the Tetragrammaton. The expression “the way of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s way”) also occurs at Judges 2:22 and Jeremiah 5:4, 5. Additionally, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew here use the divine name or an equivalent of the Tetragrammaton and read “the way of Jehovah.” So in view of the context and the Hebrew Scripture background, the divine name is used here in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 18:25 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”
- *Holy Bible From the Ancient Eastern Text—George M. Lamsa’s Translation From the Aramaic of the Peshitta* uses capital and small capitals for “LORD” in this verse and says in a footnote: “The Syriac and Aramaic form of the Divine Name, ‘Mar-Yah’ or ‘Mor-Yah’ literally means ‘Lord Yah,’ as in ‘Yahweh,’ ‘YHWH.’”

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 24, 29, 30, 32, 41, 42, 48, 65, 93, 94, 96, 100, 101

ACTS 19:20

“the word of Jehovah”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the Lord” (*tou Ky’ri’ou*) here, but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky’ri-os* can refer to Jehovah God or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The book of Acts also uses a synonymous expression, “the word of God,”

supporting the conclusion that *Ky'ri-os* at Acts 19:20 refers to God. (Acts 4:31; 6:2, 7; 8:14; 11:1; 13:5, 7, 46; 17:13; 18:11) Both expressions have their background in the Hebrew Scriptures, where the expression “the word of Jehovah” as a combination of the Hebrew term for “word” and the Tetragrammaton occurs far more often than does the expression “the word of God.” (The phrase “the word of Jehovah” [or, “Jehovah’s word”] occurs in some 200 verses. Some examples are found at 2 Samuel 12:9; 24:11; 2 Kings 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isaiah 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jeremiah 1:4; 2:4; Ezekiel 1:3; 6:1; Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zechariah 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zechariah 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo'gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here. The Latin *Vulgate* and the Syriac *Peshitta* read “the word of God.” In view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the above-mentioned manuscript evidence, and the background and the ambiguity of the term *Ky'ri-os*, the divine name is used here in the main text.

Support:

- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, p. 329) lists Acts 19:20 as a verse where *Ky'ri-os* is “used in the NT [New Testament] of Yahweh/God.”
- *The Orthodox Jewish Bible*, 2011, uses “Hashem” to represent the divine name at Acts 19:20. The term “Hashem” comes from the Hebrew expression *hash-Shem'*, meaning “the Name,” often used by Jews as a substitute for *YHWH*.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 15-18, 23, 31, 32, 41, 48, 65, 94-96, 100, 101

ACTS 21:14

“Let the will of Jehovah take place”

Reason(s): Most Greek manuscripts read “the Lord’s will,” but there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) can refer to Jehovah God

or to Jesus Christ, depending on the context. The Greek term for “will” (*the’le-ma*), as used in the Christian Greek Scriptures, is most often connected with God’s will. (Matthew 7:21; 12:50; Mark 3:35; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 1:1; Hebrews 10:36; 1 Peter 2:15; 4:2; 1 John 2:17) Therefore, it is logical to conclude that *Ky’ri-os* in this expression refers to God. In the *Septuagint*, the Greek term *the’le-ma* is often used to translate Hebrew expressions for God’s will, or delight, and can be found in passages where the divine name occurs. (Psalm 40:8, 9 [39:9, 10, LXX]; 103:21 [102:21, LXX]; 143:9-11 [142:9-11, LXX]; Isaiah 44:24, 28; Jeremiah 9:24 [9:23, LXX]; Malachi 1:10) So in view of the way the Greek word for “will” is used in the Bible, the background of this expression in the Hebrew Scriptures, and the background and the ambiguity of the term *Ky’ri-os*, the divine name is used in the main text. Also, some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here.

Support:

- *The Anchor Yale Bible*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 1998, (Vol. 31) makes this comment on Acts 21:14: “In this case, *Kyrios* refers to God the Father.”
- The reference work *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1991, (Vol. 2, pp. 329-330) lists Acts 21:14 as a verse where *Ky’ri-os* is “used of Yahweh.”
- *The New Testament in Basic English*, 1946, says: “Let the purpose of God be done.”
- *The Orthodox Jewish Bible*, 2011, uses “Hashem” to represent the divine name at Acts 21:14. The term “Hashem” comes from the Hebrew expression *hash-Shem’*, meaning “the Name,” often used by Jews as a substitute for *YHWH*.

Supporting References:

J 7, 8, 10, 17, 18, 23, 32, 43, 65, 94-96, 100, 101

Translations and Reference Works Supporting the Use of the Divine Name in the “New Testament”

Below is a partial listing of Bible translations and reference works that have used some form of the divine name (or some other way of indicating that the divine name is referred to) in what is commonly called the New Testament.*

* Also called the Christian Greek Scriptures.

- Hebrew translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures
- English translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures
- Other language translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures
- Reference works

J¹

בשורה מתי, *Euangelium Hebraicum Matthæi* (Gospel of Matthew, in Hebrew), edited by Jean du Tillet, with a Latin translation by Jean Mercier, Paris, 1555. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה or an abbreviated form of the Tetragrammaton in the main text of some verses. ●

J²

Even Bohan (אבן בוהן, “Tested Stone; Touchstone”), by Shem-Tob ben Isaac Ibn Shaprut, Spain, c. 1385. This work includes a Hebrew text of the Gospel of Matthew. Edition: *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, by George Howard, Macon, GA, U.S.A., 1995. In this edition, the Hebrew

text uses an abbreviated form of the Tetragrammaton in the main text of some verses. ●

J³

תורת המשיח, *Euangelium secundum Matthæum in lingua hebraica, cum versione latina* (Gospel of Matthew, in Hebrew and Latin), by Sebastian Münster, Basel, 1537. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

תורת המשיח, *Euangelium secundum Matthæum in lingua hebraica . . . Vnà cum Epistola D. Pauli ad Hebræos, Hebraicè & Latinè* (Gospel of Matthew and Paul’s letter to the Hebrews, in

Hebrew and Latin), by Sebastian Münster, Basel, 1557. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה or an abbreviated form of the Tetragrammaton in the main text of some verses. ●

J⁴

כפי מתי המבשר . . . תורת המשיח, *Sanc-tum Domini nostri Iesu Christi Hebraicum Euangelium secundum Matthæum* (Gospel of Matthew, in Hebrew), edited by Johannes Quinquarboreus, Paris, 1551. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

J⁵

הקרואות שנה בשנה בשבתות ובהגיי, *Euangelia anniuersaria, quae*

Dominicis diebus & in Sanctorum festis leguntur, Hebraicè conuersa (Liturgical Gospels, in Hebrew), by Fridericum Petri, Antwerp, 1581. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

J6

Euangelia anniuersaria Dominicorum et Festorum dierum, Germanicè, Latinè, Graecè, & Ebraicè (Liturgical Gospels, in German, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), by Johannis Clajus, Leipzig, 1576. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

J7

Novum Testamentum Dñi: Nri: Iesu Christi, Syriacè, Ebraicè, Graecè, Latinè, Germanicè, Bohemicè, Italicè, Hispanicè, Gallicè, Anglicè, Danicè, Polonicè (New Testament in 12 languages, including Hebrew), by Elias Hutter, Nuremberg, 1599-1600. This edition is often referred to as the Nuremberg Polyglot New Testament. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J8

תורת יהוה חדשה, *Lex Dei summi nova; Atque haec est, Novum Domini nostri Jesu Christi Testamentum Sacro-Sanctum* (New Testament, in Hebrew), by William Robertson, London, 1661. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J9

ארבעה אבני הגילוינים מהתורה החדשה, *Quatuor Euangelia Noui Testamenti Ex Latino in Hebraicum* (The Four Gospels, in Hebrew and Latin), by Giovanni Battista Jona, Rome, 1668. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J10

The New Testament . . . in Hebrew and English, in Three Volumes, containing the Gospel of Matthew to First Corinthians, by Richard Caddick, London, 1798-1805. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J11

ברית חדשה על פי משיה (New Testament, in Hebrew), by Thomas Fry and others, London, 1817. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J12

ספר הברית החדשה (New Testament, in Hebrew), by William Greenfield, London, 1831. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J13

הברית החדשה (New Testament, The Gospels in Hebrew), by Thomas Yeates, London, 1805. As reproduced by Jean Carmignac in *Traductions hebraïques des Evangiles*, Vols. 2-3, Turnhout, Belgium, 1982; from the manuscript Add MS 11659 in the British Library, London. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J14

ספר ברית חדשה על פי המשיה (New Testament, in Hebrew), by Alexander McCaul, Michael Solomon Alexander, Johann Christian Reichardt, and Stanislaus Hoga, London, 1838. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J15

ספר בשורה טובה על פי המבשר לוקס (Gospel of Luke, in Hebrew), by Johann Heinrich Raphael Biesenthal, Berlin, 1851. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

ספר פעלי השליחים (Acts of Apostles, in Hebrew), by Johann Heinrich Raphael Biesenthal, Berlin, 1867. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

אגרת אל הרומים (Paul's Letter to the Romans, in Hebrew), by Johann Heinrich Raphael Biesenthal, Berlin, 1855. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

אגרת אל העברים (Paul's Letter to the Hebrews, in Hebrew), by Johann Heinrich Raphael Biesenthal, Berlin, 1857. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

J16

החדשה על פי המשיה עם נקודות ושעמים הברית (New Testament, in Hebrew), revised by Johann Christian Reichardt and Johann Heinrich Raphael Biesenthal, London, 1866. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J17

ספרי הברית החדשה (New Testament, in Hebrew), by Franz Delitzsch, Leipzig, 1877. This translation uses יהוה or an

abbreviation of the Tetragrammaton in the main text of various verses. In 1892, Delitzsch's 11th edition replaced the abbreviated form with יהוה, which is also used in later editions. ●

J18

הברית החדשה (New Testament, in Hebrew), by Isaac Salkinson and Christian D. Ginsburg, Vienna, Austria, 1886. This translation uses יהוה in the main text in various verses. ●

J19

הבשורה הטובה על-פי יוחנן (Gospel of John, in Hebrew), by Moshe I. Ben Maer, Denver, CO, U.S.A., 1957. This translation uses יהוה or an abbreviated form of the Tetragrammaton in the main text of some verses. ●

J20

A Concordance to the Greek Testament, by William F. Moulton and Alfred S. Geden, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1897. In the scripture references under the entries ΘΕΟΨ (The-os') and ΚΥΨΙΟΣ (Ky'ri-os), this work shows parts of the Hebrew text containing the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) to which the Greek text refers or from which it makes a quotation. ●

J21

The Emphatic Diaglott (Greek-English interlinear), by Benjamin Wilson, New York, 1864. The translation into English in the right-hand column uses "Jehovah" in the main text of some verses. ●

J22

ספרי הברית החדשה (New Testament, in Hebrew), by United Bible Societies, Jerusalem, 1976. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J23

הברית החדשה (New Testament, in Hebrew), by Yohanan Bauchet and David Kinneret (Arteaga), Rome, 1975. This translation uses יהוה or an abbreviated form of the Tetragrammaton in the main text of various verses. ●

J24

A Literal Translation of the New Testament . . . From the Text of the Vatican Manuscript, by Herman Heinfetter (pseudonym for Frederick Parker), Sixth Edition, London, 1863. This translation uses "Jehovah" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 25

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, by William Gunion Rutherford, London, 1900. This translation uses "Jehovah" in the main text of some verses. ●

J 26

Psalterium Hebraicum (Bible book of Psalms and Gospel of Matthew 1:1–3:6, in Hebrew), by Anton Margaritha, Leipzig, 1533. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of some verses. ●

J 27

Die heilige Schrift des neuen Testaments (New Testament, in German), by Dominik von Brentano, Kempten, Germany, 1790-1791. This translation uses "Jehova" or "Jehovah" in the main text of various verses or in explanatory commentaries and paraphrases. ●

J 28

ספרי הברית החדשה (New Testament, in Hebrew), as appearing in *The New Covenant Commonly Called the New Testament—Peshitta Aramaic Text With a Hebrew Translation*, by The Bible Society, Jerusalem, 1986. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה in the main text of various verses. ●

J 29

The Original Aramaic New Testament in Plain English (An American Translation of the Aramaic New Testament), by Glenn David Bauscher, Seventh Edition, Australia, 2012. This translation uses "THE LORD JEHOVAH" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 30

Aramaic English New Testament, by Andrew Gabriel Roth, Third Edition, U.S.A., 2008. This translation uses "Master YHWH" or "YHWH" in the main text of various verses or in the footnotes. ●

J 31

Hebraic Roots Bible—A Literal Translation (with study notes), Word of Truth Publications, U.S.A., 2012. This translation uses "YAHWEH" in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 32

The Holy Name Bible (formerly known as *The Sacred Name New Testament*), revised by Angelo Benedetto

Traina and The Scripture Research Association, Inc., U.S.A., 2012 reprint. This translation uses "Yahweh" in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 33

The Christian's Bible—New Testament, by George Newton LeFevre, Strassburg, PA, U.S.A., 1928. This translation uses "Jehovah" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 34

The Idiomatic Translation of the New Testament, by William Graham MacDonald, 2009 electronic version. This translation uses "Yahveh" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 35

Nkand'a Nzambi i sia vo Luwawanu Luankulu Y'olu Luampa (The Bible, in Kikongo), by George Ronald Robinson Cameron and others, 1926; reprinted by United Bible Societies, Nairobi, Kenya, 1987. This translation uses "Yave" in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 36

Bibel Barita Na Uli Hata Batak-Toba siganup ari (The Bible, in Batak-Toba), Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia, 1989. This translation uses "Jahowa" in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 37

Arurutiet ne Leel ne bo: Kiptaiyandennyo Jesu Kristo Yetindennyo (New Testament, in Kalenjin), by Frances J. Mumford and others, Nairobi, Kenya, 1968. This translation uses "Jehovah" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 38

Ekonejeu Kabesi ni Dokuj Iesu Keriso (New Testament, in Nengone), by Stephen M. Creagh and John Jones, London, 1870. This translation uses "lehova" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 39

Jesu Keriso ve Evanelia Toaripi uri (The Four Gospels, in Toaripi), by J. H. Holmes, London, 1902. This translation uses "Jehova" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 40

Edisana Nwed Abasi Ibom (The Bible, in Efik), reprinted by the National Bible Society of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1949. This translation uses "Jehovah" in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 41

Testament Sefa an amam Samol o Ran Amanau Jisos Kraist: auili jonai kapas an re kris uili nanai kapas an mortlocke (New Testament, in Mortlockese), by Robert W. Logan, New York, 1883. This translation uses "Jioua" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 42

The Gospel of Jesus Christ According to St. Matthew, Translated From the Original Into Temne, and *Ama-Lémrané Ama-Fu ma Q-Rábbu de Q-Fútia-Ka-Su Yísua Masía* (New Testament, in Temne), by Christian Friedrich Schlenker, London, 1865-1868. This translation uses "Yehófa" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 43

Testament Vau Ki Nawota Anigida Go Tea Maumaupauri Yesu Kristo (New Testament, in Nguna-Tonga), British and Foreign Bible Society, London, 1912. This translation uses "Yehovah" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 44

Wusku Wutttestamentum Nul-Lordumun Jesus Christ (New Testament, in the Algonquin language of Massachusetts), by John Eliot, Cambridge, MA, U.S.A., 1661. This translation uses "Jehovah" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 45

Matiyū: Ku Nam Navosavos ugi (Gospel of Matthew, in Eromanga), by George Nicol Gordon and James Douglas Gordon, London, 1869. This translation uses "lehóva" in the main text of various verses. ●

J 46

La Bible (The Bible, in French), by André Chouraqui, Belgium, 1985. This translation uses a combination of "IHVH" and "adonai" in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 47

Biblia Peshitta en Español, Traducción de los Antiguos Manuscritos Arameos (The Peshitta Bible, in Spanish), Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN, U.S.A., 2006. This translation uses “Yahweh” in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 48

Pin chitokaka pi okchalinchi Chisvs Klaist in testament himona, chahta anumpa atoshowa hoke (New Testament, in Choctaw), by Alfred Wright and Cyrus Byington, New York, 1848. This translation uses “Chihowa” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 49

Bosakú-w'ólótsi wa Yesu Masiya boki Matayo la Malako o kótaka and Bosakú-w'ólótsi wa Yesu Masiya boki Luka o kótaka (Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in Lomóngo), by Edward Algernon Ruskin and Lily Ruskin, Congo Balolo Mission, Upper Congo, 1905. This translation uses “Yawe” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 50

Nalologena wo se Yesu Kristo Kome Mataio (Gospel of Matthew, in Tasiko, Epi), by Oscar Michelsen, London, 1892. This translation uses “Yehova” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 51

The Restored New Testament, by Willis Barnstone, New York, 2009. This translation uses “Yahweh” in some verses. A footnote at Matthew 1:20 comments on the expression “an angel of the Lord”: “From the Greek . . . (angelos kyriou), from the Hebrew . . . (malakh yahweh) . . . A literal rendering would be *Yahweh's malakh* or ‘messenger.’” In the main text of Matthew 28:2, this translation reads: “An angel of Yahweh.” ●

J 52

Messianic Jewish Shared Heritage Bible, by The Messianic Jewish Family Bible Project, Shippensburg, PA, U.S.A., 2012. This Bible uses “ADONAI” in the main text of various verses in the Christian Greek Scriptures. The glossary on page 1530 explains: “ADONAI (יהוה)—Hebrew for ‘LORD.’ When written in small capitals, it refers to God’s personal name *YHWH* as given in

the Hebrew Bible. This personal name is God’s ‘covenant name,’ used when God is relating to the Jewish people in an intimate way.” ●

J 53

The Messages of Jesus According to the Synoptists (The Discourses of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke), by Thomas Cuming Hall, New York, 1901. This paraphrase uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 54

Bibel Ānaran aen Gott, Ānarana Testament Ōbwe me Testament Etsimeduw Ōañan (The Bible, in Nauru), by Philip Adam Delaporte, New York, 1918; reprinted by The Bible Society in the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji, 2005. This translation uses “Jehova” in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 55

Embimbiliya Li Kola (The Bible, in Umbundu), by Merlin W. Ennis and others, Luanda, Angola, 1963. This translation uses “Yehova” in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 56

Ke Kauoha Hou a Ko Kakou Haku e Ola'i, a Iesu Kristo (New Testament, in Hawaiian), American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Oahu, Hawaii, 1835. This translation uses “Iehova” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 57

Te Nu Tetemanti, ae ana Taeka Ara Uea ao ara Tia Kamaiu are Iesu Kristo, ae Kaetaki man Taetaen Erene (New Testament, in Kiribati [Gilbertese]), by Hiram Bingham II, New York, 1901. This translation uses “Iehova” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 58

Dal Co Mu Biale Saint Luke Terhu (Gospel of Luke, in Lonwolwol [Fanting]), by Robert Lamb, Dunedin, New Zealand, 1899. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 59

Intas-Etipup Mat u Iesu Kristo, Natimarid Uja, im Natimi Imyiatamaig Caija (New Testament, in Aneityum),

by John Geddie, John Inglis, and others, London, 1863. This translation uses “Ihova” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 60

New Testament (in Cherokee), revised by Charles Cutler Torrey, New York, 1860. This translation uses “Yihowa” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 61

Ntestamente Yipia ya Nkambo Wetu ni Mupurushi Yesu Kristu (New Testament, in Chiluva), by Daniel Crawford, Livingstonia, Malawi, 1904. This translation uses “Yehova” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 62

Injili Mar Mathayo (Gospel of Matthew, in Dholuo), by A. A. Carscallen, London, 1914. This translation uses “Yawe” in the main text of at least one verse. ●

J 63

The Gospels of Matthew, and of Mark, Newly Rendered Into English; With Notes on the Greek Text, by Lancelot Shadwell, London, 1861. This translation uses “JEHOVAH” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 64

A Liberal Translation of the New Testament, by Edward Harwood, London, 1768. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 65

The Restoration of Original Sacred Name Bible, revised by Missionary Dispensary Bible Research, Buena Park, CA, U.S.A., 1970. This translation uses “YAHVAH” in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 66

The Scriptures, by the Institute for Scripture Research, Third Edition, South Africa, 2010. This translation uses יהוה in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 67

The New Testament Letters—Prefaced and Paraphrased, by John William Charles Wand, Melbourne, Australia, 1944. This paraphrase uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 68

The Messages of Paul (Arranged in Historical Order, Analyzed, and Freely Rendered in Paraphrase, with Introductions), by George Barker Stevens, New York, 1900. This paraphrase uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 69

The Epistle to the Hebrews with some interpretive suggestions, by Wilfrid H. Isaacs, London, 1933. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 70

The Apocalypse: A Revised Version in English, of the Revelation with Notes, Historical and Explanatory, by Edward Grimes, Newport-on-Usk, United Kingdom, 1891. This translation uses “Yahweh” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 71

The New Testament; Being the English Only of the Greek and English Testament, by Abner Kneeland, Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A., 1823. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 72

The Gospel of the Hellenists, by Benjamin Wisner Bacon and edited by Carl H. Kraeling, New York, 1933. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 73

The Family Expositor: or, A Paraphrase and Version of the New Testament; with Critical Notes, and a Practical Improvement of Each Section, by Philip Doddridge, London, 1739-1756. This paraphrase uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 74

The Modern American Bible—The Books of the Bible in Modern American Form and Phrase, With Notes and Introduction, by Frank Schell Ballentine, New York, 1899-1901. This translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 75

The Guide to Immortality; or, Memoirs of the Life and Doctrine of Christ,

by the Four Evangelists, by Robert Fellowes, London, 1804. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses or in the footnotes. ●

J 76

A New Version of the Four Gospels; with notes critical and explanatory, by a Catholic (John Lingard), London, 1836. This translation uses “The Lord (Jehova)” in the main text of Matthew 22: 44. ●

J 77

The Documents of the New Testament, by George Woosung Wade, London, 1934. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 78

Studies in Matthew, by Benjamin Wisner Bacon, New York, 1930. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 79

The New Testament, in an Improved Version, Upon the Basis of Archbishop Newcome’s New Translation, edited by Thomas Belsham and others, London, 1808. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses or in the footnotes. ●

J 80

A New Family Bible, and Improved Version, From Corrected Texts of the Originals, by Benjamin Boothroyd, Huddersfield, England, 1824. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses or in the footnotes and explanatory commentaries, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 81

The Holy Bible, Containing the Authorized Version of the Old and New Testaments, edited by John Tricker Conquest, London, 1841. This translation uses “JEHOVAH” in the main text of some verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 82

A Paraphrase and Annotations Upon All the Books of the New Testament, by Henry Hammond, London, 1653. This paraphrase uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 83

The Epistle to the Hebrews, in a Paraphrastic Commentary, by Joseph B. M’Caul, London, 1871. This paraphrase uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 84

A Revised Translation and Interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Covenant, by John Mead Ray, Glasgow, Scotland, 1815. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 85

An Attempt Toward Revising Our English Translation of the Greek Scriptures, by William Newcome, Dublin, Ireland, 1796. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 86

The Monotessaron; or, The Gospel History, According to the Four Evangelists, by John S. Thompson, Baltimore, MD, U.S.A., 1829. This translation uses “Jehovah” or “JEHOVAH” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 87

A Translation of the New Testament, by Gilbert Wakefield, London, 1791. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses. ●

J 88

The Newberry Bible (commonly known as *The Englishman’s Bible*), by Thomas Newberry, London, 1890. In this translation, “LORD” appears in capital and small capitals in the main text of numerous verses, with marginal notes drawing attention to the divine name “Jehovah,” both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J 89

The Messages of the Apostles (The Apostolic Discourses in the Book of Acts and the General and Pastoral Epistles of the New Testament), by George Barker Stevens, New York, 1900. This paraphrase uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●

J 90

A Non-Ecclesiastical New Testament, by Frank Daniels, 2016. This translation uses “Yahweh” in the main text of various verses. In the opening comments by the translator, the following state-

ment is made under the heading “The Divine Name”: “In every case where the Tetragrammaton appeared in a quotation from the Hebrew Bible (rendered Kupios [Lord] in the LXX), this translation employs the proper name, Yahweh. There are also other places in the NT [New Testament] where Kupios without an article indicates the divine name. In these cases, too, the form Yahweh is employed.” ●

J91

Uebersetzung des Neuen Testaments mit erklärenden Anmerkungen (New Testament, in German), by Johann Babor, Vienna, Austria, 1805. This translation uses “Jhova” in the main text of some verses or in the footnotes. ●

J92

Nsango ea Ndoci eki Malako o Kotaka (Gospel of Mark, in Mongo-Nkundu), by Ellsworth E. Harris and Royal J. Dye, Bolengi, Upper Congo, 1905. This translation uses “Yawe” in the main text of some verses. ●

J93

Aramaic Peshitta New Testament Translation, by Janet M. Magiera, Truth or Consequences, NM, U.S.A., 2006. This translation uses “LORD” in the main text of various verses. The introduction states: “LORD is MARYA, meaning LORD of the Old Testament, YAHWEH.” ●

J94

The Orthodox Jewish Bible, by Phillip E. Goble, Fourth Edition, New York, 2011. This Bible uses “Hashem” in the main text of various verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. The term “Hashem” comes from the Hebrew expression *hash-Shem*, meaning “the Name,” often used by Jews as a substitute for YHWH. ●

J95

Pacto Mesianoico (New Testament, in Spanish), by Academia Biblica BEREA, Argentina, 2010. This translation uses “YHWH” in the main text of numerous verses. ●

J96

El Nuevo Testamento de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo (New Testament, in Spanish), by Pablo Besson, Second Edition, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1948. This translation uses “Jehová” at Luke 2:15 and

Jude 14. When “Señor” is used in the main text, a footnote referring to “Jehová,” “Yahvé,” or “Jahvé” appears in various verses. ●

J97

Livangeli tsa Yesu-Kereste Morena oarona tse 'ngoliloeng ki Mareka le Yoanne (Luke 1:5–2:17, 40–52, Matthew 2:1–21, and Gospels of Mark and John, in Setsotho), by Eugène Casalis and Samuel Rolland, Cape Town, South Africa, 1839. This translation uses “Yehofa” in the main text of some verses. ●

J98

The Four Gospels, Translated From the Greek, by George Campbell, London, 1789. This translation uses “Lord” in the main text with a footnote referring to “Jehovah” in various verses. ●

J99

Nam Numpusok Itevau eni Iesu Kristo Novsuromon Enugkos (New Testament, in Eromanga), by H. A. Robertson, Sydney, Australia, 1909. This translation uses “Iéhōva” in the main text of various verses. ●

J100

The Book of Yahweh—The Holy Scriptures, by Yisrayl B. Hawkins, Ninth Edition, Abilene, TX, U.S.A., 1996. This translation uses “Yahweh” in the main text of numerous verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J101

The Sacred Scriptures, by Assemblies of Yahweh, Bethel, PA, U.S.A., 1981. This translation uses “Yahweh” in the main text of numerous verses, both in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Greek Scriptures. ●

J102

A Critical and Emphatic Paraphrase of the New Testament, by Vincent T. Roth, Pasadena, CA, U.S.A., 2000; reproduced from the revised edition originally published in 1963. This paraphrase uses “JEHOVAH” in the main text of various verses. ●

J103

Neues Testament mit Anmerkungen (New Testament, in German), by Heinz Schumacher, Germany, 2002. This translation uses “JAHWE” in the main text or in the footnotes of various verses. ●

J104

Das Neue Testament (New Testament, in German), by Adolf Pfleiderer, Langensteinbach, Germany, 2004; reproduced from a copy first printed in 1980. This translation uses “Jehova” in the main text of various verses. ●

J105

Sämtliche Schriften des neuen Testaments (New Testament, in German), by Johann Jakob Stolz, Second Edition, Zürich, Switzerland, 1795. This translation uses “Jehovah” in the main text of various verses. ●



GLOSSARY

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A

Ab. After the Babylonian exile, the name of the 5th month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the 11th month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-July to mid-August. It is not mentioned by name in the Bible; it is simply referred to as “the fifth month.” (Nu 33:38; Ezr 7:9)—See  App. B15.

Abib. The original name of the first month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the seventh month of the secular calendar. It means “Green Ears (of Grain)” and ran from mid-March to mid-April. After the Jews’ return from Babylon, it was called Nisan. (De 16:1)—See  App. B15.

Abys. From the Greek word *a'bys-sos*, meaning “exceedingly deep” or “unfathomable, boundless.” It is used in the Christian Greek Scriptures to refer to a place or condition of confinement. It includes the grave but is not limited to it.—Lu 8:31; Ro 10:7; Re 20:3.

Achaia. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Roman province of southern Greece with its capital at Corinth. Achaia included all of the Peloponnese and the central part of continental Greece. (Ac 18:12)—See  App. B13.

Adar. After the Babylonian exile, the name of the 12th month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the 6th month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-February to mid-March. (Es 3:7)—See  App. B15.

Adultery. Voluntary sexual intercourse by a married man or woman with someone other than his or her mate.—Ex 20:14; Mt 5:27; 19:9.

Alabaster. The name of small perfume jars originally made of a stone found near Alabastron, Egypt. Such containers were usually made with a narrow neck that could be sealed to prevent any of the precious perfume

from leaking. The stone itself also came to be known by the same name.—Mr 14:3.

Alamoth. A musical term meaning “Maidens; Young Women,” probably alluding to the soprano voices of young women. It was likely used to indicate that a musical piece or accompaniment was to be executed at a high register.—1Ch 15:20; Ps 46: Sup.

Alpha and Omega. Names of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet; they are used together three times in Revelation as a title for God. In these contexts this expression means the same as “the first and the last” and “the beginning and the end.”—Re 1:8; 21:6; 22:13.

Altar. A raised structure or platform made of dirt, rocks, a block of stone, or wood covered with metal on which sacrifices or incense were offered in worship. In the first room of the tabernacle and of the temple, there was a small “altar of gold” for offering incense. It was made of wood covered with gold. A larger “altar of copper” for burnt sacrifices was located outside in the courtyard. (Ex 27:1; 39:38, 39; Ge 8:20; 1Ki 6:20; 2Ch 4:1; Lu 1:11)—See  App. B5 and B8.

Amen. “So be it,” or “surely.” The word comes from the Hebrew root word *'a-man'*, which means “to be faithful, trustworthy.” “Amen” was said in agreement to an oath, a prayer, or a statement. In Revelation, it is used as a title for Jesus.—De 27:26; 1Ch 16:36; Re 3:14.

Ancient Near (Middle) East. A geographical and historical term that refers to a region of southwestern Asia. The region does not have definite boundaries, but the term is used to refer to an area that stretches from Turkey in the west to Iran in the east (some view it as reaching the Indus River in modern-day Pakistan); it extends from the Caucasus region in the north to the Arabian Peninsula in

the south, often also including Egypt. Some call this region the Middle East, whereas others prefer Western Asia. The expression “Near East” refers to the region’s proximity to Europe.

Angels. From the Hebrew *mal'akh'* and the Greek *ag'ge-los*. Both words literally mean “messenger” but are rendered “angel” when referring to spirit messengers. (Ge 16:7; 32:3; Jas 2:25; Re 22:8) Angels are powerful spirit creatures, created by God long before the creation of mankind. They are also referred to in the Bible as “holy myriads,” “sons of God,” and “morning stars.” (De 33:2; Job 1:6; 38:7) They were not made with the ability to reproduce their own kind but were created individually. They number well over a hundred million. (Da 7:10) The Bible indicates that they have personal names and distinct personalities, yet they humbly refuse to receive worship, and most even avoid disclosing their names. (Ge 32:29; Lu 1:26; Re 22:8, 9) They have different ranks and are assigned a variety of roles, including serving before Jehovah’s throne, conveying his messages, intervening in behalf of Jehovah’s earthly servants, executing God’s judgments, and supporting the preaching of the good news. (2Ki 19:35; Ps 34:7; Lu 1:30, 31; Re 5:11; 14:6) In the future they will support Jesus in fighting the battle of Armageddon.—Re 19:14, 15.

Anoint. The Hebrew word basically means “to smear with liquid.” Oil was applied to a person or an object to symbolize dedication to a special service. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the word is also used of the pouring out of holy spirit on those chosen for the heavenly hope.—Ex 28:41; 1Sa 16:13; 2Co 1:21.

Antichrist. The Greek term has a twofold meaning. It refers to that which is *anti*, or *opposed to*, Christ. It may also refer to a false Christ, one *in the place of* Christ. All people,

organizations, or groups that falsely claim to represent Christ or claim to be the Messiah or that oppose Christ and his disciples can properly be called antichrists.—1Jo 2:22.

Aorist. A verb form in Biblical Greek that, though called a tense, usually conveys the *kind* of action taken rather than the *time* when the action takes place. Verbs in the aorist tense may be rendered in a variety of ways according to their context. For example, the aorist may denote a single action or actions that are momentary rather than an action or actions that are habitual or continuous. At 1 John 2:1, the aorist tense of the Greek verb “to sin” is rendered “commit a sin.” The aorist here evidently expresses momentary action, referring to just one act of sin. The present tense of a Greek verb, by comparison, often denotes ongoing action. For example, at 1 John 3:6, the present tense of the same verb is rendered “practice sin.” At Matthew 4:9, the use of the aorist evidently indicates that Satan asked Jesus to “do *an act* of worship” to him, not to offer continuous worship. A command may also be in the aorist. Unlike a prohibition in the present tense, which may often denote a command to stop doing something (Lu 5:10; 23:28; Joh 2:16), a prohibition in the aorist could be understood as a command against doing something at any given time or moment. One example is recorded at Matthew 6:34: “Never be anxious about the next day.” Here the aorist conveys the idea of not being anxious at any given time or moment.

Apostasy. This term in Greek (*a-posta-si'a*) comes from a verb literally meaning “to stand away from.” The noun has the sense of “desertion, abandonment, or rebellion.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, “apostasy” is used primarily with regard to those who defect from true worship.—Pr 11:9; Ac 21:21; 2Th 2:3.

Apostle. The basic sense of the word is “one sent forth,” and it is used of Jesus and certain ones who were sent to serve others. Most frequently, it is used with regard to the disciples whom Jesus personally selected as a group of 12 appointed representatives.—Mr 3:14; Ac 14:14.

Aram; Aramaeans. Descendants of Shem’s son Aram who mainly lived in regions from the Lebanon Mountains across to Mesopotamia and from the Taurus Mountains in the north down to Damascus and beyond in the south. This area, called Aram in Hebrew, was later referred to as Syria, and its inhabitants were referred to as Syrians.—Ge 25:20; De 26:5; Ho 12:12.

Aramaic. A Semitic language closely related to Hebrew, using the same alphabet. It was originally spoken by the Aramaeans but later became the international language of trade and communication in the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. It was also the official administrative language of the Persian Empire. (Ezr 4:7) Parts of the books of Ezra, Jeremiah, and Daniel were written in Aramaic.—Ezr 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26; Jer 10:11; Da 2:4b–7:28.

Archangel. Meaning “chief of the angels.” The prefix “arch” means “chief” or “principal.” This definition, coupled with the fact that “archangel” in the Bible is used only in the singular, indicates that there is just one archangel. The Bible gives the name of the archangel, identifying him as Michael.—Da 12:1; Jude 9; Re 12:7.

Areopagus. A high hill in Athens, north-west of the Acropolis. It was also the name of the council (court) that held meetings there. Paul was brought to the Areopagus by Stoic and Epicurean philosophers to explain his beliefs.—Ac 17:19.

Ark of the covenant. The chest made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold, which was kept in the Most Holy

of the tabernacle and later in the Most Holy of the temple built by Solomon. It had a solid gold cover with two cherubs facing each other. Its principal contents were the two tablets of the Ten Commandments. (De 31:26; 1Ki 6:19; Heb 9:4)—See  App. B5 and B8.

Armageddon. From the Hebrew *Har Meghid-dohn'*, meaning “Mountain of Megiddo.” The word is associated with “the war of the great day of God the Almighty” in which “the kings of the entire inhabited earth” gather to wage war against Jehovah. (Re 16:14, 16; 19:11-21)—See GREAT TRIBULATION.

Armor. The protective clothing worn by soldiers, namely, helmet, coat of mail, belt, shin guards, and shield.—1Sa 31:9; Eph 6:13-17.

Aselgeia.—See BRAZEN CONDUCT.

Ashtoreth. A Canaanite goddess of war and fertility, the wife of Baal.—1Sa 7:3.

Asia. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the name of the Roman province that included what is today the western part of Turkey, as well as some coastal islands, such as Samos and Patmos. The capital was Ephesus. (Ac 20:16; Re 1:4)—See  App. B13.

Assembly. A group of people gathered by appointment. In the Hebrew Scriptures, this word often refers to gatherings of the people of Israel at religious festivals or at events of great national significance.—De 16:8; 1Ki 8:5.

Astrologer. A person who studies the movements of the sun, moon, and stars in order to predict future events.—Da 2:27; Mt 2:1.

Atonement. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the concept was connected with sacrifices that were made to allow people to approach God and worship him. Under the Mosaic Law,

sacrifices were made, particularly on the annual Day of Atonement, in order to effect reconciliation with God despite the sins of individuals and of the whole nation. Those sacrifices pointed to Jesus' sacrifice, which completely atoned for mankind's sins once for all time, giving people the opportunity to be reconciled to Jehovah.—Le 5:10; 23:28; Col 1:20; Heb 9:12.

Azazel. A Hebrew name that possibly means "Goat That Disappears." On the Day of Atonement, the goat designated for Azazel was sent into the wilderness, symbolically carrying off the nation's sins of the past year.—Le 16:8, 10.

B

Baal. A Canaanite god regarded as the owner of the sky and giver of rains and fertility. "Baal" was also used as a designation for local lesser gods. The Hebrew word means "Owner; Master."—1Ki 18:21; Ro 11:4.

Baptism; Baptize. The verb means "to immerse," or dip under water. Jesus made baptism a requirement for his followers. The Scriptures also refer to John's baptism, baptism with holy spirit, and baptism with fire, among others.—Mt 3:11, 16; 28:19; Joh 3:23; 1Pe 3:21.

Bath. A liquid measure that is estimated to equal about 22 L (5.81 gal), according to archaeological findings of jar fragments bearing this name. Most of the other dry and liquid measures in the Bible are calculated in relation to the estimated volume of the bath measure. (1Ki 7:38; Eze 45:14)—See  App. B14.

Beelzebub. A designation applied to Satan, the prince, or ruler, of the demons. It is possibly an alteration of Baal-zebul, the Baal worshipped by the Philistines at Ekron.—2Ki 1:3; Mt 12:24.

Biblical Greek. The language of the Christian Greek Scriptures. The primary form of the language used was Koine, or common Greek, though some expressions from classical Greek were also used. Matthew's Gospel was evidently first written in Hebrew and was later translated into Koine Greek. Following the conquests of Alexander the Great, Koine dominated the eastern Mediterranean world from about 300 B.C.E. to about 500 C.E. Tradition holds that during the third century B.C.E., Jewish scholars began translating the Hebrew Scriptures into Koine, producing a translation known as the *Septuagint*. Naturally, the vocabulary and style of the Hebrew Scriptures greatly influenced the Greek used in both the *Septuagint* and the Christian Greek Scriptures. Koine had a distinct advantage over other languages in that it was widely known. It was a mixture of different Greek dialects, of which Attic Greek was the most influential, but the grammar was simplified. Even so, Koine allowed for broad variety in expression and subtle intricacies of thought.

Biblical Hebrew. In general, the form of Hebrew found in the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures, often called the Old Testament. Hebrew was used by the Israelite descendants of Abraham and is part of the Semitic group of languages that includes Aramaic, Akkadian, and the various Arabic and Ethiopic dialects. The Hebrew language remained relatively stable for the thousand-year period during which the Hebrew Scriptures were written (from 1513 to about 443 B.C.E). The form of Hebrew script changed after the Babylonian exile when the square-shaped script became popular. Nevertheless, the ancient script continued to be used for a time.

Brazen conduct. From the Greek *a-sel'gei-a*, a phrase pertaining to acts that are serious violations of

God's laws and that reflect a brazen or boldly contemptuous attitude; a spirit that betrays disrespect or even contempt for authority, laws, and standards. The expression does not refer to wrong conduct of a minor nature.—Ga 5:19; 2Pe 2:7.

Breastpiece. The jewel-studded pouch worn by Israel's high priest over his heart whenever he entered the Holy. It was called "the breast-piece of judgment" because it contained the Urim and the Thummim, which were used in revealing Jehovah's judgments. (Ex 28:15-30)—See  App. B5.

Brother-in-law marriage. A custom, later incorporated into the Mosaic Law, whereby a man would marry the sonless widow of his deceased brother in order to produce children to carry on his brother's line. Also known as levirate marriage.—Ge 38:8; De 25:5.

Bul. The name of the eighth month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the second month of the secular calendar. It comes from a root meaning "yield; produce" and ran from mid-October to mid-November. (1Ki 6:38)—See  App. B15.

Burnt offering. An animal sacrifice that was burned on the altar as a total offering to God; no part of the animal (bull, ram, male goat, turtle-dove, or young pigeon) was kept by the worshipper.—Ex 29:18; Le 6:9.

C

Cab. A dry measure of 1.22 L (1.11 dry qt), based on the estimated volume of the bath measure. (2Ki 6:25)—See  App. B14.

Caesar. A Roman family name that became a title for the Roman emperors. Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius are mentioned by name in the Bible, and though Nero is not mentioned by name, it applies to him as well.

- “Caesar” is also used in the Christian Greek Scriptures to represent civil authority, or the State.—Mr 12:17; Ac 25:12.
- Canaan.** A grandson of Noah, and the fourth son of Ham. The 11 tribes that descended from Canaan eventually inhabited the region along the eastern Mediterranean between Egypt and Syria. That area was called “the land of Canaan.” (Le 18:3; Ge 9:18; Ac 13:19)—See  App. B4.
- Canon (Bible canon).** The expression “Bible canon” came to denote the collection, or list, of books accepted as genuine inspired Scripture. The term “canon” is derived from the Hebrew word *qa-neh'* (reed). Reeds were used as a rule or measuring device. (Eze 41:8) Fittingly, the Bible canon, or catalog of inspired books, enables the reader to “measure” faith, doctrine, and conduct. The canon of the Hebrew Scriptures was established by the end of the fifth century B.C.E. According to Jewish tradition, the skilled scribe and inspired Bible writer Ezra began the work, and it was completed by Nehemiah. (Ezr 7:6, fn.) The writing of the Christian Greek Scriptures was completed during the time that the gifts of the spirit were operative on Christ’s followers. (Joh 14:26; Re 1:1) Some Christians had the gift of “discernment of inspired expressions.” (1Co 12:10) Thus, they could, without referring the matter to a supposed church council, determine which of the letters the congregation received were inspired of God. With the death of John, the last apostle, this reliable chain of divinely inspired men came to an end. Therefore, with the book of Revelation, John’s Gospel, and his three letters, the Bible canon was closed. The testimony of later, non-inspired writers is valuable only as an acknowledgment of the Bible canon, which God’s spirit had guided and authorized.
- Capital.** The ornamental top of a column. Massive capitals topped the
- twin columns Jachin and Boaz, which stood in front of Solomon’s temple. (1Ki 7:16)—See  App. B8.
- Cassia.** A product from the cassia bark tree (*Cinnamomum cassia*), which is of the same family as the cinnamon tree. Cassia was used as a perfume and as an ingredient of the holy anointing oil.—Ex 30:24; Ps 45:8; Eze 27:19.
- Centurion.** A professional officer in the ancient Roman military. Roman legions, usually numbering some 6,000 men, were divided into 60 centuries, or groups of about 100 soldiers, each commanded by a centurion. These elite officers were the pillars of the legion and were much better paid than common soldiers. Some of these ‘army officers’ are favorably mentioned in the Scriptures. One was commended for his great faith. (Mt 8:5-10, 13) Another was named Cornelius. He and his relatives were the first uncircumcised Gentiles to convert to Christianity.—Mr 15:39; Ac 10:1, 44, 45; 27:1, 43.
- Chaff.** The husks that are separated from the edible portion of grain during threshing and winnowing. Chaff is used in figures of speech as a symbol of something worthless and undesirable.—Ps 1:4; Mt 3:12.
- Chaldea; Chaldeans.** Originally the land and people occupying the delta area of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; in time the terms were used for all of Babylonia and its people. “Chaldeans” also referred to an educated class of people who studied science, history, languages, and astronomy but who practiced magic and astrology as well.—Ezr 5:12; Da 4:7; Ac 7:4.
- Chariot.** A two-wheeled, horse-drawn vehicle used primarily in war.—Ex 14:23; Jg 4:13; Ac 8:28.
- Chemosh.** The chief god of the Moabites.—1Ki 11:33.

Cherubs. Angels of high rank having special duties. They are different from seraphs.—Ge 3:24; Ex 25:20; Isa 37:16; Heb 9:5.

Chief Agent. The Greek term basically means “Chief Leader.” It refers to the essential role of Jesus Christ in freeing faithful humans from the deadly effects of sin and in leading them to everlasting life.—Ac 3:15; 5:31; Heb 2:10; 12:2.

Chief priest. An alternate term for “high priest” in the Hebrew Scriptures. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the expression “chief priests” evidently denoted the principal men of the priesthood, including any deposed high priests and possibly the heads of the 24 priestly divisions.—2Ch 26:20; Ezr 7:5; Mt 2:4; Mr 8:31.

Chislev. After the Jews’ return from Babylon, the name of the ninth month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the third month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-November to mid-December. (Ne 1:1; Zec 7:1) —See  App. B15.

Christ. The title of Jesus, from the Greek word *Khri-stos'*, which is equivalent to the Hebrew word translated “Messiah,” or “Anointed One.”—Mt 1:16; Joh 1:41.

Christian. A God-given name for the followers of Jesus Christ.—Ac 11:26; 26:28.

Christian Greek Scriptures. A designation for the last 27 books of the Bible, commonly called the New Testament. The books were written by eight Jewish Christians: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, and Jude. (Ro 3:1, 2) Matthew apparently wrote his account in Hebrew and translated it into Greek. His translation and the rest of the books were written in Koine, or common Greek. (Thus the designation “Greek Scriptures.”) “Christian” refers to the contents of the books, which include information about the life, ministry,

and teachings of Jesus Christ and his early followers. “Christian” also distinguishes this part of the Bible from the pre-Christian Greek *Septuagint* translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Circumcision. The removal of the foreskin of the male genital organ. The procedure was made mandatory for Abraham and his descendants, but it is not a requirement for Christians. It is also used figuratively in a variety of contexts.—Ge 17:10; 1Co 7:19; Php 3:3.

Cities of refuge. Levite cities where an unintentional manslayer could seek asylum from the avenger of blood. Six such cities, spread throughout the Promised Land, were appointed by Moses and later by Joshua, under Jehovah’s direction. Upon reaching a city of refuge, the fugitive stated his case to the elders at the city gate and was received hospitably. To prevent willful murderers from taking advantage of this provision, the asylum seeker had to stand trial in the city where the killing took place in order to prove his innocence. If proved innocent, he was returned to the city of refuge, where he had to stay within its boundaries for the rest of his life or until the death of the high priest.—Nu 35:6, 11-15, 22-29; Jos 20:2-8.

City of David. The name given to the city of Jebus after David conquered it and built his royal residence there. It is also called Zion. It is the southeastern part as well as the oldest part of Jerusalem.—2Sa 5:7; 1Ch 11:4, 5.

Clean. Biblically, this word refers not only to physical cleanliness but also to maintaining or restoring to a condition that is without blemish, spotless, and free from anything that soils, adulterates, or corrupts in a moral or spiritual way. Under the Mosaic Law, the word refers to being ceremonially clean.—Le 10:10; Ps 51:7; Mt 8:2; 1Co 6:11.

Communion offering. A sacrifice presented to Jehovah as a request for peace with him. The worshipper and his household, the officiating priest, and the priests on duty all partook of it. Jehovah received, as it were, the pleasing smoke of the burning fat. The blood, representing the life, was also given to him. It was as if the priests and the worshippers sat at the meal together with Jehovah, signifying a peaceful relationship.—Le 7:29, 32; De 27:7.

Conclusion of the system of things.

The period of time leading up to the end of the system of things, or state of affairs, dominated by Satan. It runs concurrently with Christ’s presence. Under the direction of Jesus, angels will “separate the wicked from among the righteous” and destroy them. (Mt 13:40-42, 49) Jesus’ disciples were interested in the timing of that “conclusion.” (Mt 24:3) Before his return to heaven, he promised his followers that he would be with them until that time.—Mt 28:20.

Concubine. A secondary wife who was often a slave girl.—Ex 21:8; 2Sa 5:13; 1Ki 11:3.

Congregation. A group of people gathered together for a particular purpose or activity. In the Hebrew Scriptures, it generally refers to the nation of Israel. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, it refers to individual congregations of Christians but more often to the Christian congregation in general.—1Ki 8:22; Ac 9:31; Ro 16:5.

Coptic translations. During the third century C.E., various translators, working independently of one another, rendered portions of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Greek Scriptures into Coptic. That was a language of ancient Egypt, using an alphabet mainly derived from Greek. Ancient manuscripts of the Bible are found in several Coptic dialects, including Sahidic and Bohairic. The Coptic versions of the Bible were

translated from Greek. It seems that most Bible books were available in Coptic by the beginning of the fourth century C.E. The oldest complete Coptic codices of the Gospels available today date from the 11th or the 12th century C.E., but copies of single Bible books, or portions of them, date back to as early as the fourth and fifth centuries C.E. The value of the Coptic translations, particularly the early ones, is that they were based on Greek texts that predate many existing Greek manuscripts. The Coptic translations may shed light on the ancient texts from which they were translated. For example, some Coptic translations render Joh 1:1 in a way that indicates that Jesus, who is referred to as “a god,” is not the same person as Almighty God.

Copyist. In the Bible, this term refers to a person who made copies of portions of the Scriptures and other documents. (Ezr 7:6) In ancient times, copies of written text were made by hand—a slow, painstaking process that demanded great skill. (Ps 45:1) Copyists specifically named in the Bible are Ezra, Zadok, and Shaphan. (Ne 12:26; 13:13; Jer 36:10) Copyists helped preserve the inspired Scriptures when the aging originals deteriorated. There was also an increasing demand for copies of the Scriptures as the number of readers grew. The work of a copyist often included meticulous checking and correction procedures. Some copyists even counted both the words and the letters of what they copied. Skill and a careful checking process no doubt helped such copyists to preserve God’s Word through the centuries.

Cor. A dry and a liquid measure. It equaled 220 L (58.1 gal/200 dry qt), based on the estimated volume of the bath measure. (1Ki 5:11)—See  App. B14.

Coral. A hard, stonelike substance that is formed from the skeletons of

tiny sea animals. It is found in the ocean in a variety of colors, including red, white, and black. Corals were especially plentiful in the Red Sea. In Bible times, red coral was highly prized and was made into beads and other ornaments.—Pr 8:11.

Cornerstone. A stone placed at the angle, or corner, of a building where two walls meet, important in joining and binding them together. The principal cornerstone was the foundation cornerstone; a particularly strong one was generally chosen for public buildings and city walls. The word is used in a figurative sense for the founding of the earth, and Jesus is spoken of as “the foundation cornerstone” of the Christian congregation, which is likened to a spiritual house.—Eph 2:20; Job 38:6.

Courtyard. The fenced, open area surrounding the tabernacle, and later one of the walled, open-air yards around the main building of the temple. The altar of burnt offering was located in the courtyard of the tabernacle and in the inner courtyard of the temple. (See  App. B5, B8, B11.) The Bible also mentions courtyards in connection with houses and palaces.—Ex 8:13; 27:9; 1Ki 7:12; Es 4:11; Mt 26:3.

Covenant. A formal agreement, or contract, between God and humans or between two human parties to do or refrain from doing something. Sometimes only one party was responsible to carry out the terms (a unilateral covenant, which was essentially a promise). At other times both parties had terms to carry out (a bilateral covenant). Besides covenants made by God with humans, the Bible mentions covenants between men, tribes, nations, or groups of people. Among the covenants that have had a far-reaching effect are those that God made with Abraham, David, the nation of Israel (Law covenant), and the Israel of God (new covenant).—Ge 9:11; 15:18; 21:27; Ex 24:7; 2Ch 21:7.

Cubit. A linear measure roughly the distance from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. The Israelites commonly used a cubit of about 44.5 cm (17.5 in.), but they also used a larger cubit that was one handbreadth longer, about 51.8 cm (20.4 in.). (Ge 6:15; Lu 12:25)—See  App. B14.

Curse. To threaten or pronounce evil on someone or something. It is not to be confused with profanity or with violent anger. A curse is often a formal declaration of a pronouncement or prediction of evil, and when made by God or by an authorized person, it has a prophetic value and force.—Ge 12:3; Nu 22:12; Ga 3:10.

Curtain. The beautifully woven piece of fabric embroidered with figures of cherubs that separated the Holy from the Most Holy in both the tabernacle and the temple. (Ex 26:31; 2Ch 3:14; Mt 27:51; Heb 9:3)—See  App. B5.

D

Dagon. A god of the Philistines. The etymology of the word is uncertain, but some scholars associate it with the Hebrew word *dagh* (fish).—Jg 16:23; 1Sa 5:4.

Daric. A Persian gold coin weighing 8.4 g (0.27 oz t). (1Ch 29:7)—See  App. B14.

Day of Atonement. The most important holy day for the Israelites, also called Yom Kippur (from Hebrew *yohm hak-kip-pu-rim*, “day of the coverings”), held on Ethanim 10. This was the only day of the year on which the high priest went into the Most Holy of the tabernacle and later of the temple. There he offered the blood of the sacrifices for his sins, the sins of the other Levites, and the sins of the people. It was a time of holy convention and fasting, and it was also a sabbath, a time to abstain from regular work.—Le 23:27, 28.

Daystar. Similar in meaning to “morning star.” It is the last star to rise on the eastern horizon before the sun appears, thus heralding the dawn of a new day.—Re 22:16; 2Pe 1:19.

Decapolis. A group of Greek cities, originally made up of ten cities (from Greek *de’ka*, meaning “ten,” and *po’lis*, “city”). It was also the name for the region east of the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River, where most of these cities were located. They were centers of Hellenistic culture and trade. Jesus passed through this region, but there is no record of his having visited any of the cities. (Mt 4:25; Mr 5:20)—See  App. A7 and B10.

Dedication, holy sign of. A shining plate of pure gold engraved with the words, in Hebrew, “Holiness belongs to Jehovah.” It was put on the front of the turban of the high priest. (Ex 39:30)—See  App. B5.

Definite article. A grammatical term for a part of speech used in some languages. Its use varies greatly from language to language. The English definite article “the” is used to restrict the meaning of a noun, to point to a specific person or thing, or to indicate that someone or something has previously been mentioned or is well-known; it may even be used for emphasis. Koine Greek has the definite article (*ho*), which in some respects is the equivalent of the English definite article. The Greek definite article may be used to restrict the meaning of a noun to refer to a specific person or thing. For example, the Greek word *di-a’bo-los*, rendered “slanderer,” is often used with the definite article, making it refer to a specific being, the Devil (*ho di-a’bo-los*, meaning “the Slanderer”). Sometimes the definite article is used with the title “Christ” (*ho Khri-stos*) and rendered “the Christ”; this construction evidently emphasizes Jesus’ office as the

Messiah. The Greek definite article changes form, depending on gender, number, and case. At times, it may provide information on whether the noun is used as a subject or an object, whether a name is masculine or feminine, and so forth. Certain forms of the Greek definite article require the addition of a preposition, such as “of” or “to,” when rendered into English and other languages. If a noun has no article in Koine, it may, depending on the context, be rendered with an indefinite article or as an adjective. For example, when the Greek word *di-a'bo-los* is used without the article, it may be translated “a slanderer” or “slanderous.” (Joh 6:70; 1Ti 3:11; Tit 2:3)—For more information on the Greek definite article, see *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*, Appendix 7B, “Features of Biblical Greek—the Article.”

Demons. Invisible, wicked spirit creatures having superhuman powers. Called “the sons of the true God” at Genesis 6:2 and “angels” at Jude 6, they were not created wicked; rather, they were angels who made themselves enemies of God by disobeying him in Noah’s day and joining in Satan’s rebellion against Jehovah.—De 32:17; Lu 8:30; Ac 16:16; Jas 2:19.

Denarius. A Roman silver coin that weighed about 3.85 g (0.124 oz t) and bore an image of Caesar on one side. It was the daily wage of a laborer and was the “head tax” coin exacted by the Romans from the Jews. (Mt 22:17; Lu 20:24)—See  App. B14.

Devil. The descriptive name of Satan in the Christian Greek Scriptures, which means “Slanderer.” Satan was given the name Devil because he is the chief and foremost slanderer and false accuser of Jehovah, His good word, and His holy name.—Mt 4:1; Joh 8:44; Re 12:9.

Diminutive. The form of a noun that generally denotes smallness. For ex-

ample, the Greek terms for “fish” and “boat” are rendered “small fish” and “small boat” when in the diminutive form. (Mt 15:34; Mr 3:9) In addition to size, the diminutive may suggest youth, affection, familiarity and, in some cases, even contempt. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, diminutives are often used to indicate affection and familiarity. For example, Jesus described his humble followers as “little sheep” (Joh 21:15-17), and the apostle John addressed fellow Christians as “little children.”—1Jo 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21.

Diocletian. A Roman emperor who ruled from 284-305 C.E. Diocletian is known for making vicious attacks on Christians as well as for issuing edicts to destroy copies of the Holy Scriptures. Despite his attempts to do away with all early Christian literature, thousands of ancient fragments and manuscripts have been preserved until our day. (See  App. A3, “How the Bible Came to Us.”) He was named Diocles when he was born in the Roman province of Dalmatia; his full name was Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus. He became sole ruler in 285 C.E., and his secular reforms brought a measure of stability to the Roman Empire. Diocletian divided the empire administratively into a tetrarchy, or four-ruler system. He also divided it into eastern and western regions—a move that some historians believe paved the way for the rise of the Byzantine Empire. He abdicated in 305 C.E. and died a few years later, disillusioned by the quarrels among his successors. The final years of his reign saw the last major persecution of Christians. Reasons given for the persecution include the desire to restore complete unity without the tolerance of an alleged foreign cult that was seen as separatist and the influence of anti-Christian philosophers. Another reason given is the influence of Diocletian’s successor, Galerius, a fanatical follower of the traditional Roman religion.

Director. As used in the Psalms, the Hebrew term seems to refer to one who in some way arranged songs and directed the singing of them, rehearsed and trained the Levite singers, and even led official performances. Other translations render this term “chief musician” or “musical director.”—Ps 4:Sup; 5:Sup.

Dirge. A composition, lyrical or musical, expressing deep sorrow, such as the grief expressed because of the death of a friend or a loved one; a lamentation.—2Sa 1:17; Ps 7:Sup.

Drachma. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, this word refers to a Greek silver coin, which at that time weighed 3.4 g (0.109 oz t). In the Hebrew Scriptures, there is reference to a gold drachma from the Persian period that is equated with the daric. (Ne 7:70; Mt 17:24)—See  App. B14.

Drink offering. An offering of wine that was poured out on the altar and presented along with most other offerings. Used figuratively by Paul to express his willingness to expend himself for fellow Christians.—Nu 15:5, 7; Php 2:17.

E

Edom. Another name given to Esau, son of Isaac. The descendants of Esau (Edom) took over the area of Seir, the mountainous region between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of ‘Aqaba. It became known as Edom. (Ge 25:30; 36:8)—See  App. B3 and B4.

Elder; Older man. A man of mature age, but in the Scriptures, one who primarily holds a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. The word is also used of heavenly creatures in the book of Revelation. The Greek word *pre-sby'-te-ros* is translated “elder” when it refers to those responsible for taking the lead in the congregation.—Ex 4:29; Pr 31:23; 1Ti 5:17; Re 4:4.

Elul. After the Babylonian exile, the name of the 6th month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the 12th month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-August to mid-September. (Ne 6:15)—See  App. B15.

Ephah. A dry measure capacity and the container itself, used for measuring grains. It was equal to a liquid bath measure, so it amounted to 22 L (20 dry qt). (Ex 16:36; Eze 45:10)—See  App. B14.

Ephod. An apronlike garment worn by priests. The high priest wore a special ephod, on the front of which was mounted the breastpiece with 12 precious stones. (Ex 28:4, 6)—See  App. B5.

Ephraim. The name of Joseph's second son; this name was subsequently applied to one of the tribes of Israel. After Israel was divided, Ephraim, as the most prominent tribe, came to represent the entire ten-tribe kingdom.—Ge 41:52; Jer 7:15.

Epicurean philosophers. Followers of the Greek philosopher Epicurus (341-270 B.C.E.). Their philosophy centered on the idea that the pleasure of the individual was the ultimate goal in life.—Ac 17:18.

Ethanim. The name of the seventh month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the first month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-September to mid-October. After the Jews' return from Babylon, it was called Tishri. (1Ki 8:2)—See  App. B15.

Ethiopia. An ancient nation south of Egypt. It included the southernmost part of modern-day Egypt and the northern half of modern-day Sudan. The expression is sometimes used for the Hebrew "Cush."—Es 1:1.

Eunuch. In a literal sense, a castrated male. Such men were often appointed in royal courts as attendants or caretakers of the queen and the concubines. The term also refers to

a man who was, not a literal eunuch, but an official assigned to duties in the court of the king. It is used figuratively for a 'eunuch for the Kingdom,' one who exercises self-control so as to apply himself more fully to the service of God.—Mt 19:12; Es 2:15; Ac 8:27.

Euphrates. The longest and most important river of southwest Asia, and one of the two major rivers in Mesopotamia. It is first mentioned at Genesis 2:14 as one of the four rivers of Eden. It is often called "the River." (Ge 31:21) It was the northern boundary of Israel's assigned territory. (Ge 15:18; Re 16:12)—See  App. B2.

Eusebius of Caesarea.

(c. 260–c. 340 C.E.) A historian, scholar, and theologian, likely born in Caesarea, Israel. Eusebius became known as the father of church history. He was also called Eusebius of Caesarea and Eusebius Pamphili, after Pamphilus, an overseer of the church in Caesarea. Eusebius became bishop of Caesarea in about 313 C.E. Eusebius' writings are of interest to Bible students in identifying some geographical places mentioned in the Bible and in providing background information on certain Bible books. Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, published about 324 C.E., is considered the most important church history dating from antiquity. This well-known work covers in chronological order the early Christian history from the time of the apostles to his own time. In *Ecclesiastical History* (III, V, 3), Eusebius states that prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., the Christians fled the city and the land of Judea to a city of Perea (on the other side of the Jordan) that was called Pella. His account verifies that Christians heeded Jesus' warning to flee when they saw Jerusalem surrounded by Roman armies. (Lu 21:20-22) Eusebius was excommunicated for maintaining the view that Christ was subordinate to

the Father. However, at the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E., he gave his support to the opposing view and was exonerated. There, serving as theological adviser to Constantine I, Eusebius extolled the emperor's efforts to unify Christian doctrine. After Constantine's death, Eusebius wrote the *Life of Constantine*, a formal eulogy. Eusebius' compromising stand at Nicaea apparently reflected a greater concern for his position than for Bible truth.

Exile. Expulsion from one's native land or home, often decreed by conquerors. The Hebrew word means "a departing." The Israelites experienced two major exiles. The northern ten-tribe kingdom was taken into exile by the Assyrians, and later the southern two-tribe kingdom was taken into exile by the Babylonians. Remnants of both exiles were returned to their land under Cyrus, the Persian ruler.—2Ki 17:6; 24:16; Eze 6:21.

Extinguishers. Tools used in the tabernacle and temple, made of gold or copper. They may have been like scissors for trimming the lampwicks.—2Ki 25:14.

F

Fast. Abstinence from all food for a limited period. The Israelites practiced fasting on the Day of Atonement, in times of distress, and when in need of divine guidance. The Jews established four annual fasts to mark calamitous events in their history. Fasting is not a requirement for Christians.—Eze 8:21; Isa 58:6; Lu 18:12.

Fathom. A linear unit for measuring the depth of water, equal to 1.8 m (6 ft). (Ac 27:28)—See  App. B14.

Festival of Booths. Also called the Festival of Tabernacles, or the Festival of Ingathering. It was held on

Ethanim 15-21. It celebrated the harvest at the end of the agricultural year for Israel and was a time of rejoicing and thanksgiving for Jehovah's blessings on their crops. During the days of the festival, people lived in booths, or rooflike shelters, to remind them of the Exodus from Egypt. It was one of the three festivals that males were required to go to Jerusalem to observe.—Le 23:34; Ezr 3:4.

Festival of Dedication. The annual day of remembrance for the cleansing of the temple after its defilement by Antiochus Epiphanes. The celebration began on Chislev 25 and lasted for eight days.—Joh 10:22.

Festival of Harvest; Festival of Weeks.—See PENTECOST.

Festival of Unleavened Bread. The first of the three major annual festivals of the Israelites. It began on Nisan 15, the day after Passover, and continued for seven days. Only unleavened bread could be eaten, in remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt.—Ex 23:15; Mr 14:1.

Fire holders. Utensils made of gold, silver, or copper, used at the tabernacle and the temple for burning incense and for removing coals from the sacrificial altar and burnt lampwicks from the golden lampstand. They were also called censers.—Ex 37:23; 2Ch 26:19; Heb 9:4.

Firstborn. Primarily, the oldest son of a father (rather than the firstborn of the mother). In Bible times, the firstborn son held an honored position in the family and was given the headship of the household when the father died. The term also refers to the first male offspring of animals, at times called “firstlings.”—Ex 11:5; 13:12; Ge 25:33; Col 1:15.

Firstfruits. The earliest fruits of a harvest season; the first results or products of anything. Jehovah required the nation of Israel to offer their firstfruits to him, whether it be of man, animal, or the fruitage of the

ground. As a nation, the Israelites offered firstfruits to God at the Festival of Unleavened Bread and at Pentecost. The term “firstfruits” was also used figuratively of Christ and his anointed followers.—1Co 15:23; Nu 15:21; Pr 3:9; Re 14:4.

Fornication.—See SEXUAL IMMORALITY.

Fortune-teller. An individual claiming ability to foretell future events. Magic-practicing priests, spiritistic diviners, astrologers, and others are listed in the Bible as such.—Le 19:31; De 18:11; Ac 16:16.

Frankincense. Dried sap (gum resin) from trees and bushes of certain species of the genus *Boswellia*. When burned, it gave off a sweet-smelling fragrance. It was an ingredient of the holy incense used at the tabernacle and the temple. It also accompanied grain offerings and was placed on each row of the showbread inside the Holy.—Ex 30:34-36; Le 2:1; 24:7; Mt 2:11.

Freeman; Freedman. During Roman rule, a “freeman” was one who was born free, possessing full rights of citizenship. In contrast, a “freedman” was one emancipated from slavery. Formal emancipation granted the freedman Roman citizenship, but he was not eligible for political office. Informal emancipation freed the individual from slavery but did not give full civil rights.—1Co 7:22.

Furnace. A structure for smelting ore or melting metal; also used to fire pottery and other ceramic items. In Bible times, furnaces were made of brick or stone. A furnace for firing pottery and ceramics and for burning lime is also called a kiln.—Ge 15:17; Da 3:17; Re 9:2.

G

Gehenna. The Greek name for the Valley of Hinnom, south and south-

west of ancient Jerusalem. (Jer 7:31) It was prophetically spoken of as a place where dead bodies would be strewn. (Jer 7:32; 19:6) There is no evidence that animals or humans were thrown into Gehenna to be burned alive or tormented. So the place could not symbolize an invisible region where human souls are tormented eternally in literal fire. Rather, Gehenna was used by Jesus and his disciples to symbolize the eternal punishment of “second death,” that is, everlasting destruction, annihilation.—Re 20:14; Mt 5:22; 10:28.

Gerah. A weight equivalent to 0.57 g (0.01835 oz t). It corresponded to 1/20 shekel. (Le 27:25)—See  App. B14.

Gifts of mercy. Gifts given to help someone in need. These are not directly mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, but the Law gave specific directions to the Israelites about their obligations toward the poor.—Mt 6:2.

Gilead. In a strict sense, the fertile area east of the Jordan River that extended north and south of the Valley of Jabbok. At times used for the entire Israelite territory east of the Jordan, where the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh lived. (Nu 32:1; Jos 12:2; 2Ki 10:33)—See  App. B4.

Gittith. A musical term of uncertain meaning, though it seems to be derived from the Hebrew word *gath*. Some believe that it may be a melody associated with songs related to wine making, since *gath* refers to a winepress.—Ps 81:Sup.

Glean. To gather whatever portion of a crop the harvesters had intentionally or unintentionally left behind. The Mosaic Law directed the people not to reap the edges of their fields completely nor to take all the olives or grapes. It was the God-given right of the poor, the afflicted, the foreign resident, the fatherless child, and the

widow to glean what was left after harvest.—Ru 2:7.

Goad. A long rod with a sharp metal point, used by farmers to prod an animal. The goad is compared to the words of a wise person that move the listener to heed wise counsel. “Kicking against the goads” is drawn from the action of a stubborn bull that resists the prodding of the goad by kicking against it, resulting in injury to itself.—Ac 26:14; Jg 3:31.

Godly devotion. Reverence, worship, and service to Jehovah God, with loyalty to his universal sovereignty.—1Ti 4:8; 2Ti 3:12.

God’s Kingdom. The phrase used particularly of God’s sovereignty represented by the royal government of his Son, Christ Jesus.—Mt 12:28; Lu 4:43; 1Co 15:50.

Good news, the. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the good news of the Kingdom of God and of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.—Lu 4:18, 43; Ac 5:42; Re 14:6.

Gospel. A term commonly used for the first four books of the Christian Greek Scriptures. These books provide a historical account of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The word “gospel” is derived from the old English *godspel*, which means “good news; good tidings.” In some Bible translations, “gospel” is used to render the Greek word *eu-ag-ge’li-on*, meaning “good news.” (Mt 4:23; 24:14; Mr 1:14) As used in the Bible, the gospel, or good news, refers to the message about the Kingdom of God and of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Mark’s account begins with the words: “The beginning of the good news about [or, “the gospel of”] Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” Some scholars believe that this may have been the reason why the term “gospel” came to be used to describe all four accounts. Although none of the Gospel writers identified

themselves as such, there is substantial evidence that these books were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John respectively. The first three of these books are sometimes called synoptic (meaning “like view”) because they have a relatively similar approach to documenting what Jesus said and did. However, God allowed each of the four men to write in a way that reflected his individual personality.

Grave. When lowercased, referring to an individual grave; when capitalized, the common grave of mankind, equivalent to the Hebrew “Sheol” and the Greek “Hades.” It is described in the Bible as a symbolic place or condition wherein all activity and consciousness cease.—Ge 47:30; Ec 9:10; Ac 2:31.

Great tribulation. The Greek word for “tribulation” conveys the idea of distress or suffering resulting from the pressures of circumstances. Jesus spoke of an unprecedented “great tribulation” that would come upon Jerusalem and especially of one that would later befall mankind in connection with his future ‘coming with glory.’ (Mt 24:21, 29-31) Paul described this tribulation as a righteous act of God against “those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news” about Jesus Christ. Revelation chapter 19 shows Jesus as the one leading heavenly armies against “the wild beast and the kings of the earth and their armies.” (2Th 1:6-8; Re 19:11-21) “A great crowd” is shown as surviving that tribulation. (Re 7:9, 14) —See ARMAGEDDON.

Greek. The language spoken by the people of Greece; also, a native of Greece or one whose family originated there. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the word also has a broader usage, referring to all non-Jewish peoples or to those who were influenced by Greek language and culture.—Joe 3:6; Joh 12:20.

Guilt offering. A sacrifice for personal sins. It differed slightly from other sin offerings in that it was to satisfy or restore certain covenant rights that the repentant wrongdoer had lost because of a sin and to give him relief from the penalty.—Le 7:37; 19:22; Isa 53:10.

H

Hades. A Greek word corresponding to the Hebrew word “Sheol.” It is translated “Grave” (capitalized), to distinguish it as the common grave of mankind.—See GRAVE.

Hebrew. A designation first used for Abram (Abraham), distinguishing him from his Amorite neighbors. It was used thereafter to refer to Abraham’s descendants through his grandson Jacob as well as to their language. By the time of Jesus, the Hebrew language had come to include many Aramaic expressions and was the language spoken by Christ and his disciples.—Ge 14:13; Ex 5:3; Ac 26:14.

Hermes. A Greek god, son of Zeus. In Lystra, Paul was mistakenly called Hermes in reference to that god’s supposed role as messenger of the gods and the god of skillful speech.—Ac 14:12.

Herod. The family name of a dynasty that ruled over the Jews by appointment from Rome. Herod the Great was famous for rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem and for ordering the slaughter of children in an attempt to destroy Jesus. (Mt 2:16; Lu 1:5) Herod Archelaus and Herod Antipas, sons of Herod the Great, were appointed over sections of their father’s domain. (Mt 2:22) Antipas was a tetrarch, popularly referred to as “king,” who ruled during Christ’s three-and-a-half-year ministry and through the period up to Acts chapter 12. (Mr 6:14-17; Lu 3:1, 19, 20; 13:31, 32; 23:6-15; Ac 4:27; 13:1) Af-

ter that, Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great, was executed by God's angel after ruling for a short time. (Ac 12:1-6, 18-23) His son, Herod Agrippa II, became ruler and reigned up to the time of the Jewish revolt against Rome.—Ac 23:35; 25:13, 22-27; 26:1, 2, 19-32.

Herod, party followers of. Also known as Herodians. They were a party of nationalists who supported the political aims of the Herods in their rule under the Romans. Some of the Sadducees probably belonged to this party. The Herodians joined with the Pharisees to oppose Jesus.—Mr 3:6.

Higgaion. A technical term of musical direction. As used at Psalm 9:16, the word may signify either a solemn, deep-toned harp interlude or a solemn pause conducive to meditation.

High place. A place of worship usually on top of a hill, a mountain, or a man-made platform. Although high places were sometimes used for the worship of God, they are most often associated with pagan worship of false gods.—Nu 33:52; 1Ki 3:2; Jer 19:5.

High priest. Under the Mosaic Law, the principal priest who represented the people before God and supervised the other priests. Also called "the chief priest." (2Ch 26:20; Ezr 7:5) He alone was allowed to enter the Most Holy, the innermost compartment of the tabernacle and later of the temple. He did so only on the annual Day of Atonement. The term "high priest" is also applied to Jesus Christ.—Le 16:2, 17; 21:10; Mt 26:3; Heb 4:14.

Hin. A liquid measure and the container for that measure. It is equivalent to 3.67 L (7.75 pt), based on a statement by the historian Josephus that a hin equaled two Athenian choes. (Ex 29:40)—See  App. B14.

Holy; Holiness. A quality possessed inherently by Jehovah; a state of absolute moral purity and sacredness. (Ex 28:36; 1Sa 2:2; Pr 9:10; Isa 6:3) When referring to humans (Ex 19:6; 2Ki 4:9), animals (Nu 18:17), things (Ex 28:38; 30:25; Le 27:14), places (Ex 3:5; Isa 27:13), time periods (Ex 16:23; Le 25:12), and activities (Ex 36:4), the original Hebrew word conveys the thought of separateness, exclusiveness, or sanctification to the holy God; a state of being set aside for Jehovah's service. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the words rendered "holy" and "holiness" likewise denote separation to God. The words are also used to refer to purity in one's personal conduct.—Mr 6:20; 2Co 7:1; 1Pe 1:15, 16.

Holy, the. The first and larger compartment of the tabernacle or of the temple, as distinguished from the innermost compartment, the Most Holy. In the tabernacle, the Holy contained the golden lampstand, golden altar of incense, table of showbread, and golden utensils; in the temple, it contained the golden altar, ten golden lampstands, and ten tables of showbread. (Ex 26:33; Heb 9:2)—See  App. B5 and B8.

Holy spirit. The invisible energizing force that God puts into action to accomplish his will. It is holy because it comes from Jehovah, who is clean and righteous to the highest degree, and because it is God's means to accomplish what is holy.—Lu 1:35; Ac 1:8.

Homer. A dry measure corresponding to the cor. Based on the estimated volume of the bath measure, it equaled 220 L (200 dry qt). (Le 27:16)—See  App. B14.

Horeb; Mount Horeb. The mountainous region surrounding Mount Sinai. Another name for Mount Sinai. (Ex 3:1; De 5:2)—See  App. B3.

Horn. Referring to animal horns, which were used as drinking vessels,

as vessels for oil, as containers for ink and cosmetics, and as musical or signaling instruments. (1Sa 16:1, 13; 1Ki 1:39; Eze 9:2) "Horn" is often used figuratively for strength, conquest, and victory.—De 33:17; Mic 4:13; Zec 1:19.

Horns of the altar. Hornlike projections extending outward from the four corners of certain altars. (Le 8:15; 1Ki 2:28)—See  App. B5 and B8.

Hort, Fenton John Anthony. (1828-1892) A Bible scholar and theologian who was born in Dublin, Ireland, and educated at Cambridge University, England. Hort later became a professor at Cambridge, an office he held until his death. He also served as an ordained minister of the Church of England. Hort and fellow collaborator, B. F. Westcott, prepared a scholarly edition of the Greek text of the Christian Greek Scriptures entitled *The New Testament in Greek*, first published in 1881. This work was one of the scholarly editions of the Greek text consulted during the preparation of the original *New World Translation* and the 2013 revision.

Hyperbole. A figure of speech that employs intentional and obvious exaggeration or overstatement for emphasis or effect. Hyperbole should not be taken literally. Jesus often used hyperbole in his teaching. For example, he said: "Why . . . do you look at the straw in your brother's eye but do not notice the rafter in your own eye?" (Mt 7:3) Another example is when he said: "Not even a hair of your heads will perish." (Lu 21:18) He was obviously not saying that every hair of each of his disciples would be preserved. Rather, by using hyperbole, Jesus left no doubt that his followers would be protected despite being "hated by all people."—Lu 21:17.

Hyssop. A plant with fine branches and leaves, used for sprinkling blood or water in cleansing ceremonies. It

was possibly marjoram (*Origanum maru*; *Origanum syriacum*). As used at John 19:29, it may have been marjoram attached to a branch or durra, a variety of common sorghum (*Sorghum vulgare*), since this plant could have provided a stalk long enough to carry the sponge of sour wine to Jesus' mouth.—Ex 12:22; Ps 51:7.

I

Idiom. An expression that has a meaning different from the sense conveyed by the individual words or by the elements that make up the expression. Like other languages, Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek contain many idiomatic expressions. A reader must understand idioms used in the Bible if he is to comprehend its message correctly. And translators must understand them if they are to translate them accurately. Depending on a Bible reader's language, culture, or background, some idioms can easily be understood, even if translated literally. (See study notes on Mt 5:2; 10:27; 24:31.) Other idioms may need to be explained in order to be fully understood by those not familiar with the Bible's original languages. (See study notes on Mt 26:23; Mr 5:34; 14:40.) And still other idioms may need to be translated according to their meaning, with the literal meaning being given in footnotes or study notes. (See study notes on Mt 9:15; Lu 10:6; 12:35.) Examples of idiomatic expressions found in the Bible are: "To walk in" or "to walk according to" means "to live according to; to follow." (Ps 1:1; 25:5; 89:30) The phrase "to go in the way of all the earth" is a Hebrew idiom for "to die." (Jos 23:14; ftn.) The Greek expression "to have in the belly" means "to be pregnant." (Mt 1:18, 23) The expression "to break bread" used at Ac 20:7 means "to have a meal," bread being a staple in

Bible lands.—For the examples taken from the Christian Greek Scriptures, see *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*.

Idol; Idolatry. An idol is an image, a representation of anything, real or imagined, that people may use in worship. Idolatry is the veneration, love, worship, or adoration of an idol.—Ps 115:4; Ac 17:16; 1Co 10:14.

Illyricum. A Roman province northwest of Greece. Paul traveled this far in his ministry, but it is not stated whether he preached in Illyricum or merely up to it. (Ro 15:19)—See  App. B13.

Incense. A compound of aromatic gums and balsams that burns slowly, giving off a fragrant aroma. A special four-ingredient incense was made for use at the tabernacle and the temple. It was burned morning and night on the altar of incense in the Holy compartment, and on the Day of Atonement, it was burned inside the Most Holy compartment. It was symbolic of the acceptable prayers of God's faithful servants. Its use was not required of Christians.—Ex 30:34, 35; Le 16:13; Re 5:8.

Interlinear translations. The term "interlinear" comes from a Latin word that means "between the lines." Such a translation of the Scriptures enables readers who are not familiar with the original languages to see what these literally state, which may help in examining the basis for a target-language rendering. Such word-for-word translations, however, reflect the grammar of the source language, often making the literal translation hard to understand. Hence, interlinear translations often have the parallel wording of a recognized Bible translation in a marginal column. For example, *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures* (Matthew to Revelation) uses the wording of the 1984 English revision of the *New World Translation*.

Israel. The name God gave to Jacob. It came to refer to all his descendants collectively, at any one time. The descendants of Jacob's 12 sons were often called the sons of Israel, the house of Israel, the people (men) of Israel, or the Israelites. Israel was also used as the name for the ten-tribe northern kingdom that broke away from the southern kingdom, and later as a term for anointed Christians, "the Israel of God."—Ga 6:16; Ge 32:28; 2Sa 7:23; Ro 9:6.

J

Jacob. A son of Isaac and Rebekah. God later gave him the name Israel, and he became the patriarch of the people of Israel (also called Israelites and later, Jews). He was the father of the 12 sons who, along with their descendants, made up the 12 tribes of the nation of Israel. The name Jacob continued to be used for the nation or people of Israel.—Ge 32:28; Mt 22:32.

Jeduthun. A term of uncertain meaning appearing in the superscriptions of Psalms 39, 62, and 77. These superscriptions appear to be instructions for the performance of the psalm, perhaps identifying a style or a musical instrument. There was a Levitical musician named Jeduthun, so this performance style or instrument may have been associated with him or his sons.

Jehovah. The common English rendering of the Tetragrammaton (the four Hebrew letters for the personal name of God), which appears over 7,000 times in this translation.—See  App. A4 and A5.

Jerome. (c. 347–c. 420 C.E.) A Bible scholar, priest, and monastic leader and for three years secretary to Pope Damasus in Rome. Jerome's Latin name was Eusebius Hieronymus; he was born in Stridon, in the Roman province of Dalmatia. Je-

rome is especially known for his translation of the Bible. Called the *Vulgate*, his translation was in the common, or popular, Latin of the day so that it could be easily understood by the ordinary people of the Western Roman Empire. The *Vulgate* was not just a revision of earlier Latin versions. Jerome endeavored to translate directly from the original languages, Hebrew and Greek, as well as from the Greek *Septuagint*. He spent the last 34 years of his life in Bethlehem, near Jerusalem, where he presided over a monastery, furthered his knowledge of Hebrew, and completed his translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. While the completed work included apocryphal books, which were by his time found in copies of the *Septuagint*, Jerome clearly distinguished between the books that were canonical and those that were not. In the course of his research, Jerome made an important discovery: The best *Septuagint* manuscripts available to him contained God's name in the form of the Tetragrammaton. Nevertheless, Jerome felt that this name was just one of what he considered to be ten names for God, thus confusing God's proper name with His titles. In his translation, Jerome substituted two of those titles—Lord and God—for the divine name.

Jew. A term used for a person of the tribe of Judah after the fall of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. (2Ki 16:6) After the Babylonian exile, it was used with regard to Israelites from various tribes who returned to Israel. (Ezr 4:12) Later, it was used throughout the world to distinguish Israelites from those of the Gentile nations. (Es 3:6) The term is also used figuratively by the apostle Paul when reasoning that nationality is of no consequence in the Christian congregation.—Ro 2:28, 29; Ga 3:28.

Josephus, Flavius.

(c. 37–c. 100 C.E.) A Jewish historian from a priestly family. Josephus

became a Pharisee and was later appointed by the Sanhedrin as a commander during the Jewish revolt against Rome. His original name was Joseph ben Matthias (Yoseph ben Mattityahu). During the Jewish revolt, Josephus and his men were defeated in Galilee in 67 C.E. He surrendered to the then Roman commander, Vespasian, who released him. As was the custom of the time, he adopted Vespasian's family name, Flavius. By then, Josephus had recognized Rome's superior strength, and he even attempted to mediate between the Romans and the besieged rebels in Jerusalem. After the city fell to Vespasian's son Titus in 70 C.E., Josephus accompanied Titus to Rome and there devoted himself to writing. His works include *The Jewish War*, *The Jewish Antiquities*, *Against Apion*, and his autobiography, entitled *Life*. Josephus is considered a credible but not infallible historian whose works fill important gaps in Jewish history and provide historical background for parts of the Bible. Next to the Bible, his writings are the main source of historical information regarding first-century Jerusalem and its temple. His writings also make reference to Jesus, Jesus' half brother James, and John the Baptist. Moreover, Josephus' eyewitness account of the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple sheds light on the fulfillment of Bible prophecy.—Da 9:24-27; Lu 19:41-44; 21:20-24.

Jubilee. Every 50th year, counting from Israel's entry into the Promised Land. The land was to lie fallow during the Jubilee year, and Hebrew slaves were to be set free. Hereditary lands that had been sold were returned. The Jubilee was, in a sense, an entire year of festival, a year of liberty that restored the nation to the state it had enjoyed when God first established it.—Le 25:10.

Judah. Jacob's fourth son by his wife Leah. In his deathbed prophecy, Ja-

cob foretold that a great and lasting ruler would come from Judah's family line. Jesus, in his human existence, descended from Judah. The name Judah also refers to the tribe and later to the kingdom named after Judah. Described as the southern kingdom, Judah was made up of the Israelite tribes of Judah and Benjamin and included the priests and Levites. Judah occupied the southern part of the country that included Jerusalem and the temple.—Ge 29:35; 49:10; 1Ki 4:20; Heb 7:14.

Judges. Men raised up by Jehovah to save his people prior to the period of Israel's human kings.—Jg 2:16.

Judgment Day. A specific day, or period, when particular groups, nations, or mankind in general are called to account by God. It may be a time when those judged to be deserving of death are executed, or the judgment may afford opportunity for some to be saved and gain everlasting life. Jesus Christ and his apostles pointed to a future "Judgment Day" involving not only the living but also those who died in the past.—Mt 12:36.

Judgment seat. Usually a raised outdoor platform, approached by steps, from which seated officials could address the crowds and announce their decisions. The expressions "judgment seat of God" and "judgment seat of the Christ" are symbolic of Jehovah's arrangement for judging mankind.—Ro 14:10; 2Co 5:10; Joh 19:13.

Justin Martyr. (c. 100–c. 165 C.E.) A Greek philosopher and theologian who wrote in defense of Christianity. He was born in Flavia Neapolis (now Nablus). Justin converted to Christianity in about 132 C.E., possibly at Ephesus, and was beheaded in Rome as a martyr. The only surviving works by Justin are *Apologies* and *Dialogue With Trypho, a Jew*. In his *Apologies*, Justin tried to defend Christians against a hostile Roman

State and the accusation that they were atheists. He also articulated his beliefs, which combined Scripture with Greek philosophy. His beliefs included the idea that God has no proper name. In his *Dialogue*, he argued that Jesus was the Messiah and that Judaism was obsolete. By combining Christianity with philosophy, Justin disregarded the inspired command to adhere to what is written. (1Co 4:6) Other so-called Church Fathers followed his example, accelerating the foretold apostasy. (Mt 13:38, 39; 2Pe 2:1) That said, because Justin lived soon after the death of the apostles, his writings have historical value. For example, they show that he accepted the established Jewish canon and rejected the apocryphal books.

L

Lake of fire. A symbolic place that “burns with fire and sulfur,” also described as “the second death.” Unrepentant sinners, the Devil, and even death and the Grave (or, Hades) are thrown into it. The inclusion of a spirit creature and also of death and Hades, all of which cannot be affected by fire, indicates that this lake is a symbol, not of everlasting torment, but of everlasting destruction.—Re 19:20; 20:14, 15; 21:8.

Last days. This and similar expressions, such as “the final part of the days,” are used in Bible prophecy to refer to the time when historical events would reach a final climax. (Eze 38:16; Da 10:14; Ac 2:17) Depending on the nature of the prophecy, this may be a period covering just a few years or many. Most notably, the Bible uses this term regarding “the last days” of the present system of things, during Jesus’ invisible presence.—2Ti 3:1; Jas 5:3; 2Pe 3:3.

Latin. A language belonging to the Indo-European family and the parent

of the Romance languages, namely, French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish. The word “Latin” itself occurs only once in the Bible, at Joh 19:20, where it is mentioned that the inscription placed above Jesus on the torture stake was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. When Jesus Christ was on earth, Latin was the language of the Roman authorities in Israel. It appeared on official inscriptions, although it was not the common language of the people. So it is not surprising to find various forms of Latinisms in the Christian Greek Scriptures. These contain over 40 Latin proper names of people and places, such as Aquila, Luke (*Lucas*), Mark (*Marcus*), Paul (*Paulus*), Caesarea, and Tiberias. In this part of the Bible are found Greek equivalents of some 30 Latin words of military, judicial, monetary, and domestic nature, such as *centurio* (Mr 15:39, army officer), *denarius* (Mt 20:2), and *speculator* (Mr 6:27, bodyguard). Certain Latin expressions or idioms also occur, such as “to satisfy” (Mr 15:15) and “taking sufficient security” (Ac 17:9). Latinisms are found mostly in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. In fact, Mark used more of them than any other Bible writer. This lends credence to the belief that he wrote his Gospel in Rome and mainly for Gentiles, particularly the Romans. Paul made little use of Latinisms, and none are found in the Greek *Septuagint*. The appearance of Latinisms in the Scriptures is of more than academic interest to Bible readers. It shows that Bible writers accurately depicted the Roman occupation of ancient Israel when Jesus was on earth. Further, the use of these and similar Latinisms by secular Greek writers of the same period argues that the Christian Scriptures were indeed produced during the times referred to. This testifies to the authenticity of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

Law. When it is capitalized, this word refers either to the Mosaic Law or to

the first five books of the Bible. When it is lowercased, it may refer to individual laws of the Mosaic Law or a principle of law.—Nu 15:16; De 4:8; Mt 7:12; Ga 3:24.

Lay hands on. Hands were laid on a person to appoint him to a special work or to designate him for a blessing, a healing, or a gift of the holy spirit. Sometimes hands were laid on animals before they were sacrificed.—Ex 29:15; Nu 27:18; Ac 19:6; 1Ti 5:22.

Leaven. A substance added to dough or to liquids to cause fermentation; especially a portion of fermented dough preserved from a previous batch. Often used in the Bible as a symbol of sin and corruption, it is also used to indicate hidden, pervasive growth.—Ex 12:20; Mt 13:33; Ga 5:9.

Lebanon Mountain range. One of the two mountain ranges forming the mountain system of the land of Lebanon. The Lebanon range is on the west, and the Anti-Lebanon range is on the east. A long, fertile valley separates the two ranges. The Lebanon range rises up almost directly from the Mediterranean coast, and its summits average between 1,800 and 2,100 m (6,000 and 7,000 ft) in elevation. In ancient times, Lebanon was covered with majestic cedars, which were highly prized by the surrounding nations. (De 1:7; Ps 29:6; 92:12)—See  App. B7.

Leprosy; Leper. A serious skin disease. In the Scriptures, leprosy is not restricted to the disease known by that name today, for it could affect not only humans but also clothing and houses. A person afflicted with leprosy is called a leper.—Le 14:54; Lu 5:12.

Lepton. In the Christian Greek Scripture period, the smallest Jewish copper or bronze coin. Translated as “mite” in some Bible versions. (Mr 12:42; Lu 21:2)—See  App. B14.

Levi; Levite. Jacob's third son by his wife Leah; also the tribe named after him. His three sons became the founders of the three principal divisions of the Levites. At times, the term "Levites" applies to the whole tribe, but usually it excludes the priestly family of Aaron. The tribe of Levi did not receive an allotment of land in the Promised Land but was given 48 cities within the boundaries of land apportioned to the other tribes.—De 10:8; 1Ch 6:1; Heb 7:11.

Leviathan. An animal usually associated with water, apparently some form of aquatic creature. At Job 3:8 and 41:1, it seems to refer to the crocodile or some other aquatic creature of great proportions and strength. At Psalm 104:26, it may be some type of whale. Elsewhere it is used figuratively and is not identifiable with any one animal.—Ps 74:14; Isa 27:1.

Loaves of presentation.—See SHOW-BREAD.

Locusts. A variety of grasshoppers that migrate in great swarms. They were considered clean for food in the Mosaic Law. Large swarms that consume everything in their path, causing massive destruction, were regarded as a plague.—Ex 10:14; Mt 3:4.

Log. The smallest liquid measure mentioned in the Bible. In the Jewish Talmud, it is described as 1/12 of a hin, so using that as a basis, the log would have a capacity of 0.31 L (0.66 pt). (Le 14:10)—See  App. B14.

Loom. A frame used for weaving threads or yarns into cloth.—Ex 39:27.

Lord's Evening Meal. A literal meal consisting of unleavened bread and wine as symbols of Christ's body and blood; a memorial of Jesus' death. Since this is an observance that Christians are Scripturally required to keep, it is also appropriately

termed "the Memorial."—1Co 11:20, 23-26.

Lots. Pebbles or small bits of wood or stone that were used in making decisions. These were gathered into the folds of a garment or into a vessel and then shaken. The lot that fell out or was drawn out was the one chosen. This was often done prayerfully. The term "lot" is used both literally and figuratively with the meaning "share" or "portion."—Jos 14:2; Ps 16:5; Pr 16:33; Mt 27:35.

Loyal love. Most frequently rendered from the Hebrew word *che'sedh*, referring to love motivated by commitment, integrity, loyalty, and deep attachment. It is often used in connection with God's love for humans, but it is also love shown between humans.—Ex 34:6; Ru 3:10.

M

Macedonia. A region north of Greece that gained prominence under Alexander the Great and remained independent until conquered by the Romans. Macedonia was a Roman province when the apostle Paul made his first visit to Europe. Paul visited the area three times. (Ac 16:9)—See  App. B13.

Magistrates. Under the government of Babylon, magistrates were civil officers in the jurisdictional districts who knew the law and had limited judicial authority. In Roman colonies, the civil magistrates were administrators of the government. Their duties included maintaining order, controlling finances, judging violators of the law, and ordering the carrying out of punishment.—Da 3:2; Ac 16:20.

Mahalath. A term, evidently musical, found in the superscriptions of Psalms 53 and 88. It may be related to a Hebrew root verb meaning "grow weak; fall sick," thereby suggesting a gloomy and sad tone, which would

harmonize with the somber content of the two songs.

Malcam. Probably the same as Molech, the chief god of the Ammonites. (Zep 1:5)—See MOLECH.

Manna. The main food of the Israelites during their 40 years in the wilderness. It was provided by Jehovah. It miraculously appeared on the ground under a layer of dew every morning except on the Sabbath. When the Israelites first saw it, they said, "What is it?" or, in Hebrew, "man hu?" (Ex 16:13-15, 35) In other contexts, it is referred to as "the grain of heaven" (Ps 78:24), "bread from heaven" (Ps 105:40), and "the bread of mighty ones" (Ps 78:25). Jesus also referred to manna in a figurative sense.—Joh 6:49, 50.

Manuscripts. A term often used to refer to ancient handwritten documents, such as books of the Bible. The word "manuscript" comes from the Latin *manu scriptus*, "handwritten." Ancient manuscripts were often made of parchment, vellum, or papyrus. Parchment was commonly made from the skins of cows, sheep, or goats; vellum, from the skins of very young animals. Papyrus, a primitive form of paper, was made from the papyrus plant, especially the pith. The original Bible manuscripts disappeared long ago. However, very old copies have been found, most notably the Dead Sea Scrolls of books of the Hebrew Scriptures. Some of these scrolls, including fragments, have been dated to the third century B.C.E. It is estimated that a total of about 6,000 manuscripts of the Hebrew Scriptures or parts thereof are still in existence in various libraries. Of the Christian Greek Scriptures, about 5,300 are in Greek and about 10,000 are in Latin, besides many other languages.

Maskil. A Hebrew term of uncertain meaning in the superscriptions of 13 psalms. It possibly means "contemplative poem." Some think that

a word similar in form, translated ‘serve with discretion,’ may be related in meaning.—2Ch 30:22; Ps 32:Sup.

Measuring reed. A measuring reed was six cubits long. Based on the common cubit, it measured 2.67 m (8.75 ft); based on the long cubit, it measured 3.11 m (10.2 ft). (Eze 40:3, 5; Re 11:1)—See  App. B14.

Medes; Media. A people descended from Japheth’s son Madai; they settled in the mountainous Iranian plateau that became the country of Media. The Medes joined with Babylon to defeat Assyria. At that time, Persia was a province under Media, but Cyrus revolted and Media was merged with Persia to form the Medo-Persian Empire that defeated the Neo-Babylonian Empire in 539 B.C.E. Medes were present in Jerusalem at Pentecost in 33 C.E. (Da 5:28, 31; Ac 2:9)—See  App. B9.

Mediator. One who intercedes between two parties in order to reconcile them. In the Scriptures, Moses and Jesus are the mediators of the Law covenant and the new covenant respectively.—Ga 3:19; 1Ti 2:5.

Memorial tomb. A burial place in which the remains of a deceased person were placed. This term renders the Greek word *mne-meí'on*, which comes from the verb “to remind,” suggesting that the person who has died is remembered.—Joh 5:28, 29.

Merodach. The chief god of the city of Babylon. After the Babylonian king and lawmaker Hammurabi made Babylon the capital of Babylonia, Merodach (or, Marduk) grew in importance, finally displacing a number of the earlier gods and becoming the chief god of the Babylonian pantheon. In later periods, the name Merodach (or, Marduk) was replaced by the title “Belu” (“Owner”), and Merodach was commonly spoken of as Bel.—Jer 50:2.

Messiah. A word derived from the Hebrew word for “anointed” or “anointed one.” “Christ” is the equivalent derived from the Greek.—Da 9:25; Joh 1:41.

Metaphor. A figure of speech that highlights a similarity between two different things by stating that one thing *is* another. A metaphor, like other word pictures, can be understood by identifying three elements: **the topic** that is being discussed, **the image** or concept that the topic is compared with, and **the specific point of similarity** between the two things being compared. The Bible uses many metaphors. For example, Jesus used a metaphor when he said to his followers: “You are the salt of the earth.” (Mt 5:13) In this word picture, the **topic** is “you,” that is, Jesus’ followers. The **image** is “salt.” The **point of similarity** in this context is the preservative quality of salt. The lesson? Just as salt could preserve food by preventing decay, the disciples could preserve the moral purity of people by teaching them the things Jesus commanded. (See study note on Mt 5:13.) Some other metaphors used in the Bible can be found at Ps 18:2; 84:11; 121:5; Joh 10:7; 15:1. A related figure of speech is a simile. Similes are less forceful than metaphors. They state that one thing is *like* another. Examples of similes can be found at Ge 22:17; Ps 1:3; 10:9.

Miktam. A Hebrew word used in the superscriptions of six psalms (Ps 16, 56-60). It is a technical term of uncertain meaning, though it may be related to the word “inscription.”

Milcom. A god worshipped by the Ammonites, probably the same as the god Molech. (1Ki 11:5, 7) Near the close of his reign, Solomon built high places to this false god.—See MOLECH.

Mildew. Any of many parasitic plant diseases caused by fungi. It has

been suggested that the mildew mentioned in the Bible is black stem rust (*Puccinia graminis*).—1Ki 8:37.

Mile. A measure of distance occurring only once in the original text of the Christian Greek Scriptures at Matthew 5:41, probably referring to the Roman mile that was equal to 1,479.5 m (4,854 ft). The three other occurrences of “mile” at Luke 24:13, John 6:19, and John 11:18 refer to statute miles converted from the ancient stadia of the original text.—See  App. B14.

Millstone. A round stone placed on top of a similar stone and used to grind grain into flour. A peg that was fitted into the center of the lower stone served as a pivot for the upper stone. In Bible times, hand mills operated by the women were used in most homes. Since a family’s daily bread depended on the hand mill, the Mosaic Law forbade confiscating it or its upper grindstone as security. Larger mills of a similar construction were turned by animals.—De 24:6; Mr 9:42.

Mina. Also called maneh in Ezekiel. A unit both of weight and of monetary value. Based on archaeological evidence that a mina equaled 50 shekels, and a shekel weighed 11.4 g, the mina of the Hebrew Scriptures weighed 570 g (18.35 oz t). There may also have been a royal mina, as in the case of the cubit. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, a mina was equivalent to 100 drachmas. It weighed 340 g (10.9 oz t). Sixty minas equaled a talent. (Ezr 2:69; Lu 19:13)—See  App. B14.

Ministerial servant. A rendering of the Greek word *di-a/ko-nos*, which is often translated “minister” or “servant.” “Ministerial servant” refers to one who serves as an assistant to the body of elders in the congregation. He must meet Bible standards to qualify for this privilege of service.—1Ti 3:8-10, 12.

Miracles; Powerful works. Actions or phenomena that surpass all powers known to humans and are attributed to a supernatural agency. Such expressions as “sign,” “portent,” and “wonder” are sometimes used synonymously in the Bible.—Ex 4:21; Ac 4:22; Heb 2:4.

Mishnah. A compilation of Jewish oral law and tradition that expands on and interprets God’s written Law, especially that given to Moses. It was compiled and put into written form by the early third century C.E. The name Mishnah is derived from a Hebrew word that means “repetition” or “instruction.” Orthodox Jews believe that at Mount Sinai, God gave to Moses both the written Law and oral instructions on carrying out that Law. The Mishnah later became the foundation of the Talmud. While claiming to complement the Scriptures, the Mishnah actually does the opposite—in effect, burying God’s laws and principles under a mountain of man-made rules and traditions. (Mr 7:1, 13) The Mishnah has historical value for Bible students because it provides background information on certain passages of Scripture and explains ancient Jewish customs and attitudes toward God’s name.

Molech. A god of the Ammonites; possibly the same as Malcam, Milcom, and Moloch. It may be a title rather than the name of a specific god. The Mosaic Law demanded the death penalty for anyone who sacrificed his children to Molech.—Le 20:2; Jer 32:35; Ac 7:43.

Moloch.—See MOLECH.

Morning star.—See DAYSTAR.

Moses, Law of. The Law that Jehovah gave Israel through Moses in the wilderness of Sinai in 1513 B.C.E. The first five books of the Bible are often referred to as the Law.—Jos 23:6; Lu 24:44.

Most Holy, the. The innermost room of the tabernacle and of the temple,

where the ark of the covenant was kept; also called the Holy of Holies. According to the Mosaic Law, the only person allowed to enter the Most Holy was the high priest, and he could enter only on the annual Day of Atonement.—Ex 26:33; Le 16:2, 17; 1Ki 6:16; Heb 9:3.

Mound. In Hebrew, “Millo,” from a root word meaning “fill.” The *Septuagint* translates it “citadel.” It was apparently a geographic or structural feature of the City of David, but its exact nature remains unknown.—2Sa 5:9; 1Ki 11:27.

Mourning. The outward expression of grief over a death or some other calamity. In Bible times, it was customary to mourn for a period of time. In addition to weeping loudly, mourners wore special clothes, put ashes on their head, ripped their garments, and beat their chest. Professional mourners were sometimes invited to funerals.—Ge 23:2; Es 4:3; Re 21:4.

Muth-labben. A term in the superscription of Psalm 9. Traditionally, it meant “concerning the death of the son.” Some suggest that it was the name or perhaps the opening words of a familiar melody to be used when singing this psalm.

Myrrh. An aromatic gum resin obtained from a variety of thorny shrubs or small trees of the genus *Commiphora*. Myrrh was one of the ingredients of the holy anointing oil. It was used to scent such things as garments or beds, and it was added to oil for massages and body lotions. Myrrh was also used to prepare bodies for burial.—Ex 30:23; Pr 7:17; Joh 19:39.

N

Nard. A costly fragrant oil of light-reddish color, derived from the spikenard plant (*Nardostachys jatamansi*). Because it was expensive,

nard was often mixed with inferior oils, and it was sometimes counterfeited. Notably, both Mark and John state that “genuine nard” was used on Jesus.—Mr 14:3; Joh 12:3.

Nazarene. A name for Jesus, as one from the town of Nazareth. It is probably related to the Hebrew word used at Isaiah 11:1 for “sprout.” It was later applied to Jesus’ followers as well.—Mt 2:23; Ac 24:5.

Nazirite. A word taken from the Hebrew for “One Singled Out,” “Dedicated One,” “Separated One.” There were two classes of Nazirites: those who volunteered and those who were appointed as such by God. A man or a woman could take a special vow to Jehovah to live as a Nazirite for a period of time. Those voluntarily taking the vow had three principal restrictions: they were to drink no alcohol nor eat any product of the grapevine, they were not to cut their hair, and they were not to touch a dead body. Those appointed by God as Nazirites remained such for life, and Jehovah specified the requirements for them.—Nu 6:2-7; Jg 13:5.

Nehiloth. A term of uncertain meaning, occurring in the superscription of Psalm 5. Some believe that it refers to a wind instrument, linking it with a Hebrew root word related to *cha-lil’* (flute). However, it may designate a melody.

Nephilim. The violent hybrid sons who were the children of materialized angels and the daughters of men before the Flood.—Ge 6:4.

Nethinim. Non-Israelite temple servants, or ministers. The Hebrew term literally means “Given Ones,” implying that they were given for temple service. Likely, many of the Nethinim were descendants of the Gibeonites, whom Joshua had constituted “gatherers of wood and drawers of water for the assembly and for Jehovah’s altar.”—Jos 9:23, 27; 1Ch 9:2; Ezz 8:17.

New moon. The first day of each month of the Jewish calendar, which was observed as a day for gathering together, feasting, and offering special sacrifices. In later periods, the day became an important national festival, and people abstained from work.—Nu 10:10; 2Ch 8:13; Col 2:16.

Nisan. After the Babylonian exile, the new name for Abib, the first month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the seventh month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-March to mid-April. (Ne 2:1)—See  App. B15.

O

Oath. A sworn statement to certify that something is true, or a solemn promise that a person will or will not do a certain thing. It is frequently a vow made to a superior, especially to God. Jehovah reinforced his covenant with Abraham by a sworn oath.—Ge 14:22; Heb 6:16, 17.

Omer. A dry measure equaling 2.2 L (2 dry qt), or a tenth of an ephah. (Ex 16:16, 18)—See  App. B14.

Onyx. A semiprecious stone, a hard variety of agate, or a banded form of chalcedony. The onyx has white layers alternating with black, brown, red, gray, or green layers. It was used in the special garments of the high priest.—Ex 28:9, 12; 1Ch 29:2; Job 28:16.

Overseer. A man whose primary responsibility is to watch over and shepherd the congregation. The basic idea inherent in the Greek term *e-pi'sko-pos* is that of protective supervision. The terms “overseer” and “elder” (*pre-sby/te-ros*) refer to the same position in the Christian congregation, with “elder” indicating the mature qualities of the one so appointed, and “overseer” emphasizing the duties inherent in this appointment.—Ac 20:28; 1Ti 3:2-7; 1Pe 5:2.

P

Papyrus. A reedlike aquatic plant used in making such things as baskets, containers, and boats. It was also used to make a writing material similar to paper and was used in many scrolls.—Ex 2:3.

Paradise. A beautiful park, or park-like garden. The first such place was Eden, made by Jehovah for the first human pair. When speaking to one of the criminals next to him on the torture stake, Jesus indicated that the earth would become a paradise. At 2 Corinthians 12:4, the word evidently refers to a future paradise, and at Revelation 2:7, to a heavenly paradise.—Ca 4:13; Lu 23:43.

Parchment. The skin of a sheep, goat, or calf prepared for use as writing material. It was more durable than papyrus and was used for scrolls of the Bible. The parchments that Paul requested Timothy to bring were possibly portions of the Hebrew Scriptures. Some of the Dead Sea Scrolls were written on parchment.—2Ti 4:13.

Party followers of Herod.—See HEROD; PARTY FOLLOWERS OF.

Passover. An annual festival observed on the 14th day of Abib (later called Nisan) to commemorate the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. It was observed by slaughtering and roasting a lamb (or goat), which was then eaten with bitter greens and unleavened bread.—Ex 12:27; Joh 6:4; 1Co 5:7.

Pentateuch. This term comes from a Greek word (*pentateukhos*) meaning “Five Rolls” or “Five Volumes” and refers to the first five books of the Bible—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. All were written by Moses. The Pentateuch takes us from creation to the founding of Israel as a nation and the appointment of Joshua as leader to succeed Moses. Much of the content

concerns God’s laws and regulations to Israel and its Levitical priesthood. Because Moses was the writer, other inspired penmen, as well as Jesus Christ, refer to the Pentateuch as “the Law of Moses,” “the book of Moses,” or just “Moses.” (Jos 8:31; Ezr 6:18; Lu 24:27) The Jews call it the Torah, or Law. The Pentateuch sheds valuable light on the origin of humankind and man’s fall into sin. Its laws reveal Jehovah’s love for his people, leading them to the one who will eliminate sin and its effects—Jesus Christ.—Ga 3:24; Heb 10:1.

Pentecost. The second of the three major festivals that all Jewish males were required to celebrate in Jerusalem. Pentecost, meaning “Fiftieth (Day),” is the name used in the Christian Greek Scriptures for what is called the Festival of Harvest or Festival of Weeks in the Hebrew Scriptures. It was celebrated on the 50th day counted from Nisan 16.—Ex 23:16; 34:22; Ac 2:1.

Persia; Persians. A land and a people regularly mentioned along with, and evidently related to, the Medes. In their early history, the Persians held only the southwestern part of the Iranian plateau. Under Cyrus the Great (who according to some ancient historians was born of a Persian father and a Median mother), the Persians became dominant over the Medes, though the empire continued to be dual. Cyrus conquered the Babylonian Empire in 539 B.C.E. and allowed the Jews in captivity to return to their homeland. The Persian Empire extended from the Indus River on the east to the Aegean Sea on the west. The Jews were under Persian rule until Alexander the Great defeated the Persians in 331 B.C.E. The Persian Empire was foreseen in a vision by Daniel, and it figures in the Bible books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. (Ezr 1:1; Da 5:28)—See  App. B9.

Pestilence. Any rapidly spreading infectious disease capable of attaining

epidemic proportions and of causing death. It is often related to the execution of divine judgment.—Nu 14:12; Eze 38:22, 23; Am 4:10.

Pharaoh. A title given to the kings of Egypt. Five pharaohs are named in the Bible (Shishak, So, Tirhakah, Nechoh, and Hophra), but others are left anonymous, including those who had extensive dealings with Abraham, Moses, and Joseph.—Ex 15:4; Ro 9:17.

Pharisees. A prominent religious sect of Judaism in the first century C.E. They were not of priestly descent, but they were strict observers of the Law in its smallest detail, and they elevated oral traditions to the same level. (Mt 23:23) They opposed any Greek cultural influence, and as scholars of the Law and the traditions, they had great authority over the people. (Mt 23:2-6) Some were also members of the Sanhedrin. They often opposed Jesus regarding Sabbath observance, traditions, and association with sinners and tax collectors. Some became Christians, including Saul of Tarsus.—Mt 9:11; 12:14; Mr 7:5; Lu 6:2; Ac 26:5.

Philistia; Philistines. The land on the southern coast of Israel that came to be called Philistia. The immigrants from Crete who settled there were called Philistines. David subdued them, but they remained independent and were constant enemies of Israel. (Ex 13:17; 1Sa 17:4; Am 9:7) —See  App. B4.

Philo. (c. 20-10 B.C.E.—c. 50 C.E.) A Jewish writer and philosopher who lived in Alexandria, Egypt. He was often called Philo of Alexandria, but he was also known as Philo Judaeus because of his Jewish background. Philo was Greek-speaking, as were many Jews living in Egypt at that time. He used the Greek *Septuagint* version of the Hebrew Scriptures as the basis for his Biblical studies. His use of certain Greek terms that are also found in the Christian Greek

Scriptures may shed light on their meaning and can therefore be of interest to Bible students.—See study note on Mt 19:28. Philo believed that Judaism was the only true religion, and he sought to lead Gentiles to God by making Judaism acceptable to them. However, he mixed Scripture with Greek philosophy, such as that of Plato. Philo defended the existence of God. At the same time, he claimed that God “has no distinctive qualities” and that God “is incomprehensible,” so calling him by a personal name is impossible. Philo’s writings were among the influences that led many nominal Christians to adopt the unscriptural doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Moreover, Philo’s teaching on the Logos (or, the Word) contributed to the development of the non-Biblical teaching of the Trinity.

Phoenicia. A loose confederation of city-states that occupied a strip of coastland along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea in ancient times. Phoenicia roughly corresponds to the regions of modern-day Lebanon and smaller parts of Syria and Israel. The principal city of Phoenicia was initially Sidon, but its importance was later eclipsed by Tyre, originally a Sidonian colony. The Scriptures indicate that the Sidonians were descendants of Noah through Ham, Canaan, and Sidon. (Ge 10:1, 6, 15, 18, 19) The people called their land Canaan and practiced the Canaanite religion. Later, the Greeks called the area Phoenicia. In the Scriptures, the terms Phoenician, Canaanite, and Sidonian are used at various times in reference to the same region. (Jos 13:6; Jg 1:32; Ac 21:2) In time, the Phoenician alphabet, very similar to that of ancient Hebrew, became the basis for Greek and Latin script. Skilled shipbuilders and navigators, Phoenicians were among the great seafaring traders of the ancient world, sailing to its known extremities.—Eze 27:1-9.

In the course of history, Phoenicia came to be dominated by Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. Rome conquered the area in 64 B.C.E. In the first century C.E., Phoenicia was part of the Roman province of Syria. The history of Phoenicia and its principal cities underscores the accuracy of Bible prophecy.—Isa 23:1-14; Jer 25:17, 22, 27; Eze 26:3, 4.

Pillar. An upright structural support or column, or something resembling such a column. Some were set up to commemorate historic acts or events. Structural pillars were used in the temple and the royal structures built by Solomon. Pagan peoples set up sacred pillars in connection with their false religion, and the Israelites at times took up this practice. (Jg 16:29; 1Ki 7:21; 14:23) —See CAPITAL.

Pim. A weight as well as the price charged by the Philistines for sharpening various metal implements. Several stone weights found in archaeological excavations in Israel bear the ancient Hebrew consonants of “pim”; their average weight is 7.8 g (0.2508 oz t), which would be approximately two thirds of a shekel. —1Sa 13:20, 21.

Pledge. An object of personal property given by a debtor to his creditor as a guarantee of the future repayment of a loan. It was also called security. The Mosaic Law contained stipulations concerning pledges in order to protect the interests of poor and defenseless members of the nation.—Ex 22:26; Eze 18:7.

Pomegranate. A fruit that is shaped like an apple, with a rosette or crown at one end. Crowded within the hard rind are small capsules full of juice, each containing a tiny pink or red seed. Pomegranate-shaped ornaments adorned the hem of the high priest’s blue sleeveless coat as well as the capitals of the pillars Jachin and Boaz in front of the temple.—Ex 28:34; Nu 13:23; 1Ki 7:18.

Porneia.—See SEXUAL IMMORALITY.

Potter. A maker of earthenware pots, dishes, and other vessels. The Hebrew word for potter literally means “former.” The potter’s authority over the clay is often used to illustrate Jehovah’s sovereignty over individuals and nations.—Isa 64:8; Ro 9:21.

Praetorian Guard. A group of Roman soldiers established as a bodyguard for the Roman emperor. The guard came to be a powerful political force in supporting or overthrowing an emperor.—Php 1:13.

Prefect. An official lower in rank than a satrap in the Babylonian government. In the Bible, prefects were in a position of authority over the wise men in the Babylonian court. Prefects are also mentioned during the rule of King Darius the Mede.—Da 2:48; 6:7.

Preparation. A name for the day before the Sabbath, during which the Jews made the necessary preparations. The day ended at sundown of what is today called Friday, at which time the Sabbath would begin. The Jewish day ran from evening to evening.—Mr 15:42; Lu 23:54.

Presence. In some contexts in the Christian Greek Scriptures, this word describes the royal presence of Jesus Christ from the time of his invisible enthronement as Messianic King onward in the last days of this system of things. Christ’s presence is not simply a coming followed by a quick departure; rather, it covers a marked period of time.—Mt 24:3.

Priest. A man who officially represented God to the people he served, instructing them about God and his laws. Priests also represented the people before God, offering sacrifices as well as interceding and pleading for the people. Before the Mosaic Law was instituted, the family head served as priest for his family. Under the Mosaic Law, the male

members of the family of Aaron of the tribe of Levi made up the priesthood. The rest of the male Levites were their assistants. At the inauguration of the new covenant, spiritual Israel became a nation of priests, with Jesus Christ as High Priest.—Ex 28:41; Heb 9:24; Re 5:10.

Proconsul. The principal governor of a province administered by the Roman Senate. He had judicial and military power, and although his actions were subject to review by the Senate, he wielded supreme authority in the province.—Ac 13:7; 18:12.

Prophecy. An inspired message, whether a revelation of divine will or the proclamation of it. Prophecy may be an inspired moral teaching, an expression of a divine command or judgment, or a declaration of something to come.—Eze 37:9, 10; Da 9:24; Mt 13:14; 2Pe 1:20, 21.

Prophet. One through whom divine purposes are made known. Prophets acted as spokesmen for God, conveying not only predictions but also Jehovah’s teachings, commands, and judgments.—Am 3:7; 2Pe 1:21.

Propitiation.—See ATONEMENT.

Propitiatory cover. The cover of the ark of the covenant, before which the high priest spattered the blood of sin offerings on Atonement Day. The Hebrew term comes from a root verb meaning “to cover over (sin)” or perhaps “to wipe away (sin).” It was made of solid gold, with two cherubs, one mounted at each end. It is sometimes referred to simply as “the cover.” (Ex 25:17-22; 1Ch 28:11; Heb 9:5)—See  App. B5.

Proselyte. A convert. In the Scriptures, this refers to one who embraced Judaism, which in the case of a male involved getting circumcised.—Mt 23:15; Ac 13:43.

Prostitute. A person who engages in sexual relations outside the marriage

bond, especially for money. (The Greek word for “prostitute,” *por'ne*, comes from a root meaning “to sell.”) The term usually refers to a woman, although male prostitutes are also mentioned in the Bible. Prostitution was condemned in the Mosaic Law, and a prostitute’s wages were unacceptable as a contribution to Jehovah’s sanctuary, in contrast with the pagan practice of using temple prostitutes as a source of revenue. (De 23:17, 18; 1Ki 14:24) The Bible also uses the term figuratively, referring to people, nations, or organizations that engage in some form of idolatry while claiming to be worshippers of God. For example, the religious entity called “Babylon the Great” is described in Revelation as a prostitute because she has consorted with the rulers of this world for power and material gain.—Re 17:1-5; 18:3; 1Ch 5:25.

Proverb. A wise saying or short story that teaches a lesson or expresses a profound truth in very few words. A Biblical proverb may take the form of a puzzling saying or a riddle. A proverb embodies a truth in expressive language, often metaphorically. Some sayings became common expressions of ridicule or contempt for certain people.—Ec 12:9; 2Pe 2:22.

Psalms. A song of praise to God. Psalms were set to music and sung by worshippers, including in public worship of Jehovah God at his temple in Jerusalem.—Lu 20:42; Ac 13:33; Jas 5:13.

Purim. The annual festival celebrated on the 14th and 15th of Adar. It commemorates the Jews’ deliverance from destruction in Queen Esther’s time. The non-Hebrew word *pu-rim'* means “lots.” The Festival of Purim, or Festival of Lots, was so named from the act of Haman in casting Pur (the Lot) to determine the day to carry out his extermination plot against the Jews.—Es 3:7; 9:26.

Q

Queen of Heaven. The title of a goddess worshipped by apostate Israelites in the days of Jeremiah. Some suggest that it refers to the Babylonian goddess Ishtar (Astarte). The name of her earlier Sumerian counterpart, Inanna, means “Queen of Heaven.” Besides being associated with the heavens, she was a fertility goddess. Astarte is also called “Lady of Heaven” in an Egyptian inscription.—Jer 44:19.

Qumran. The name of a wadi, or stream bed, on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. It is associated with the nearby ruins of an ancient Jewish settlement made famous by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The modern name of the site is Khirbet Qumran. It lies 13 km (8 mi) south of Jericho. In 1947 the first of the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in caves in the area, apparently put there by the first-century inhabitants of Qumran, whom many scholars identify with a Jewish sect called the Essenes. These people hid their important documents in the caves before fleeing the Roman invasion of 68 C.E. The Romans destroyed this settlement and apparently stationed a garrison there until about 73 C.E.

R

Rahab. An expression used symbolically in the books of Job, Psalms, and Isaiah (not to be confused with the woman Rahab in the book of Joshua). In the book of Job, the context helps to identify Rahab as a sea monster; in other contexts this sea monster is used as a symbol for Egypt.—Job 9:13; Ps 87:4; Isa 30:7; 51:9, 10.

Ransom. A price paid to provide a release from captivity, punishment, suffering, sin, or even an obligation.

The price was not always monetary. (Isa 43:3) A ransom was required in a number of different situations. For example, all firstborn boys or male animals in Israel belonged to Jehovah, and a ransom, or redemption price, needed to be paid to release them from exclusive use in Jehovah’s service. (Nu 3:45, 46; 18:15, 16) If an unguarded, dangerous bull killed someone, a ransom was imposed on its owner in order to release him from the prescribed death sentence. (Ex 21:29, 30) However, no ransom was accepted for a willful murderer. (Nu 35:31) Most important, the Bible highlights the ransom that Christ paid by his sacrificial death in order to release obedient humankind from sin and death.—Ps 49:7, 8; Mt 20:28; Eph 1:7.

Reed. A term used for numerous plants commonly growing in wet places. The plant intended in many cases is *Arundo donax*. (Job 8:11; Isa 42:3; Mt 27:29; Re 11:1)—See MEASURING REED.

Repentance. In Biblical usage, a change of mind accompanied by heartfelt regret over a former way of life, wrong actions, or what one has failed to do. Genuine repentance produces fruitage, a changed course of action.—Mt 3:8; Ac 3:19; 2Pe 3:9.

Resurrection. A rising up from death. The Greek word *a-na’sta-sis* literally means “raising up; standing up.” Nine resurrections are mentioned in the Bible, including the resurrection of Jesus by Jehovah God. Although other resurrections were performed through Elijah, Elisha, Jesus, Peter, and Paul, these miracles are clearly attributed to God’s power. The earthly resurrection of “both the righteous and the unrighteous” is essential to God’s purpose. (Ac 24:15) The Bible also mentions a heavenly resurrection, termed “the earlier” or “the first” resurrection, involving the spirit-anointed brothers of Jesus.

—Php 3:11; Re 20:5, 6; Joh 5:28, 29; 11:25.

Rhetorical question. A question, not intended to elicit an audible answer, but designed to stimulate thinking, add emphasis, make an important point, or move listeners to reason on a matter. A powerful teaching aid, rhetorical questions are often used in the Bible. Jehovah employed them when reproving his ancient people. (Isa 40:18, 21, 25; Jer 18:14) Jesus asked rhetorical questions to emphasize important truths. (Lu 11:11-13) He also used them to get people to think, sometimes even asking a series of such questions. (Mt 11:7-9) The apostle Paul likewise made excellent use of rhetorical questions. (Ro 8:31-34; 1Co 1:13; 11:22) When a Bible reader encounters a rhetorical question, it is good to pause and try to determine the intended point of the question. For example, when Jesus asked: “Which one of you, if his son asks for bread, will hand him a stone?” the intended answer is: “It would be unthinkable for a father to do such a thing.”—See study note on Mt 7:9.

Righteousness. In the Scriptures, what is right according to God’s standard of right and wrong.—Ge 15:6; De 6:25; Pr 11:4; Zep 2:3; Mt 6:33.

Root word. A basic form of a word from which related words are derived.

S

Sabbath. From a Hebrew word meaning “to rest; to cease.” It is the seventh day of the Jewish week (sunset Friday to sunset Saturday). Some other festive days in the year, as well as the 7th and 50th years, were also called sabbaths. On the Sabbath day, no work except priestly service in the sanctuary was to be done. In Sabbath years, the land

was to lie uncultivated and fellow Hebrews were not pressed for repayment of debts. In the Mosaic Law, the restrictions for the Sabbath were reasonable, but religious leaders gradually added to them, so that by Jesus' day they were hard for people to observe.—Ex 20:8; Le 25:4; Lu 13:14-16; Col 2:16.

Sackcloth. A coarse cloth used in making sacks, or bags, such as those for containing grain. It was usually woven from dark-colored goat's hair and was the traditional garment of mourning.—Ge 37:34; Lu 10:13.

Sacred pillar. An upright pillar, usually of stone, and evidently a phallic symbol of Baal or of other false gods.—Ex 23:24.

Sacred pole. The Hebrew word (*'ashe-rah'*) refers to (1) a sacred pole representing Asherah, a Canaanite goddess of fertility, or (2) an image of the goddess Asherah herself. The poles apparently stood upright and were made, at least in part, of wood. They may have been uncarved poles, or even trees.—De 16:21; Jg 6:26; 1Ki 15:13.

Sacred secret. An aspect of God's purpose that originates with God, is withheld until his own time, and is revealed only to those whom he chooses to make it known.—Mr 4:11; Col 1:26.

Sacred service. Ministry, or work, that is sacred, being directly related to one's worship of God.—Ro 12:1; Re 7:15.

Sacrifice. An offering presented to God as a token to express thanksgiving, to acknowledge guilt, and to restore good relations with him. Starting with Abel, humans offered various voluntary sacrifices, including animals, until the Mosaic Law covenant made them a requirement. Animal sacrifices were no longer needed after Jesus gave his own life as a perfect sacrifice, though Chris-

tians continue to offer spiritual sacrifices to God.—Ge 4:4; Heb 13:15, 16; 1Jo 4:10.

Sadducees. A prominent religious sect of Judaism made up of wealthy aristocrats and priests who wielded great authority over the activities at the temple. They rejected the many oral traditions observed by the Pharisees as well as other Pharisaic beliefs. They did not believe in the resurrection or in the existence of angels. They opposed Jesus.—Mt 16:1; Ac 23:8.

Samaria. The capital city of the northern ten-tribe kingdom of Israel for some 200 years, as well as the name of its entire territory. The city was built on a mountain of the same name. In Jesus' time, Samaria was the name of a district that lay between Galilee in the north and Judea in the south. Jesus usually refrained from preaching in the region in his travels, but at times he passed through it and spoke to the inhabitants. Peter used the second figurative key of the Kingdom when the Samaritans received the holy spirit. (1Ki 16:24; Joh 4:7; Ac 8:14) —See  App. B10.

Samaritans. The term initially referred to the Israelites of the northern ten-tribe kingdom, but after the conquest of Samaria by the Assyrians in 740 B.C.E., it included the foreigners brought in by the Assyrians. In Jesus' day, rather than having a racial or political connotation, the name usually referred to those who belonged to the religious sect that was located in the vicinity of ancient Shechem and Samaria. The sect's adherents held certain beliefs that were distinctly different from those of Judaism.—Joh 8:48.

Sanctuary. Generally, a place set apart for worship, a holy place. Most often, though, it designates either the tabernacle or the temple in Jerusalem. The term is also used of God's dwelling place in the heavens.

—Ex 25:8, 9; 2Ki 10:25; 1Ch 28:10; Re 11:19.

Sanhedrin. The Jewish high court in Jerusalem. In Jesus' day, it was made up of 71 members, including the high priest and others who had held the office of high priest, members of the high priestly families, elders, tribal and family heads, and scribes.—Mr 15:1; Ac 5:34; 23:1, 6.

Satan. A Hebrew word meaning "Resister." When used with the definite article in the original languages, it refers to Satan the Devil, God's chief Adversary.—Job 1:6; Mt 4:10; Re 12:9.

Satrap. A viceroy, or governor of a province, in the Babylonian and Persian empires. A satrap was appointed by the king as a chief ruler.—Ezr 8:36; Da 6:1.

Scepter. A baton or rod carried by a ruler as an emblem of royal authority.—Ge 49:10; Heb 1:8.

Scourge. In the Hebrew Scriptures, this term usually refers to a plague, a disease, or a calamity sent from Jehovah as punishment. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, it refers to beating or flogging with a whip that had knots or barbed ends.—Nu 16:49; Joh 19:1.

Scribe. A copyist of the Hebrew Scriptures. By the time Jesus came to earth, it designated a class of men learned in the Law. They opposed Jesus.—Ezr 7:6, ftn.; Mr 12:38, 39; 14:1.

Scripture(s). The sacred writings of God's Word. This expression occurs only in the Christian Greek Scriptures.—Lu 24:27; 2Ti 3:16.

Scroll. A long sheet of parchment or papyrus, with writing on one side, which was usually rolled around a stick. The Scriptures were written and copied on scrolls, the common book form during the period of Bible writing.—Jer 36:4, 18, 23; Lu 4:17-20; 2Ti 4:13.

Seah. A dry measure. Basing the capacity on the corresponding liquid bath measure, it would equal 7.33 L (6.66 dry qt). (2Ki 7:1)—See  App. B14.

Seal. A device used to make an impression (usually on clay or wax) that showed ownership, authenticity, or agreement. Ancient seals consisted of a piece of hard material (stone, ivory, or wood) having engraved letters or designs in reverse. A seal is used figuratively for something stamped as authentic, or as a mark of possession, or as something that is hidden or secret.—Ex 28:11; Ne 9:38; Re 5:1; 9:4.

Seal ring. A type of seal that was worn on the finger or on a cord, probably around the neck. Also called a signet ring, it was the symbol of authority of a ruler or an official. (Ge 41:42)—See SEAL.

Sect. A body of people adhering to a doctrine or to a leader and following their own beliefs. It is used of the two prominent branches of Judaism, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Non-Christians also called Christianity a “sect” or “the sect of the Nazarenes,” possibly viewing it as a breakaway from Judaism. Sects eventually developed in the Christian congregation; “the sect of Nicolaus” is mentioned specifically in Revelation.—Ac 5:17; 15:5; 24:5; 28:22; Re 2:6; 2Pe 2:1.

Seer. A person enabled by God to discern the divine will, one whose eyes had been opened to see or understand things that were not evident to humans in general. The Hebrew word is drawn from a root word meaning “to see,” either literally or figuratively. A seer was a person consulted by others for wise counsel on problems encountered.—1Sa 9:9.

Selah. A technical term for music or recitation found in Psalms and Habakkuk. It may mean a pause in the singing or in the music, or in

both, for the purpose of silent meditation or to make the sentiment just expressed stand out. The Greek *Septuagint* rendering is *di-a'psal-ma*, defined as “a musical interlude.”—Ps 3:4; Hab 3:3.

Semitic. Refers to the peoples, languages, and cultures of the descendants of Noah’s son Shem, who are known as Semites. (Ge 10:21-31) The early Semites included various Arabian tribes, as well as the Aramaeans (or, Syrians), the Assyrians, the early Chaldeans, the Elamites, the Hebrews, and others. They inhabited much of the southwestern corner of the Asiatic continent, including most of the Fertile Crescent and a large portion of the Arabian Peninsula. In Bible times, Semitic languages included Akkadian (spoken in Assyria and Babylon), Arabic, Aramaic, Hebrew, and the languages of the neighboring nations of Israel, such as the Ammonites and the Moabites. (Ge 11:27; 19:30, 37, 38) No other language family has a longer recorded history. When a word, name, or idiom is termed “Semitic,” it means that its origin is from a Semitic language or that it has characteristics that can be found in a Semitic language.

Septuagint. The earliest translations of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, produced for the benefit of Greek-speaking Jews. Translation was begun in Egypt in the third century B.C.E. and was completed in the following century. According to tradition, about 70 Jewish scholars embarked on the project—thus the designation *Septuagint* from the Latin *Septuaginta*, meaning “70.” The translation is commonly referred to as LXX, the Roman numerals for 70. Early manuscripts of the *Septuagint* use either Greek characters or the four Hebrew letters that make up the Tetragrammaton (YHWH in English) to render God’s name. After the translation of the Hebrew canon was completed, apoc-

ryphal writings were added to the *Septuagint*. However, there is no evidence that Christian Bible writers acknowledged the apocryphal writings by quoting from them, though they often quoted from canonical books in the *Septuagint*. Furthermore, some first-century Christians had a miraculous gift, enabling them to discern which Bible books were inspired. (1Co 12:4, 10) Today, the *Septuagint* is an important tool for studying and understanding the text of the Hebrew Scriptures, and it sheds light on the meaning of certain obscure Hebrew and Aramaic terms.

Seraphs. Spirit creatures stationed around Jehovah’s throne in the heavens. The Hebrew term *sera-phim*’ literally means “burning ones.”—Isa 6:2, 6.

Sexual immorality. From the Greek *por-nei'a*, a general term for all unlawful sexual intercourse. It includes adultery, prostitution, sexual relations between unmarried individuals, homosexuality, and bestiality. It is used figuratively in Revelation with regard to a religious prostitute called “Babylon the Great” to describe her consorting with the rulers of this world for power and material gain. (Rev 14:8; 17:2; 18:3; Mt 5:32; Ac 15:29; Ga 5:19)—See PROSTITUTE.

Shebat. After the Babylonian exile, the name of the 11th month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the 5th month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-January to mid-February. (Zec 1:7)—See  App. B15.

Shekel. The basic Hebrew unit of weight and of monetary value. The weight equaled 11.4 g (0.403 oz; 0.367 oz t). The “shekel of the holy place” may have been an expression used to emphasize that the weight should be precise or that it should conform to a standard weight kept at the tabernacle. There may have been a royal shekel (different from the common shekel) or a standard

weight kept at the royal palace.—Ex 30:13.

Sheminith. A musical term literally meaning “the eighth” that may refer to a lower musical register, or mode. For instruments, the word probably pointed to those that produced the bass tones of the musical scale. For songs, it likely referred to musical accompaniment in a lower range and sung accordingly.—1Ch 15:21; Ps 6:Sup; 12:Sup.

Sheol. A Hebrew word corresponding to the Greek word “Hades.” It is translated “Grave” (capitalized), to distinguish it as the common grave of mankind rather than an individual grave.—Ge 37:35, ftn.; Ps 16:10, ftn.; Ac 2:31.

Showbread. Twelve loaves of bread that were placed in two stacks of six each on the table in the Holy compartment of the tabernacle and of the temple. Also called “layer bread” and “loaves of presentation.” This offering to God was replaced with fresh bread on each Sabbath. The bread that was removed was normally eaten only by the priests. (2Ch 2:4; Mt 12:4; Ex 25:30; Le 24:5-9; Heb 9:2)—See  App. B5.

Sign. An object, act, situation, or unusual display that has significance as an indicator of something else, present or future.—Ge 9:12, 13; 2Ki 20:9; Mt 24:3; Re 1:1.

Sin offering. A sacrifice offered for unintentional sin committed because of weakness of the imperfect flesh. Various animal sacrifices, from bull to pigeon, were used, according to the position and circumstances of the one whose sin was being atoned for.—Le 4:27, 29; Heb 10:8.

Sivan. After the Babylonian exile, the name of the third month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the ninth month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-May to mid-June. (Es 8:9)—See  App. B15.

Sling. A leather strip or a woven band of such materials as animal sinews, rushes, or hair. The wide center part held the projectile, often a stone. One end of the sling was tied to the hand or wrist, while the other was held in the hand and released when the sling was swung. Ancient nations employed slingers in their armies.—Jg 20:16; 1Sa 17:50.

Snuffers. Tools made of gold, possibly similar to tongs, that were used in the tabernacle and the temple to put out the flame on lamps.—Ex 37:23.

Solomon's Colonnade. In the temple in Jesus' day, a covered passageway on the east of the outer courtyard, popularly believed to be a remnant from Solomon's temple. There Jesus walked ‘in the wintertime,’ and there early Christians met for worship. (Joh 10:22, 23; Ac 5:12)—See  App. B11.

Song of the Ascents. The superscription of Psalms 120-134. Although there are various ideas on the meaning of the phrase, many believe that these 15 psalms were sung by joyful Israelite worshippers as they ‘ascended’ to Jerusalem, which was situated high in the mountains of Judah, in order to attend the three great annual festivals there.

Son of David. A phrase often applied to Jesus, emphasizing that he is the Heir of the Kingdom covenant that was to be fulfilled by someone in David's lineage.—Mt 12:23; 21:9.

Son of man. An expression found about 80 times in the Gospels. It applies to Jesus Christ and shows that by means of his fleshly birth, he became a human and was not simply a spirit creature with a materialized body. The phrase also indicates that Jesus would fulfill the prophecy recorded at Daniel 7:13, 14. In the Hebrew Scriptures, this expression was used for Ezekiel and Daniel, highlighting the difference between

these mortal spokesmen and the divine Originator of their message.—Eze 3:17; Da 8:17; Mt 19:28; 20:28.

Sons of Aaron. Descendants of Levi's grandson Aaron, who was chosen as the first high priest under the Mosaic Law. The sons of Aaron performed the priestly duties at the tabernacle and at the temple.—1Ch 23:28.

Sorcery. The use of power that is acknowledged to be from wicked spirits.—2Ch 33:6.

Soul. The traditional rendering of the Hebrew word *ne'phesh* and the Greek word *psy-khe'*. In examining the way these terms are used in the Bible, it becomes evident that they basically refer to (1) people, (2) animals, or (3) the life that a person or an animal has. (Ge 1:20; 2:7; Nu 31:28; 1Pe 3:20; also ftns.) In contrast to the way that the term “soul” is used in many religious contexts, the Bible shows that both *ne'phesh* and *psy-khe'*, in connection with earthly creatures, refer to that which is material, tangible, visible, and mortal. In this translation, these original-language words have most often been rendered according to their meaning in each context, using such terms as “life,” “creature,” “person,” “one's whole being,” or simply as a personal pronoun (for example, “I” for “my soul”). In most cases, footnotes or study notes give the alternative rendering “soul.” When the term “soul” is used in the main text, in footnotes, or in study notes, it should be understood in line with the above explanation. When referring to doing something with one's whole soul, it means to do it with one's whole being, wholeheartedly, or with one's whole life. (De 6:5; Mt 22:37) In some contexts, these original-language words can be used to refer to the desire or appetite of a living creature. They can also refer to a dead person or a dead body.—Nu 6:6; Pr 23:2; Isa 56:11; Hag 2:13.

Span. A linear measure approximately equal to the distance between the end of the thumb and the end of the little finger when the hand is spread out. Based on the cubit of 44.5 cm (17.5 in.), a span would be 22.2 cm (8.75 in.) in length. (Ex 28:16; 1Sa 17:4)—See  App. B14.

Spelt. An inferior kind of wheat (*Triticum spelta*), the kernels of which are not readily separated from the chaff.—Ex 9:32.

Spirit. The Hebrew word *ru'ach* and the Greek word *pneu'ma*, often translated “spirit,” have a number of meanings. All of them refer to that which is invisible to human sight and gives evidence of force in motion. The Hebrew and Greek words are used with reference to (1) wind, (2) the active life-force in earthly creatures, (3) the impelling force that issues from a person’s figurative heart and causes him to say and do things in a certain way, (4) inspired expressions originating from an invisible source, (5) spirit persons, and (6) God’s active force, or holy spirit.—Ex 35:21; Ps 104:29; Mt 12:43; Lu 11:13.

Spiritism. The belief that the spirits of dead humans survive the death of the physical body and that they can and do communicate with the living, especially through a person (a medium) particularly susceptible to their influence. The Greek word for “practice of spiritism” is *phar-ma-ki'a*, which literally means “druggery.” This term came to be connected with spiritism because in ancient times, drugs were used when invoking the power of the demons in order to practice sorcery.—Ga 5:20; Re 21:8.

Spirit medium. Someone who claims to talk with the dead.—Le 20:27; De 18:10-12; 2Ki 21:6.

Spoil. Personal or household effects, livestock, or other items of value that are taken as plunder from a defeated enemy.—Jos 7:21; 22:8; Heb 7:4.

Stake. An upright pole to which a victim was fastened. It was used in some nations for execution and/or for exposing a dead body as a warning to others or for public humiliation. The Assyrians, noted for their savage warfare, impaled captives by hanging their bodies atop pointed stakes that had been run up through the abdomen into the chest cavity of the victim. In Jewish law, though, those guilty of such heinous crimes as blasphemy or idolatry were first killed by stoning or by some other method, and then their dead bodies were hung on stakes, or trees, as warning examples to others. (De 21:22, 23; 2Sa 21:6, 9) The Romans sometimes simply tied a victim to the stake, in which case he might live for several days before he died from pain, thirst, hunger, and exposure to the sun. In other cases, such as the execution of Jesus, they nailed the hands and feet of the accused to a stake. (Lu 24:20; Joh 19:14-16; 20:25; Ac 2:23, 36)—See TORTURE STAKE.

Stocks. An instrument of confinement for punishment. Some devices confined only the feet, while others kept the body in a distorted position, perhaps confining feet, hands, and neck.—Jer 20:2; Ac 16:24.

Stoic philosophers. A Greek school of philosophers who believed that happiness consists of living in accord with reason and nature. The truly wise man, in their estimation, was indifferent to pain or pleasure.—Ac 17:18.

Superscription. The heading at the beginning of a psalm that identifies the writer, gives background information, provides musical instructions, or indicates the use or purpose of the psalm.—See the superscriptions of Psalms 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 30, 38, 60, 92, 102.

Synagogue. A word meaning “a bringing together; an assembly,” but in most scriptures, the building

or place where Jews assembled for Scripture reading, instruction, preaching, and prayer. In Jesus’ day, each sizable town in Israel had a synagogue, and the larger cities had more than one.—Lu 4:16; Ac 13:14, 15.

Syria; Syrians.—See ARAM; ARAMA-EANS.

Syrtis. Two large shallow gulfs on the coast of Libya, North Africa, feared by ancient sailors because of the treacherous sandbanks that were constantly shifting as a result of the tides. (Ac 27:17)—See  App. B13.

System(s) of things. Rendering of the Greek word *ai-on'* when it refers to the current state of affairs or features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. The Bible speaks of “the present system of things,” referring to the prevailing state of affairs in the world in general and the worldly way of life. (2Ti 4:10) By means of the Law covenant, God introduced a system of things that some might call the Israelite or Jewish epoch. By means of his ransom sacrifice, Jesus Christ was used by God to introduce a different system of things, one primarily involving the congregation of anointed Christians. This marked the beginning of a new epoch, characterized by the realities foreshadowed by the Law covenant. When in the plural, this phrase refers to the various systems of things, or prevailing states of affairs, that have existed or will exist.—Mt 24:3; Mr 4:19; Ro 12:2; 1Co 10:11.

T

Tabernacle. A transportable tent of worship used by Israel after the Exodus from Egypt. It housed the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, which was representative of God’s presence, and served as a place of sacrifice and worship. It is also sometimes called “the tent of

meeting.” It was a framework of wooden panels enclosed by linen coverings embroidered with cherubs. It was divided into two rooms, the first called the Holy, and the second, the Most Holy. (Jos 18:1; Ex 25:9) —See  App. B5.

Tacitus, Publius Cornelius.

(c. 56–c. 120 C.E.) A Roman orator and public official, often regarded as the greatest historian of ancient Rome. Tacitus’ most famous works are his *Histories* (c. 104–109 C.E.) and his *Annals* (c. 115–117 C.E.), which together document the history of the Roman Empire from 14 to 96 C.E. Considered a moralist, Tacitus condemned the Roman despots for their corruption and their abuse of power. For example, even though Tacitus had little regard for Christians, he recorded Nero’s brutality toward them, which included making them scapegoats for the great fire in Rome, which occurred in 64 C.E. Tacitus’ writings often refer to specific individuals mentioned in the Bible. These include Quirinius, Roman governor of Syria; Felix, procurator of Judea; and Pontius Pilate, who had Christ executed during the reign of Tiberius Caesar. All these references provide support for the Bible record.—Mt 27:2; Lu 2:1, 2; 3:1; Ac 23:24, 26.

Talent. The largest of the Hebrew units of weight and of monetary value. It weighed 34.2 kg (75.5 lb; 91.75 lb t; 1,101 oz t). A Greek talent was smaller, weighing about 20.4 kg (44.8 lb; 54.5 lb t; 654 oz t). (1Ch 22:14; Mt 18:24)—See  App. B14.

Talmud. A compilation of traditional oral law, containing Jewish civil and religious regulation that consists of two main parts—the Mishnah, a law code, and the Gemara, a commentary on that code. There are two Talmuds—the Palestinian (c. 400 C.E.) and the Babylonian (c. 600 C.E.). The latter is more extensive and is regarded as the pillar of rabbinic law. Considered by the

Jews to be a complement to the Hebrew Scriptures, the Talmud sets out an exhaustive code of conduct that addresses every aspect of life. By the time of the Middle Ages, many Jews revered the Talmud more than the Scriptures. Although the Talmud provides interesting background information on Jewish traditions and interpretation of the Scriptures, it teaches people to think legalistically, not in terms of God’s justice and love. (Mt 23:23, 24; Lu 11:42) The Talmud also reflects the influence of superstition and Greek philosophy on Jewish thinking, including the notion that the soul is immortal.—See study note on Mt 15:2.

Tammuz. (1) The name of a deity over whom apostate Hebrew women in Jerusalem wept. It has been suggested that Tammuz was originally a king who was deified after his death. In Sumerian text, Tammuz is called Dumuzi and is identified as the consort or lover of the fertility goddess Inanna (the Babylonian Ishtar). (Eze 8:14) (2) After the Babylonian exile, the name of the fourth Jewish lunar month of the sacred calendar and the tenth month of the secular calendar. This month ran from mid-June to mid-July.—See  App. B15.

Tarshish, ships of. Initially a term used for ships that made trips to ancient Tarshish (modern-day Spain). It seems that the term eventually came to stand for large ships capable of long-distance travel. Solomon and Jehoshaphat utilized such ships for trade purposes.—1Ki 9:26; 10:22; 22:48.

Tartarus. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, a prisonlike abased condition into which the disobedient angels of Noah’s day were cast. At 2 Peter 2:4, the use of the verb *tar-ta-ro’o* (to “cast into Tartarus”) does not signify that “the angels who sinned” were cast into the pagan mythological Tartarus (that is, an underground prison and place of darkness for the lesser gods). Rath-

er, it indicates that they were abased by God from their heavenly place and privileges and were delivered over to a condition of deepest mental darkness respecting God’s bright purposes. Darkness also marks their own eventuality, which the Scriptures show is everlasting destruction along with their ruler, Satan the Devil. Therefore, Tartarus denotes the lowest condition of abasement for those rebellious angels. It is not the same as “the abyss” spoken of at Revelation 20:1–3.

Tebeth. After the Babylonian exile, the name of the tenth month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the fourth month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-December to mid-January. It is generally referred to simply as “the tenth month.” (Es 2:16)—See  App. B15.

Temple. The permanent building in Jerusalem that replaced the portable tabernacle as the center of Israelite worship. The first temple was built by Solomon and was destroyed by the Babylonians. The second one was built by Zerubbabel after the return from Babylonian exile and was later rebuilt by Herod the Great. In the Scriptures, the temple was often simply called “the house of Jehovah.” (Ezr 1:3; 6:14, 15; 1Ch 29:1; 2Ch 2:4; Mt 24:1)—See  App. B8 and B11.

Tenth (tithe). A tenth part, or 10 percent, given or paid as a tribute, especially for religious purposes. It is also called a “tithe,” and giving it is called “tithing.” (Mal 3:10; De 26:12; Mt 23:23) Under the Mosaic Law, a tenth of the produce of the land and a tenth of the increase of the herds and flocks were given to the Levites yearly to support them. The Levites gave a tenth of this tenth to the Aaronic priesthood to support them. There were some additional tithes as well. Tithing is not required of Christians.

Tent of meeting. An expression applied both to the tent of Moses and

to the sacred tabernacle originally erected in the wilderness.—Ex 33:7; 39:32.

Teraphim. Family gods or idols, at times consulted for omens. (Eze 21: 21) Some were the size and shape of a man, while others were much smaller. (Ge 31:34; 1Sa 19:13, 16) Archaeological findings in Mesopotamia indicate that possessing the teraphim images had a bearing on who would receive the family inheritance. (This may explain why Rachel took her father's teraphim.) This does not seem to have been the case in Israel, although the idolatrous use of teraphim existed in the days of the judges as well as the kings, and they were included among the items destroyed by faithful King Josiah.—Jg 17:5; 2Ki 23:24; Ho 3:4.

Testimony. “The Testimony” usually refers to the Ten Commandments as written on the two stone tablets given to Moses.—Ex 31:18.

Tetrarch. The Greek term *te-tra-ar'-khes* literally means “ruler over one fourth”—that is, a quarter of a district, or province. The tetrarchs, or district rulers, mentioned in the Bible are Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee and Perea; his brother Philip, ruler of Ituraea and Trachonitis; and Lysanias, ruler of Abilene, all of whom ruled over a certain area designated by and subject to the authority of Rome. (Lu 3:1) Herod Antipas' official Roman title was “tetrarch,” but he was popularly referred to as “king,” perhaps as a courtesy.—See study notes on Mt 14:1, 9; Mr 6:14; Lu 3:1.

Thanksgiving offering. A communion offering intended to praise God for his provisions and loyal love. The flesh of the animal offering and both leavened and unleavened bread were eaten. The flesh had to be eaten the same day.—2Ch 29:31.

Thresh; Threshing floor. The process of releasing grain from its stalk and chaff; the place where this work

was done. Threshing was done by hand with a rod, or for larger quantities, with special equipment, such as threshing sledges or rollers, pulled by animals. The equipment ran over the grain that was spread on the threshing floor, a flat circular area usually at a high elevation exposed to wind.—Le 26:5; Isa 41:15; Mt 3:12.

Tishri.—See ETHANIM and ☞ App. B15.

Torture stake. The rendering of the Greek word *stau-ros'*, meaning an upright stake or pole, such as the one on which Jesus was executed. There is no evidence that the Greek word meant a cross, such as the pagans used as a religious symbol for many centuries before Christ. “*Torture stake*” conveys the full intent of the original word, since the word *stau-ros'* is also used to indicate the torture, suffering, and shame that Jesus' followers would face. (Mt 16: 24; Heb 12:2)—See STAKE.

Transgress; Transgression. To overstep a stated law; the act of overstepping a law. It is synonymous with “sin” in the Bible.—Ps 51:3; Ro 5:14.

Transliterate. To replace the letters or characters of one language with the closest corresponding letters or characters of another language. Transliterations enable the reader to pronounce foreign words.

Tree of life. A tree in the garden of Eden. The Bible does not indicate that it had inherent life-giving qualities in its fruit; instead, it represented God's guarantee of everlasting life to those he would allow to eat of its fruit.—Ge 2:9; 3:22.

Tree of the knowledge of good and bad. A tree in the garden of Eden that God used as a symbol of his right to set the standards for mankind as to what is “good” and what is “bad.”—Ge 2:9, 17.

Tribute. Payment by one State or ruler to another as a mark of submission, in order to maintain peace or to gain protection. (2Ki 3:4; 18:14-16; 2Ch 17:11) The word is also used for a personal tax on individuals.—Ne 5:4; Ro 13:7.

True God, the. A rendering of the Hebrew expression for “the God.” In many cases, this use of the definite article in Hebrew serves to distinguish Jehovah as the only true God in contrast to false gods. The rendering “the true God” carefully preserves the full meaning of the Hebrew expression in such contexts.—Ge 5:22, 24; 46:3; De 4:39.

Trumpet. A wind instrument made of metal, used for signaling and for music. According to Numbers 10:2, Jehovah gave instructions for making two silver trumpets that would be used to sound specific signals for summoning the assembly, for breaking camp, or for proclaiming war. These likely were straight trumpets, unlike the curved “horns” that were actually made from animal horns. Trumpets of unspecified construction were also included among the musical instruments at the temple. The sound of trumpets often symbolically accompanies the proclamation of Jehovah's judgments or other significant events of divine origin.—2Ch 29:26; Ezr 3:10; 1Co 15:52; Re 8:7-11:15.

Turban. A cloth wrapped around the head and worn as a headdress. The high priest wore a turban of fine linen, with a gold plate tied to its front with a blue cord. The king wore a turban under his crown. Job used the expression figuratively when he likened his justice to a turban.—Ex 28:36, 37; Job 29:14; Eze 21:26.

U

Uncial. A handwriting style that employed large, rounded, and separated

capital letters. Generally, there was no word separation, and there were few accents or punctuation marks. The term can also be used of a manuscript written in this style. This writing style was commonly used by copyists to produce Greek Bible manuscripts between the fourth and the ninth centuries C.E. The most important uncial manuscripts are written on parchment, and these include the following: Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Vaticanus, Codex Ephraemi Syri rescriptus, and Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis. Because of their age and quality, Greek uncial manuscripts are considered to be the most valuable of all witnesses to the texts of the *Septuagint* and the Christian Greek Scriptures.

Unclean. May refer to being physically dirty or to breaking moral laws. In the Bible, though, the word often refers to what is not acceptable, or not clean, according to the Mosaic Law. (Le 5:2; 13:45; Mt 10:1; Ac 10:14; Eph 5:5)—See CLEAN.

Undeserved kindness. A Greek word with the central idea of that which is agreeable and winsome. The word is often used to refer to a kind gift or a kind manner of giving. When referring to the undeserved kindness of God, the word describes a free gift given generously by God, with no expectation of repayment. Thus, it is an expression of God's bounteous giving and generous love and kindness toward humans. The Greek term is also rendered by such expressions as "favor" and "kind gift." It is given unearned and unmerited, motivated solely by the generosity of the giver.—2Co 6:1; Eph 1:7.

Unleavened. Referring to bread that is made without leaven.—De 16:3; Mr 14:12; 1Co 5:8.

Urim and Thummim. Objects used by the high priest in a manner similar to the use of lots to determine the divine will when questions of

national importance needed an answer from Jehovah. The Urim and Thummim were put inside the high priest's breastpiece when he entered the tabernacle. Their use seems to have ceased when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem.—Ex 28:30; Ne 7:65.

V

Vow. A solemn promise made to God to perform some act, make some offering or gift, enter some service, or abstain from certain things not unlawful in themselves. It carried the force of an oath.—Nu 6:2; Ec 5:4; Mt 5:33.

Vow offering. A voluntary offering that accompanied certain vows.—Le 23:38; 1Sa 1:21.

Vulgate. A Latin translation of the Bible completed in about 405 C.E. by Bible scholar Eusebius Hieronymus, more commonly known as Jerome. In Jerome's day, translations of the Bible in what is known as Old Latin were common but were lacking in quality. Jerome was commissioned to correct this problem by producing a standard Latin translation. He began with the Gospels, working from the best Greek manuscripts available to him. Then, moving on to Psalms, he embarked on the Hebrew Scriptures, initially basing his translation on the *Septuagint* but later working directly from the Hebrew. (Some of the *Vulgate* may have been translated by others.) Jerome recognized God's name but did not use it in his translation. In his prologue to the books of Samuel and Kings, Jerome wrote: "And we find the name of God, the Tetragrammaton [i.e., יהוה], in certain Greek volumes even to this day expressed in ancient letters." Initially, Jerome's translation was not well-received, but later it was widely accepted. Eventually, this translation became known as the *Vulgate*, a name that comes from a Latin word

meaning "common" or "popular." After various revisions, the *Vulgate* of 1592 (known as the Sixtine Clementine version) became the official translation of the Roman Catholic Church. Thousands of *Vulgate* manuscripts are in existence today.

W

Wadi. The valley or bed of a stream that is usually dry except during the rainy season; the word may also refer to the stream itself. Some streams were fed by springs and were therefore perennial. The wadi is referred to as "valley" in some contexts.—Ge 26:19; Nu 34:5; De 8:7; 1Ki 18:5; Job 6:15.

Warp. In weaving, the group of threads running the length of the fabric. The set of threads woven alternately over and under these at right angles across the cloth are the woof.—Jg 16:13.

Watchman. One who guards against possible harm to people or property, often during the night, and who may sound an alarm in the face of threatened danger. Watchmen were often stationed on the city walls and towers to observe those approaching before they got close. A watchman in the military is usually called a guard or a sentry. Figuratively, prophets served as watchmen to the nation of Israel, warning of impending destruction.—2Ki 9:20; Eze 3:17.

Wave offering. An offering in which the priest evidently placed his hands under the hands of the worshipper who was holding the sacrifice to be presented and waved them back and forth; or the priest himself waved the offering. This action represented a *presenting* of the sacrificial offerings to Jehovah.—Le 7:30.

Way, the. An expression used figuratively in the Scriptures to refer to a mode of action or conduct that is either approved or disapproved by

Jehovah. Those who became followers of Jesus Christ were spoken of as belonging to “The Way,” that is, they kept a way of life centered on faith in Jesus Christ, following his example.—Ac 19:9.

Wicked one, the. A designation for Satan the Devil, who stands in opposition to God and his righteous standards.—Mt 6:13; 1Jo 5:19.

Winepress. Usually two pits (vats) cut out of natural limestone, one higher than the other, and connected by a small channel. As the grapes were crushed in the upper pit, the juice flowed into the lower pit. The word is used figuratively for God’s judgment.—Isa 5:2; Re 19:15.

Wineskin. A skin bottle made of the complete hide of an animal, such as a goat or a sheep, and used for holding wine. Wine was put into new wineskins, because as it ferments, it generates carbon dioxide gas that exerts pressure on the skin bottles. New skins expand; old, inflexible ones burst under the pressure.—Jos 9:4; Mt 9:17.

Woof. In weaving, the set of threads running the width of the fabric. These were woven alternately over and under the warp, that is, the group of threads running the length of the fabric.—Le 13:59.

Wormwood. Various woody plants having an intensely bitter taste and a strong aromatic odor. Wormwood is used figuratively in the Bible to describe the bitter effects of immorality, enslavement, injustice, and apostasy. At Revelation 8:11, “wormwood” denotes a bitter and poisonous substance, also called absinthe.—De 29:18; Pr 5:4; Jer 9:15; Am 5:7.

Y

Yoke. A bar borne upon a person’s shoulders, from each side of which

loads were suspended, or a wooden bar or frame placed over the necks of two draft animals (usually cattle) when pulling a farm implement or a wagon. Because slaves often used yokes to carry heavy burdens, the yoke was used figuratively to represent enslavement or subjection to another person, as well as oppression and suffering. Removing or breaking the yoke signified liberation from bondage, oppression, and exploitation.—Le 26:13; Mt 11:29, 30.

Z

Zealot. The Greek term *ze-lo-tes'* refers to one who is zealous or enthusiastic. “Zealot” came to denote a member of a militant Jewish sect that was prominent in the first century C.E. and that fought against the Roman occupation of the Jewish homeland. Roman rule over Judea created deep religious and political tensions. Josephus, the main source of information on that turbulent period, described various Jewish liberation groups that sprang up. One group was the Zealots. As their name suggests, the Zealots were zealous for Jewish freedom and, spurred on by messianic fervor, were willing to use violence. They even despised fellow Jews who sought peace with the Roman authorities. The uprisings in which the Zealots shared did not lead to liberation; rather, their actions sowed the seeds for national disaster—the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in 70 C.E. Some Zealots fled to the mountain fortress of Masada, which had been occupied by those who were called *Sicarii* (Dagger Men). In 73 C.E., after a two-year siege, the Zealots committed mass suicide rather than surrender.

Zeus. The supreme god of the polytheistic Greeks. In Lystra, Barnabas was mistakenly identified as Zeus. Ancient inscriptions found near Lys-

tra refer to “priests of Zeus” and “Zeus the sun-god.” The ship Paul traveled on from the island of Malta had the figurehead “Sons of Zeus,” that is, the twin brothers Castor and Pollux.—Ac 14:12; 28:11.

Zion; Mount Zion. The name of the Jebusite fortress city of Jebus that was on the southeast hill of Jerusalem. After David captured it, he built his royal residence there, and it came to be called “the City of David.” (2Sa 5:7, 9) Zion became a mountain especially holy to Jehovah when David had the Ark transferred there. Later, the name included the temple area on Mount Moriah, and at times the entire city of Jerusalem. It is often used symbolically in the Christian Greek Scriptures.—Ps 2:6; 1Pe 2:6; Re 14:1.

Ziv. The original name of the second month of the Jewish sacred calendar and the eighth month of the secular calendar. It ran from mid-April to mid-May. It is named Iyyar in the Jewish Talmud and other works dated after the Babylonian exile. (1Ki 6:37)—See  App. B15.

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