

Bible Thoughts

with
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St Matthew's Gospel

The thoughts and note material given on these pages are only a possible suggestion of the meaning, they must not be taken as inspired, however they are prayerfully prepared and compared with other similar material. There are many ways in which God's Word can be analyzed and none must be taken in place of the Word of God itself.

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Introduction

The Gospel of St. Matthew.

WRITER. Historical text in the early church has The St. Matthew's Gospel as written by Matthew or as called Levi by Mark and Luke. The Bible does not give as much information about Matthew, he was a disciple and originally was a tax collector, a position hated by the Jews as he was working for the invaders, the Romans. However, this position gave him excellent qualifications for writing the Gospel, he probably had the ability to keep good records. In addition, the book often mentions money, e.g., Matt 18:24.

Date: There are numerous references to The Gospel in early church writings which suggest it was in widespread use. Because there is no reference to the actual destruction of Jerusalem, only prophetic passages, Matt 24:1ff, it must therefore have been written before 70 A.D. though there is some argument by Bible students pointing out the parable, Matt 22:7 may have been referring to Jerusalem.

There is also some possible references to church order, Matt 16:19; Matt 18:17ff, which does suggest a later date, after 70 A.D.

Tradition has it that it was written by Matthew in Hebrew (Aramatic) though some challenge this as it appears to use some material from St. Marks Gospel, whose author was not a disciple. However, many think that Mark's Gospel was dictated by Peter and it would therefore have great authority for use by other Gospel writers.

Reason: Matthew was written for the Jewish converts, to prove that Jesus was the looked for Messiah. This helped the Jew's accept that faith in Jesus was not against their Old Testament teachings.

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS OF MATTHEW:

The birth and childhood of Jesus Matt 1:1 - 2:23

The line of descent (genealogy) of Jesus Matt 1:1-17.

The birth of Jesus Matt 1:18-25.

The visit of the Magi Matt 2:1-12.

Murder of children and the flight of Joseph and Mary to Egypt 2:13-18.
Return to Nazareth 2:19-23.

The baptism and temptation of the Christ Matt 3:1 - 4:25.

The ministry of John Matt 3:1-12.
The baptism of Jesus Matt 3:13-17.
The temptations of Jesus Matt 4:1-11.
Jesus begins His ministry Matt 4:12-25.
Call of four Disciples Matt 4:18-22.

The Sermon on the Mount Matt 5:1 - 7:29.

Marks of a disciple Matt 5:1-16.
The old and the new law Matt 5:17-48.
Religious observance Matt 6:1-18.
Material possessions Matt 6:19-34.
Attitudes to man and God Matt 7:1-12.
The demands of the kingdom Matt 7:13-29.

The ministry of Jesus Matt 8:1 - 9:34.

Acts of healing Matt 8:1-17.
Ten Miracles Matt 8:1-9:38.
Faith put to the test Matt 8:18-27.
The call of Matthew and a question about fasting Matt 9:9-17.
Further healing's Matt 9:18-34.

The mission of the Twelve Matt 9:35 - 10:42.

Jesus' compassion and call Matt 9:35 - 10:4.
The mission charge Matt 10:5-42.

The claims of the Christ Matt 11:1 - 12:50.

Jesus and John Matt 11:1-19.
The refusal and the offer of the gospel Matt 11:20-30.
Controversy about the Sabbath Matt 12:1-14.
Further healing's and controversy Matt 12:15-37.
Challenges to commitment Matt 12:38-50.

The parables on the kingdom Matt 13:1-52.

The rejection of Jesus Matt 13:53 - 17:27.

The rejection of Jesus and the execution of John Matt 13:53 - 14:12.
The feeding of the five thousand and the walking on the water Matt 14:13-36.
The tradition of the elders Matt 15:1-20.
Further healing's and the feeding of the four thousand Matt 15:21-39.
Pharisees and Sadducees Matt 16:1-12.
The confession and challenge of Messiah ship Matt 16:13-28.
The transfiguration and its consequences Matt 17:1-27.

Preparing for the New Kingdom Matt 18:1-35.

Jesus now journeys to Jerusalem and makes challenge to Jerusalem Matt 19:1 - 22:46.

Teaching on divorce Matt 19:1-12.

Blessing of children Matt 19:13-15.

Riches and rewards. Rich young man Matt 19:16 - 20:16.

The future suffering and love of the Messiah Matt 20:17-19.

Requests of Zebedee's sons Matt 20:20-28.

Blind men healed Matt 20:29-34.

The triumphal entry Matt 21:1-11.

Cleansing of the Temple Matt 21:12-17.

Cursing of fig tree Matt 21:18-22.

Judgment on the Jewish leaders and nation Matt 21:23-22:14.

The Pharisees and Sadducees question Jesus Matt 22:15-46.

Jesus gives warnings and prophecies of judgment Matt 23:1 - 25:46.

Jesus talks of the evil of the Pharisees Matt 23:1-39.

The fall of Jerusalem and the coming of the Son of man Matt 24:1-42.

Five parables about the day of judgment Matt 24:43-25:46.

The passion and death of Jesus Matt 26:1 - 27:66

The betrayal of Jesus Matt 26:1-16.

The Last Supper Matt 26:17-29.

Jesus tells of Peter's failure Matt 26:31-35.

Gethsemane Matt 26:36-56.

The trial before Caiaphas Matt 26:57-75.

Judas regrets his actions Matt 27:3-10.

Trial before Pilate 27:11-31.

The Crucifixion Matt 27:32-56.

The burial, and setting of the guard Matt 27:57-66.

The resurrection of the Christ Matt 28:1-20.

The resurrection, the empty tomb Matt 28:1-10.

The bribing of the guard Matt 28:11-15.

The Final Instructions and Commission Matt 28:16-20.

Chapter 1

v1-2:23 **The birth and childhood of Jesus.**

v1-17 **The genealogy of Jesus .**

The following material is only found in Matthew's Gospel. It appears that Matthew is showing the legal descent to Joseph. There is no suggestion that Joseph was the natural father of Jesus, the material recorded after shows that Jesus was conceived through the Holy Spirit and not a human father.

Matthew starts with Abraham and shows God's working through His chosen people.

v5,6 Four women are mentioned as part of the family who were irregular unions in a royal ancestry.

Tamar, [Gen 38:1ff](#) was an adulteress.

Rahab was a foreigner and had been an harlot [Joshua 2:1ff](#).

Ruth was a Moabitess [Ruth 1-4](#).

v6 Bathsheba, was the wife of Uriah with whom David committed adultery [2 Sam 12](#).

v18-25 **The Birth of Jesus.**

To obtain the full list of events read Matthew with [Luke 1:1ff](#).

v18,25 *Betrothal*. This is equivalent to an engagement but was far more binding, a legal relationship, any unfaithfulness was considered adultery. It is specifically mentioned that Joseph did not have intercourse with Mary before the birth of Jesus.

v19 Though Joseph and Mary were not legally married, because of the engagement arrangement a divorce was necessary. Joseph could have made it a public divorce but was planning to give a written statement in the presence of two witnesses. However, God overrules and send Joseph an angelic message in a dream. We are reminded that Joseph was a descendent of King David, a legal requirement of the Messiah.

v21,22 The Messiah was expected to provide a way to remove sin but God's method was not expected.

v23 The quotation from [Isaiah 7:10-17](#), *virgin* indicates a *maiden* or *unmarried daughter*.

v24,25 Indicates that Joseph and Mary had a normal marriage relationship after the birth of Jesus. Other children were born normally [Matt 13:55ff](#).

Chapter 2

v1-12 **The Magi (Wisemen) visit.**

v1 Because of the census (an official count of the population), Mary and Joseph had to travel to *Bethlehem*, Joseph was a descendent of David who was born in Bethlehem.

[Luke 2:1-6](#).

Judea was the name of the area but it reminds us that Jesus was a descent of the tribe of Judah.

Herod the King was 'Herod of Idumaeon,' an Edomite, often known as 'Herod the Great,' he was not a Jew and was put in charge by the Romans. He was given the title "King of the Jews" in 40 B.C. He died in 4 B.C.

The Wisemen would have been astrologers, people who were the 'scientists' of the time, who studied the heavens and probably believed the stars and planets influenced

or affected the life of a human, they would not have been considered evil.

The Wisemen had seen a 'star' appear in the heavens and thought it indicated the birth of a special King - "the King of the Jews." There is no certainty of what they saw, many suggestions have been made. It is interesting Matthew's remark in v9, "went before them until it came and stood over where the young Child was." Would a 'star' or event in the heavens be able to create this effect?

v2-6 The Wisemen approach the official channels, Herod obviously feels threatened, and so did the Jewish leaders, was this the expected Messiah? Herod asks the chief priests and scribes about the Jewish prophecies. They quote from [Micah 5:2](#).

v7 Herod asks the Wisemen for more details then sends them to Bethlehem.

v8 Herod referred to a "young child," indicating the Wisemen had been travelling for sometime. This would explain why Herod killed the children up to 2 years of age, v16.

v11 Matthew refers to "the house" which again confirms the time delay, Mary and Joseph and the child were not now in the stable.

Though the scripture does not mention how many Wisemen there were, it is assumed that as only three gifts were given there was only three Wisemen.

Gold - signified the Kingship of Jesus.

Frankincense - This was a resin obtained from the certain trees related to the terebinth, they are found in South West Arabia. The whitish-yellow produces a very strong smell if heated and was used in the holy anointing oil used in the temple worship, [Exodus 30:34ff](#). Signifying His heavenly position, Son of God.

Myrrh - Resin obtained from a small tree found in the Arabian desert and parts of Africa. The gum drips from the shrub onto the ground, where it hardens into an oily yellow-brown resin. Myrrh was part of the holy anointing oil [Exodus 30 23-33](#). It was also used in purification rites and cosmetic preparations. The spice was offered to Jesus as part of a pain killing drink on the cross [Mark 15:23](#) and used in His burial. [John 19:39,40](#). Showing that Jesus was destined to die.

v12 A special divine warning telling the Wisemen to avoid further contact with Herod.

v13,14 Joseph is now given a divine warning and instruction to take Mary and the Child to Egypt for protection. There were many Jews living in Egypt and they would be safe. It appears that they departed the same night as the Wisemen.

v16 Herod soon realized that he had been tricked and orders the murder of all children in Bethlehem and surrounding area up to two years of age. He was using the times given by the Wisemen as a guidance and making sure that the child was killed, it does not mean that Jesus was two years old at the time.

v15 [Hosea 11:1](#).

v17,18 Matthew quotes from [Jeremiah 31:15](#) which was reflecting the Israel's exile.

v19-23 Following Herod's terrible death in 4 B.C. as recorded by Josephus history writings, God sends two divine messages to Joseph to return to Israel and live in the Galilee area, eventually settling in Nazareth. We have no record that God instructed Joseph to settle in this town but it would fulfil Old Testament prophecies which indicated that the Messiah would be despised because Nazareth would be a most unlikely place for a Messiah to come from. [Isaiah 53:3](#); [Psalms 22:6](#); [Daniel 9:26](#); [John 1:46](#).

v23 "Nazarene" may be referring to [Isaiah 11:1](#). The word "Rod" or *Natzer* is used for the Messiah's place of origin.

Chapter 3

The Ministry of Jesus Begins.

The baptism and temptation of the Christ.

Matt 3:1-4:25.

John the Baptist makes his public appearance before Jesus to prepare the people for the coming Messiah. [Luke 1:5-25](#), [Luke 1:57-80](#) provide full details and description of the birth of John the Baptist.

v1 John the Baptist did his preaching near the River Jordan, in the northern part of the wilderness of Judea, a barren area spreading out from the western shore of the Dead Sea.

v2 John's task was to prepare the way for the coming Messiah, Jesus. The message was "to repent" or '*change the mind*,' not just a change of opinion but a complete change in attitude to a wrong life and sin, this was associated with a feeling of sorrow and change of how a person lived.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" is based upon [Daniel 2:44](#); [Daniel 7:13,14,27](#). A promised Messianic Kingdom, Jesus was about to be shown to be the king of this kingdom. This kingdom needed preparation by the people to enter into this Kingdom of God.

v3,4 [Isaiah 40:3-5](#), shows a definite prophecy to John the Baptist. Clothes of *camel hair and leather* are similar to Elijah's [2 Kings 1:8](#) and were a symbol of a prophet. *Locusts*, an easily available and permitted food, [Leviticus 11:22](#).

v5,6 The Jewish people responded to the preaching of John and as a sign of acceptance and repentance were being baptized by John. Baptism was performed when a non-Jew becoming a follower of the Jewish faith, a proselyte. It was also sometimes used as a sign of purifying. This action by John was not therefore new, the meaning however was.

v7-10 [Pharisees and Sadducees](#). They claimed to be the protectors of the Mosaic Law but here we see John challenging their work, John is able to see the reason for their act of "repenting," it was just a display, not from their hearts, they were like a snake trying to escape from danger. One of the claims of the Jew was that they were descendants of Abraham, the man chosen by God. But John said this will not protect you from the anger of God. For God could create people who will follow Him just from the stones at the feet of John.

The coming "axe" shows that the people who were not wanting to serve God are about to be cut down.

v11,12 John speaks of a future baptism which would involve more than just a dip in a river as a sign of repentance. Two events appear to be spoken of by John, Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was given to the believers and the "Fire of Judgement" still to come. John did not indicate that there was a long time period between these two events.

v12-17 The Baptism of Jesus.

[Mark 1:9-12](#); [Luke 3:21,22](#); [John 1:29-34](#).

v13,14 John recognized Jesus when He came to be baptized, they were related but somehow John now recognized the fact that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

Jesus was not repenting of any personal sin, He came to identify Himself with those who were repenting and as a sign of the ministry He was about to start. Jesus was about to become the "Priest" and as such He had to be 30 years old and washed and anointed as Priest. See [Luke 3:23](#); [Numbers 4:1-4](#); [Exodus 29:4-7](#); [Leviticus 8:6-36](#). v16,17 The appearance of the Holy Spirit was confirmation to John the Baptist that this was the Messiah. The Spirit had previously come upon Old Testament prophets during their ministries for help and guidance but now the Spirit comes on Jesus without measure.

A *Dove* was a symbol of purity and peace. Jesus was divinely consecrated for the ministry and work of the Priest.

The *voice from heaven* comes at three points in the Ministry of Jesus, at His Baptism, at His Transfiguration [Matt 17:5](#). Just before the cross, [John 12:28](#).

Chapter 4

v1-11 The Temptation of Christ.

[Mark 1:12](#); [Luke 4:1](#).

The various tests were directed against the human nature of Jesus, but as Jesus was a perfect joining of the divine and human natures then the outcome must be certain, because God cannot sin.

v1 *Led of the Spirit* is an indication of the submission of Jesus to the situation. *Tempted by the devil*. To be tried or tested to do evil. The Spirit was deliberately leading Jesus in order for this test time to take place.

The Temptation of Jesus is to be compared and contrasted with the temptation of Adam when Man lost his place to Satan as lord of the earth. Adam did not have knowledge of good and evil until he disobeyed the commands of God. [Genesis 1:26-28](#); [Genesis 3:1-8](#).

Jesus has now taken the place of Man and is being exposed to the plan of God to restore Man, the fallen race, back to God. [Rom 8:19-23](#).

3-7 Satan wants Jesus to use His divine powers as a human, to act against the commands of God. The first two temptations were designed to prove that Jesus was the Son of God. Satan did not doubt that Jesus was the Son of God v6, he was using it as a test. Neither bread and hunger are sinful but we need to see that we need God as our source of "food," the response from [Deuteronomy 8:3](#) shows the importance.

v5-7 Taking Jesus up onto the roof of the temple, the pinnacle could have been the top of the porch, Satan uses scripture [Psalm 91:11,12](#) to make Jesus prove God's Word. "You shall not tempt the Lord your God." unauthorized action in putting God to the test is not faith but doubt.

v8-11 The third temptation is an offer by Satan to give the world, which he stole from Adam, back to Jesus. Satan does control the earthly kingdoms, though there are limits which are set by God. [2 Cor 4:4](#). As Jesus was the Son of Man, Satan was offering to give back what he had stolen from Adam. However, Jesus had to give Satan the wor-

ship Satan wanted. If Jesus had worship Satan He would have accepted the lordship of the Devil. Satan was defeated by the use of God's Word, just as any believer can do. v11 Jesus is able to reject the temptations of Satan, who now departed, Jesus had only used the Word of God to defeat Satan, this power is open to all believers.

v12 **The Ministry of Jesus Christ starts.**

Matthew's record covers four geographical area's: Galilee, commencing [Matthew 4:12ff](#); Perea, commencing [Matthew 19:1ff](#); Judea, commencing [Matthew 20:17ff](#), and Jerusalem, from [Matthew 21:1ff](#). Matthew does not record the earlier Judean ministry recorded in the other Gospels but starts with Capernaum.

v12-17 Jesus becomes resident of Capernaum.

The imprisonment of John the Baptist is a signal for the ministry to begin.

v13-16 Nazareth was not in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali so the move to Capernaum fulfilled, [Isaiah 9:1,2](#). This area was more exposed to foreign influence, it had a mixed population and so had a low spiritual state, *the darkness*.

v17 The message is the same as John the Baptist preached in Judea.

v18-20 The Sea of Galilee - a lake in the Jordan valley, 680 feet below sea level, 7 miles wide and 14 miles long. Due to the surrounding hills and mountains the area is subject to sudden storms.

The four Disciples called had probably met Jesus in Judea during the preaching of John The Baptist, compare [John 1:32-49](#). Obviously their earlier meeting had a great affect on these men, v20 *they straightway left* and v22 *they immediately left the boat and their father*, reveals how much.

The events of [Luke 5:1-11](#) probably happened just before the call recorded by Matthew.

v23-25 The early ministry involved *teaching, preaching, and healing*, as a result, the fame of Jesus spread.

v24 The healing covered two forms, illnesses due to diseases and illnesses as a result of demonic influences, clearly separating the two problems.

Syria probably referred to the area to the north of Galilee, *Decapolis* was a group of ten independent Greek cities to the east of Galilee and associated with Syria. *Beyond Jordan* is the Perea region.

The message "the Gospel of the Kingdom," was the good news that the Messianic king was here and was about to set up His kingdom, [Isaiah 35:3-6](#).

Chapter 5

The Sermon on the Mount Matt 5:1 - 7:29.

The event must have happened sometime after the start of the ministry as Jesus now has a "multitude" of followers. The "mountain" was probably near Capernaum, probably a flat area on a hill side, suitable for speaking to a large number of people.

In [Luke 6:12-20](#) we are told that the Twelve Disciples have recently been chosen and most of the material was meant for them but the position allowed many others to also hear. Jesus tells the disciple that they are to be the "light of the world."

The Sermon on the Mount starts with twelve verses which we call "the Beatitudes," These verses are a description of the blessed life which is available through Jesus.

Having announced that the "Kingdom of heaven is at hand" the King now informs His disciples the principles of this kingdom. It is based upon the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament and Jesus states that the attitude of Men towards this law will affect their place in the kingdom, v19.

As with the Mosaic Law the characteristics, as describe by Jesus, are not attainable (reachable) by self-effort, only by the action of the Holy Spirit.

The word "Blessed" means "Happy" a condition of the believer's spiritual, inner life. The statements made in the Beatitudes are not really promises to the believer but a description of what it means to be part of the Family of God, those who are "born again" in Christ. How wonderful to be 'blessed' by God.

v3 This verse is not talking about the money poor, riches will in fact produce the opposite attitude that Jesus is talking about, a rich person may feel they have no need of God.

Jesus is talking about the persons spiritual attitude. Once a person has realized their sinful nature and need of a Saviour then the attitude of "poor in spirit," a full submission to God, will result in that person having their needs meet by Christ as heirs to His kingdom.

v4 "Mourn:" A sadness in the heart of a person when they realize their sinful state. As Christ took all our sins on Him we have great comfort available. [1 John 1:9](#).

v4 "Meek:" Quite, gentle, obedient, humble, patient. This is only mentioned by Matthew. Christ is the source of all meekness [Matt 11:28,29](#); See [2 Cor 10:1](#). "Inherit the earth," the Messianic kingdom of the future.

v6 "Hunger and thirst after righteousness." A deep desire for personally being right with God, such a desire shows that the present spiritual situation makes the person unhappy. Read and consider the parable of [Luke 18:9-14](#).

v7 "Merciful:" If we live our lives showing mercy for others then God will show mercy to us. The Pharisees were very religious, claiming their 'legalistic' righteousness, but this was just external, they were judgmental, preferring their way of life than beg for undeserved mercy from God.

v8 "Pure in Heart:" Purity is not a common condition in today's world, from 'behaviour' to 'thoughts' we can be contaminated, made un pure, in so many ways. God is absolutely pure and as a sinner there is no way we can come to Him in our sinful condition, but Jesus has made it possible. See [Luke 5:8](#). On the return of Christ His people will obtain this pure nature of God. [1 Cor 13:12](#); [1 John 3:2](#).

v9 "Peacemakers:" God is the source of all peace, [Heb 13:20](#). Christ is the "Prince of Peace," [Isaiah 9:6](#). Peacemakers will take on this Godly nature as He takes control of a believers life. In God's kingdom there will be no conflict of any sort, with people or nations.

v10-12 "Persecuted for righteousness sake:" During the 1000 year Messianic Kingdom, such wrongs will be put right, however in that 1000 years period there will still be men with sinful natures and so evil is possible. Though it will be judged by Christ immediately,

[Acts 5:41](#); [Acts 8:1](#); [Acts 9:16](#); [Heb 11:36](#).

The Old Testament prophets, who foretold of the coming kingdom, met with the same opposition.

v13-16 Behaviour of Kingdom citizens.

v13 Salt, a chemical used for food preservation, often used as a symbol of 'good' controlling 'evil.' Believers are a controlling force in the world's corruption.

"Lost its savour." This is not referring to a chemical change, but due to impurities like sand, so reducing the effect of the salt as a preservative. If the impurity is large salt will not be worth having.

v14 "Ye are the light of the world." Believers function as a 'light to lighten the darkness of the world.' [John 8:12](#). A city on a hill, full of lights, cannot be hidden in the dark.

v15 The personal "light" should also be on show, so that the world can see Jesus in the person, this should make the world turn to Jesus Christ for forgiveness and give the glory to God.

v17-48 Kingdom standards compared with Mosaics Law.

The Jewish leaders were challenging Jesus, that He was destroying the Old Testament Law of Moses, Jesus answers the objection by stating that He was here to fulfil the Law not destroy it. He obeyed the Law perfectly, finally paying the full penalty as a substitute, (replacement) for sinners. See [Rom 3:20-26](#).

v18 "For verily I say unto you." An indication that what is being said is very important.

"Till heaven and earth pass away," suggests "never," but [Matt 24:25-35](#); [Rev 21:1](#) indicate that there is a time limit.

"Jot" the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

"Tittle" A tiny amount or part of some Hebrew letters.

v19 A disciples attitude to the law, a person who avoids doing the small requirements of the Old Law will have a lesser reward in the kingdom.

v20 "Your righteousness." Comparing the 'righteousness' of the Scribes and Pharisees, who obeyed the Mosaics Law but only outwardly, their hearts were very evil. Without the righteousness of Christ being imputed (put or given to us) by faith we cannot enter this new Kingdom of Christ.

v21-26 The Law in action.

Jesus gives an example - murder, developing [Ex 20:13](#). A physical murder does not need to happen, just being angry with a person for no cause can be considered to have *murdered* the person. Jesus said that if one person calls the other person "Raca" or *empty headed*, then they should expect judgement by the Jewish court only. However, by calling the person "a fool" you are involving and considering the persons character. We call this 'libel' and even under our rules can expect a more severe punishment.

"Hell fire." Jesus could have been referring to the *Gehenna of fire*, a place outside Jerusalem where all the rubbish was burnt, but more likely a place of eternal torment.

Jesus is saying that the route desire of the heart of an angry man will not be accepted in His kingdom, and will be dealt with.

v23-24 Jesus points out that God will not be able to accept any offering if there is evil in the heart of a person, get your relationship right with each other before worshipping God.

v25 "Adversary." A person who wants to take you before the court of law, to get judgement over some disagreement with you, as a result of not settling the problem out

of the law courts, you could end up in prison.

v26 *Prison* cannot represent hell as payment can allow release, once you are in hell there is no escape, [Matt 25:41,46](#), the debt cannot be paid.

v27-28 Second example, Adultery. Again Jesus states that the sin of [Exodus 20:14](#) has a deeper level, "just looking" can involve lust for the person, the 'looker' would commit adultery if the opportunity existed.

v29-30 Jesus now talks about a person who blames parts of their body for their behaviour, Jesus points out the obvious action, to remove the eye. We amputate a diseased hand or leg to save a life, so an eye, or the hand, v30, needs a dramatic action for salvation, however the eye or hand is controlled by the mind of the person, that is the source of the sin, not the eye or hand.

v31,32 Third example, divorce: God never expected or planned the act of divorce, it was allowed under the Mosaic Law as a concession, permission allowed under the certain conditions of fornication (a person has a sexual act with someone who they are not married to.) [Matt 19:3-10](#).

Over the years the Jewish religious leaders had expanded the meaning of fornication, the Mosaic Law for "uncleanness" could now include from the act of fornication to the husband having a dislike of his wife.

Some people feel fornication only applies before marriage, [Matt 1:18,19](#). Others see "fornication" is the same as "adultery" at any time and say this situation is one cause for divorce which is allowed.

v33-37 Fourth example: Making an oath. "Forswear" swear falsely, perjury. The Jews were often misusing the oath, including '*by heaven, by earth, Jerusalem, by your own head*' for which they did not control, they are all under the control of God, so Jesus said not to use the oath as proof of a statement. A Believer should only need to say "Yes" or "No" and the answer should be trustworthy.

v38-42 Fifth example: retaliation, to attack, return in kind. [Ex 21:24](#). A common result of the courts, the punishment fits the crime.

v43-48 **Love your neighbour.**

[Lev 19:18,34](#).

"Hate thine enemy" was not in the original Law, but must have been a popular understanding based on people creating opposites to the Law. But Jesus reveals the true love of God the Father, He loves all people with an *agape* love, not expecting love in return. Having this love shows a true understanding of the Father.

Jesus also reminds them that the publicans, Roman Tax collectors, are happy to "love" those who "love" them or greet them. Not a common occurrence!!!

"Be therefore perfect" is applying to loving others, our love should be for all, just as God the Father. "Perfect" cannot apply to our sinful nature as that is not possible until we are with Jesus.

Chapter 6

6:1 to 7:12 The behaviour and attitude of Citizens of the Kingdom.

Jesus now examines and compares the life He expects of His followers with those of the religious groups like the Pharisees.

v1-4 The giving of help through money or material like food - Alms.

Though Jesus wants His followers to show Christ and shine before the world He warns that deeds or actions of righteousness must not be done to give self glory, "to be seen by men," God considers that you have already been "rewarded" if you do.

Verse 2 goes further that you must not make announcements of what you are about to do, "the sounding of a trumpet," Jesus continues to tell us that this is what the "hypocrites" or people who are 'acting,- playing a part,' are doing. They have their reward in full. The original use of the word "reward" indicated that it was in full payment, nothing to be added to it. Neither will God add to the reward.

v3,4 However, those who are prepared to give help and gifts secretly, so secret that "even their own hands do not knowing what each is doing," and not expecting any reward from men, those will be rewarded by God the Father.

v5-15 Prayer.

It was common practice in the synagogues to stand and pray out loud. [Mark 11:25](#), this behaviour was not said to be wrong by Jesus for He prayed publicly. [Luke 10:21,22](#); [John 11:41,42](#). But the deliberate praying in such a way that it became a display, this was the wrong way to pray and was condemned by Jesus. Neither should the prayer be "vain repetitions." It was common for Pagan worship to have repeated phrases or passages in an attempt to 'wake the god up.' Jesus is saying here that your prayers should not just be words with no meaning or worship but should come from your heart.

It is not the length or the repeated prayer that Jesus is talking about, Jesus prayed all night, [Luke 6:12](#), and repeated His requests, [Matt 26:44](#), He is condemning the attitude of the person in the prayer, the motive or reason for making the prayers.

v9-13 The Lord's Prayer.

Jesus now gives an example of a suitable prayer, though short it contains the essential ideas and thoughts. Worship, forgiveness for failures and requests. This prayer was never meant to be recited, repeated without meaning or true belief in the words by a person. Consider [John 16:23,24](#).

God and His plans.

"Our Father" often used in Old Testament prayers but much more precious to a New Testament believer.

"Hallowed be Your name" treated the name with reverence, holy, in awe and respect. "Your Kingdom come." The kingdom of Christ, not only the Jew but all believers should be looking and working for this kingdom.

Man and his needs.

"Our daily bread," necessary for us to exist.

"Forgive us our debts." This is not financial problems but our spiritual failures to the righteous requirements of the Father. This prayer was only given to the disciples, so can only apply to believers confessing their failures. These are not the sins, the wrongs of a non believer coming to Christ.

"As we forgive." All forgiveness of sin is totally dependant upon the grace of God through the Blood of Jesus, so a believer who is asking for forgiveness for their own wrong yet still refuses to forgive another person who has wronged them, this must be wrong and hypocritical, for they are making themselves god like by this action. Chris-

tians should consider how much God has forgiven them. [Eph 4:32](#).

"Lead us not into temptation." God will not lead anyone into temptation, [James 1:13,14](#); [Luke 22:40](#), here the prayer is for God to protect the person from unnecessary temptations.

v16-18 Fasting.

Under the Old Testament the Mosaic Covenant described one fast day a year on the Day of Atonement [Lev 16:29](#). The Pharisee's had added two fasts a week, Mondays and Thursdays, they often used these days for public displays of their "purity." The true meaning and use of fasting was to permit all of a persons time to prayer and spiritual meditation. Fasting therefore is a personal action and should not need to involve others as spectators because this means it is acting or done for praise. Jesus never indicated the need for fasting though it did appear occasionally in the early church, [Acts 13:2,3](#).

v19-21 Wealth.

It was considered by most Jews that wealth was a sign of God's blessing. Jesus explains that "treasures of the earth" only last a short period because it can be destroyed by animals, wear and tear or even stolen. The citizen of the Kingdom of Christ should store up their riches in heaven but using their life to the glory of God. see v33. Wherever your "treasures" are is where your heart wants to be.

v22-24 What you look at and desire shows your interest, Jesus therefore said that your eye is what shines into your body and mind, if the eye is only interested in the things of God then you will have the light of God and understanding in your life. If you are interested only in the things of the world then your treasure and desires will be for the world, no understanding of the love and grace of God, a life full of darkness.

Jesus goes on to explain that we are "slaves" and as such we cannot have two masters, we will want to serve one and not the other. So with a citizen of Christ, we can only serve God or riches (mammon). Jesus does not actually condemn wealth but our attitude and desires to it.

25-34 Faith.

Those without wealth may be subjected to worry and lack of faith in God supplying their needs. "Take no thought for your life," does not mean that we should make no plans or preparation for the future, consider [1 Tim 5:8](#), but trust God for each daily need. God made our bodies, He is more than able to supply what is needed.

v26 God provides all the needs of the birds and they do not have the ability to sow, harvest and store food like we do.

v27 Our food is needed to live and grow, a child grows far more than a cubit (about 18 inches), but once we reach our mature height we are unable to get any taller, it is under the control of God.

v28-30 "What we wear." Why Jesus referred to lilies is unknown, possibly they were visible at the place where they were. Jesus is pointing out the short lived beauty of a flower need no special hard work or effort. Solomon was the richest Hebrew king, yet he could not reach the beauty of a flower.

God looks after the needs of the grass which we just burn, then He will not fail in our needs if we trust Him.

v31,32 The Gentiles spend all their time looking for material gain because they do not know God the Father which the Jews did and had access to Him for all their needs.
 v33,34 Those who were the children of God should therefore not be concerned about their needs, they should work for the Kingdom of God and trust God for all their needs. Let God look after the future as it is stupid to add tomorrows problems to those of today.

Chapter 7

This chapter continues the thoughts on attitudes of the Kingdom Citizens.

v1-12 Judging others.

[Rom 2:1](#); [Rom 14:4](#); [Rom 14:13](#); [1 Cor 4:5](#).

Jesus appears to be telling us that it is wrong to be a judge of others, only God can give a fair judgement because only He knows the true motives, [James 4:11,12](#). Believers are not to avoid judging under all situations for they need to be a judge of themselves and other believers failures, [1 Cor 5:3-5,12,13](#).

v3-5 A "mote" is a very small piece of straw or wood while a "beam" was a large log or piece of wood used to construct the roof or floor of a building. In this passage Jesus is pointing out the problems of judging a small error in another while you personally have a very large problem or error. Jesus said that you are an hypocrite, you are playing at being a doctor, when you are very ill yourself.

v6 The wonderful news of the Gospel and invitation of salvation are being rejected by many people and Jesus refers these to being "dogs" and "swine" (pigs). Dogs & pigs were very repulsive(revolting) to a Jew, So Jesus is say they do not understand the value of the wonderful gift being offered.

v7,8 There are various interpretations of the following verses but we must take them in context (with the verses before and after, not on their own). Jesus is telling the disciples to avoid the "dogs," "pigs" attitude and "large pieces of wood" in their eye, to recognize these Jesus tells them to ask for help from the Father. Also, the text suggests that we may need to make the request often.

v9-11 There are similarities (alike in some ways) between "round loaf" and a "stone," "fish" and a "snake," but an earthly father would not put his own child in danger or hurt in anyway, so God the Father will make sure we have all that we need. See [Luke 11:11-13](#).

v12 We are evil by our nature but God still treats the believers as His children, promising to respond to our requests and needs, we therefore should treat others as we would like to be treated. "The Law and the Prophets." Consider [Matt 22:36-40](#); [Rom 13:8-10](#).

v13,14 Jesus is talking to His followers and is here examining their position, they have entered, by faith, into following the Lord Jesus, He now explains how unpopular this walk of faith will be. The 'gate' suggests the initial experience of salvation, then the long walk of faith and living for God. The first Christians were called "Followers of the Way," [Acts 9:2](#); [Acts 19:9](#); [Acts 19:23](#).

Most of Mankind have entered the wide gateway and are walking upon the broadway which leads to destruction, v14 suggests that the narrow gate, which leads to life, is difficult to find.

v15-20 Those who entered the narrow way are warned of the danger of **false prophets**. These are people who claim to be guides for the believers, but their teaching is really full of lies. Jesus described them as people who are wearing "Sheep's clothing," this is not referring to the clothes they are wearing, but as a comparison with their hearts, they are really evil "wolves," but pretending to be believers. The people of God have needed to watch out for deceptive, (false or distorted teaching) leaders. [Acts 20:28-31](#); [1 John 4:1](#); [Rev 13:11-14](#).

How can we identify these false prophets? "By their fruits," as the outward appearance may not show their true heart. "The corrupt tree," a tree which is not useable, with no fruit worth eating, decaying. The only thing to do with this type of tree is destruction by fire, to stop it infecting other trees.

v21-23 Jesus confirms that He will be the judge as the divine Son of God. He tells us that there will be people who appeared to have done things in the Name of Christ, carried out miracles and had power over evil but were not true believers. Spectacular behaviour, even supernatural, does not prove divine control under Christ. "I never knew you: depart from Me," was the judgement of Jesus. See [2 Thess 2:7-10](#); [Matt 24:24](#). These people must be still living during the end times when Jesus returns as any who were dead would not be raised until the wicked dead are judged, [Rev 20:5](#).

v24-27 The story Jesus now tells, as an example, reminds us how important it is to build upon the right foundation. The house which collapsed was not due to the man failing to work but because he did not build the house on the right foundation. Believers must build their life on the foundation of Jesus and His teachings, [1 Cor 3:11](#).

v28,29 The people had been listening to the words of Jesus with great attention, now when He ends the people suddenly realize that this man was different. He spoke as if He knew the answers to all questions and did not have to refer to other people like the scribes did when they had a question, the scribes usually went off and looked up previous teaching and prophets for the answers.

Chapter 8

Matt. 8:1 - 9:34 The ministry of Jesus.

v1-4 The Leper is cleaned.

Leprosy was considered "the visible sign of a persons spiritual corruption." Lepers were required to live outside the camp or city, [Numbers 5:1-4](#). This disease was regarded as an awful punishment from the Lord, [Numbers 12:1-15](#); [Numbers 12:9-15](#); [2 Kings 5:1ff](#).

The name "Leprosy" comes from the Greek word 'lepra,' because the Greek doctors describe the disease from its scaliness. We have the description of the disease, as well as the regulations connected with it in [Leviticus 13:1ff](#).

v2 "Lord, if You will" shows the faith of this man, he knew the Lord could heal him, it was just up to Jesus.

v3 "Jesus touched him," as He healed the man and made him clean. The man was clean before the Lord touched him so Jesus was not made unclean according to the regulations.

v4 The instruction, "Tell no man," was not to keep the act secret, as Jesus was sur-

rounded by the multitude during the healing. So why? It was possibly to prevent the priest hearing before the examination, according to the regulations, the priest could have been prejudiced (biased against) because the healing was by Jesus. Unfortunately the man did not obey this instruction, [Mark 1:45](#).

v5-13 The Centurion's servant.

A centurion was normally a Gentile soldier who was in charge of 100 soldiers. Centurions are uniformly shown as men of good character in the New Testament, [Matt 27:54](#); [Acts 10:22](#); [Acts 27:3,43](#).

Luke tells us in [Luke 7:1-10](#) that the centurion made the appeal to Jesus through the Jewish elders and friends.

v6 "Sick of the palsy," the word indicates that the servant had some sort of paralysis affecting the muscles, a number of diseases are able to produce this effect.

This centurion obviously had a close relationship with the Jews as he had built a synagogue for the people, [Luke 7:5](#), yet felt he did not have the right to approach Jesus to personally come to his home.

v9,10 "I am a man under authority," - this minor officer had the power to issue orders to his soldiers, yet he believed that he was talking to Jesus, one who had authority over all things and could heal his servant without contact.

v10 Jesus marvelled, admired this faith. How wonderful to realized that the Son of God still has human experiences. Jesus must have been sad that it was a Gentile who had such faith in Him and not a Jew.

v11,12 As a result of this meeting Jesus reveals that His future kingdom will have many who are not Jews, Gentiles who will sit with Abraham. But those who should have been in this kingdom, the heirs, the Jewish nation, will be rejected due to their lack of faith.

v13 The man believed Jesus was all powerful and could heal at a distance, he had great faith, and so Jesus did the healing.

v14-17 Peter's mother-in-law healed.

Jesus has returned from a synagogue service, [Luke 4:38](#); [Mark 1:29](#) and they found the mother-in-law of Peter lying ill. Jesus just touches her and immediately she is able to look after the party. Note: This healing took place on the Sabbath.

Some have suggested that Peter's wife must have been dead for the mother-in-law to do the serving but this disagrees with [1 Cor 9:5](#).

v16,17 When the evening came, at sundown, the Sabbath is over and many sick and demon possessed were brought to Jesus. These actions were signs of His power, a part fulfilling of [Isaiah 53:4](#) which was finally fulfilled on the cross at Calvary.

v18-22 Conditions for a disciple.

[Luke 9:57ff](#) seems to suggest that this event happened later. It is possible that Matthew combined the events together.

[Scribes](#) were not attracted to Jesus because of their interpretation of the law was not the same as Jesus. This scribe was however considering becoming a follower. Jesus could see into his heart and explained what it would cost him. The use of the title "Son of Man" would have been understood by the Jews to be referring to the Messiah, [John 12:31-37](#); [Luke 22:66-71](#).

Another follower ask to bury his father, he must have only just died as the Jews bury their dead very quickly, often on the same day of death. It would not have delayed Jesus and a Jew felt great responsibility for their aged parents, so why did Jesus respond this way? A disciple must consider the requests of living for Christ more important than world requirements. Those who are 'spiritually' dead can care for the 'physically' dead. [Luke 9:59-62](#).

v23-27 The Storm.

The words used in this passage indicate an unusual violence of the sea. Violent storms are quite common on the Sea of Galilee due to the geography of the area.

The disciples faith in who Jesus was is obviously very weak, it was He who had commanded them to make the journey and He was peacefully asleep. Yet their turning to Jesus showed that they knew He had a greater power.

We are told that Jesus stopped the winds and the sea. Following a high wind the sea would have taken many hours to become calm, so showing His power to the disciples.

v28-34 Demon possessed men.

[Mark 5 1-20](#); [Luke 8 26-30](#).

The area of Gaderene's was called from the city of Gadara to the South East on the lake shore.

Matthew mentions two people were possessed with demons though Luke and Mark only mention the one more important in the event.

In the New Testament, people who are possessed by demons are not shown as very sinful or mentally insane, though the presence of the demons could produce the same effect. The mind of the person had come under the control of Satan's followers and it is interesting that it occurred so often during the period of Christ on earth, Satan's effort to affect God's plans?

The demons were aware of who was present and what was the ultimate event in their future, they were totally subject to His power. Why did the demons make such a strange request for the action of Jesus? Perhaps if they occupied a person or animal they would not be sent to the abyss (deep) of eternal punishment. [Luke 8:31](#); [Rev 20:1-3](#). However, the swine(pigs), by rushing into the water and being drowned, prevented any plans the demons had.

The owners of the swine did not complain as it was illegal, according to the Mosaic law, for a Jew to keep pigs.

The objection to the presence of Jesus came from the towns population. They did not want to accept the message Jesus brought.

Chapter 9

Matt. 9:35 - 10:42 The mission of the Twelve.

v1-8 Healing of paralyzed man.

[Mark 2:1-12](#); [Luke 5:17-26](#).

v1 Jesus returns to "His own city" - Capernaum.

We are told in the other gospels that getting the man to Jesus was a problem due to the crowds. The man had to be lowered down through the roof of the house.

v2 "Seeing their faith," this must include the faith of the sick man as in most cases

faith of the person was involved in healing.

v2,3 The sickness must have been involved or as a result of some sin by the man as Jesus starts the healing with "your sins are forgiven." This causes some immediate charges by the present religious leaders present.

Blaspheming - 'speaking against God' was a common charge by these leaders, they felt that only God could forgive sin, so by this action of Jesus He was claiming to be God, [Luke 5:21](#).

v4-6 Jesus, able to read their thoughts, asks a question, "which is easier?" Any person can say - "your sins are forgiven," or "Get up and walk," but both need a following action to prove they have divine power. "A fake will use the "Sins forgiven" claim as it cannot be proved, but Jesus also proves His power on earth is divine by physically healing the man.

v7,8 The healing caused considerable discussion by the crowds, about divine gifts given to a man by God.

v9-13 The call of Matthew.

Matthew, also called Levi, [Mark 2:14](#); [Luke 5:27](#), was a tax collector. Jesus came to him when he was sitting in the tax building, probably on the road from Damascus to Capernaum, where they would be collecting taxes for goods travelling along the road into the port. These people were hated by the Jewish population.

v9 "Follow Me," showed that Matthew was to make a complete break with his old life, there would be no turning back, his post would quickly be filled by another person.

v10 The feast in the house of Matthew, [Luke 5:29](#) probably took place a little later after the calling for Matthew, when he had invited many of his old colleagues and associates, "publicans and sinners," to the meal, men who were living in a way against the commands of God.

v11-13 To the Pharisees, who considered themselves very righteous, this behaviour of Jesus was all very wrong. Jesus responds to their questions by saying His work was for the sinners, "people who are ill need a doctor." By referring to 'the righteous' and 'the sinners' needs, Jesus is comparing the difference between the Pharisees attitude and the spiritually needy. "Sacrifice" means that a cost is involved.

v14-17 Disciples of John.

This talk with the disciples of John probably took place during the meal at the house of Matthew, [Luke 5:33](#).

The law only lists one fasting day, the Day of Atonement but the religious leaders had now added a day of fasting on each Monday and Thursday, this was observed by the Pharisees and others, including it appears the followers of John the Baptist.

Compare the answer of Jesus with John's in [John 3:29](#).

Those looking after the bridegroom will be sad and then fast when the bridegroom is taken away, a true fast of sadness, not a routine fast done twice a week, as the Pharisees. This was to happen when Jesus died on the cross.

Old and New.

When a piece of cloth is new it will shrink at the first wash, it is therefore a foolish act to repair an old cloth with a new piece of cloth, when it is washed it will shrink and tear away from the material to which it is sewn. New wine, having not yet fermented,

will burst old wineskin containers.

These examples showed the danger of mixing old material with new material. The message Jesus came with did not just modifying the existing teachings, an old teaching made new with a few changes, Jesus came with a totally new message.

v18-26 The healing of the ruler's child and the woman.

[Mark 5:22-43](#); [Luke 8:41-56](#).

Jairus was a ruler, probably of the city Capernaum, he would have been rich money wise, but still needed to come to Jesus for help. Luke tells us that when he initially approached Jesus for help he said "she was dying," it was later, while Jesus was healing the woman that messengers told him that she was dead.

Jairus had great faith in the power of Jesus, he asked him to come to his home and heal the child just by touching her. However, on the way the woman, suffering from an hemorrhage for twelve years, approaches Jesus believing she will be healed just by touching the bottom of His coat.

This woman with an "hemorrhage" would be ceremonial defiled, considered unclean, and would not be allowed to attend any synagogue and would also have had many problems at home, ([Leviticus 15:19-30](#)). She had suffered from this problem for 12 years. Her "ritual uncleanness" may have explained why she approached Jesus in such a secret way.

She believed that she just needed to touch the clothes of Jesus, she reached out to touch a small part of the bottom of the outer coat normally worn by the Jew, [Numbers 15:38](#). Matthew does not give all the events, but Jesus knows of her action and healing and now turns to her. It was not the clothing which healed the woman but her faith.

The delay must have been very difficult for Jairus. In [Luke 8:49](#); [Mark 5:35](#), we are told that while this healing is taking place messengers come from the house of Jairus, they tell him his daughter is dead. Jesus tells Jairus to keep believing in Him.

v23 When they arrive at the house of Jairus, the funeral mourners had already gathered, "the minstrels and the people making a wailing noise."

v24-26 "The maid is not dead, but sleeps." Jesus was not saying she was not dead, or that death was a state of sleep, rather it showed what he was about to do. See [John 11:11,14](#).

v26 Even though Jesus asked for no publicity of this action, [Mark 5:43](#); [Luke 8:56](#), this did not happen.

v27-31 Blind men healed.

This event is only recorded by Matthew.

"Son of David," a Messianic title. Jesus was trying to avoid publicity because this title would have been a political threat to the Romans. We therefore see that Jesus ignores the men until he is in a house.

Again healing involved an act of faith by the men, they recognized Jesus for who He really was - the Messiah.

v31 Again Jesus requested no publicity, but that was not to happen, unable to contain their thanks for the blessing, they did not obey the warning by Jesus.

v32-34 Demonic possessed man healed.

Normally a person possessed by a demon was very vocal, however this one, for some

reason was dumb. Jesus sends the demon out of the man, who then speaks.

The reaction of the people was recorded by Matthew and also the reasoning of the Pharisees, it is possible that these words were not spoken directly to Jesus as He does not respond until the same accusation is made later, [Matt 12:24-29](#).

v35-38 "Jesus was going about" suggests that this visitation of the area was a continuation of [Matt 4:23ff](#).

Jesus is distressed by what he sees in the people, they are - scattered, leaderless, lost sheep. But Jesus also saw that they were "a harvest ready for collection." Jesus told the disciples to pray that the "Lord of the harvest," Jesus, would send workers. They were to be sent themselves later, they were the answer to their prayers.

Chapter 10

v1-42 The twelve sent out.

v1 This group had been with Jesus for some time, following a period of instruction, [Mark 3:14](#), Jesus now gives them authority and sends them out on a mission. The power they had was the ability to heal and cast out evil spirits. Note Jesus separated disease and demonic possession.

v2-4 Matthew lists the twelve sent out. See also [Mark 3:16ff](#); [Luke 6:14ff](#); [Acts 1:13](#). Note that Judas Iscariot is included and appears to have been given the same powers as the others. Until the betrayal, Judas was always considered as one of the twelve by the disciples.

In all the lists Peter is always given first, though he was not the first disciple chosen. This probably is a reference to the apparent leadership of Peter in the apostles and involvement in specific events, e.g. Pentecost, Cornelius. However, the Bible does not indicate any supremacy of Peter over the other disciples.

v5-7 The disciples were not allowed to go to the Samaritans or the Gentiles. This was not to be a permanent restriction. The disciples message was only for the Jews, "The Messianic Kingdom" was about to appear. See [Matt 3:1,2](#), Israel was the heir to this promise.

v8 The powers given to the twelve disciples was considerable, even to raising of the dead, though the Gospels give no record of this happening during this mission period. The ministration was to be free to all who asked, just as their power had been given freely.

v9,10 For this short mission they were not to have any money or clothing with them, support was to come from grateful hearers. This situation was to be changed later, [Luke 22:35,36](#).

v11 It was to be obvious to the disciples who were spiritually open to the message and accept their hospitality.

v12 On entering an house they were to give the normal greeting, usually "shalom" (peace).

v13 If the disciples were to then find that the person or people of the house were not interested in the message then they were to take back any blessing given.

v14,15 If the people of the house or city rejected the message then the disciple were to shake the dust from the place off their feet showing the disciples were not guilty of

future judgement on that people. The reference to "Sodom and Gomorrah" are often used as examples of doomed cities.

Warnings for the present mission and future missions.

Jesus now gives warnings, which in most points will apply to later missions after His death. There does not appear to be any suggestion that the disciples met any of the problems in this first mission.

v16 "Wolves," dangerous and vicious enemies, would enjoy a sheep for a meal.

People believe that the "wisdom of the serpent" is just cunning, however, the disciples were to also combined this with "harmlessness of a dove," avoiding danger, physical and spiritual.

v17 The councils Jesus is referring to were the local courts found in every town and city.

v18 Before governors and kings, a prophetic warning which would occur after the crucifixion, Agrippa 1, Felix, Festus, Agrippa 2, Sergius Paulus and Gallio were all to have disciples testify before them during the New Testament time.

v19,20 Do not be anxious. The Holy Spirit was to supply all the needs of the disciples and today us when under persecution.

v21,22. A very sad result of turning to Christ for forgiveness, those who you thought were close to you may also turn against your belief and faith, rejection by families must be expected. But do not lose faith. Compare v32-39.

v23 This is an instruction for the follower not to become a martyr, to deliberately allow capture and punishment, reasonable care for the life of the believer must be taken. "Before all the cities of Israel could have been visited," before the coming of the Son of Man suggests the Second return of Christ and judgement, but to make more sense it probably referees to the coming judgement of God on the Jews and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

v24,25 The relationship of a believer with Christ is 'disciple and teacher,' 'servant and Lord,' 'master of the house and members of the house hold.' If Jesus expected to be ill-treated then any followers must also expect similar treatment. Beelzebub was considered the "prince of demons," or Satan, [Matt 12:24](#); [Luke 11:15](#).

v26 We should have no fear of these people, God is in full control and will deal with the persecutors. Note, we should continue to preach the message openly.

v27 Jesus did not preach to many people compared with the disciples after His resurrection, the teaching Jesus gave them "in darkness" must be revealed to the world, fearlessly publicized "in the light ... on the house tops."

v28 Jesus reminds us that our concern must be to please God, who can destroy the soul and body in hell. We are told to resist Satan not to fear him, [1 Peter 5:8,9](#); [James 4:7](#) neither can Satan destroy people in hell as he will also be there.

v29-31 Though we have just been told that God is a terrible judge, here we can see the perfect loving Father for all who trust Him.

v32,33 Open confession is an essential mark of being a disciple, [Romans 10:9-11](#). Denying Jesus before men, not just one failure like Peter, but a lifetime of rejection, [2 Tim 2:12](#) will result in denial before the Father on the day of judgement.

v34-39 These warnings of coming danger might seem strange at first as Jesus came as the Prince of Peace but the message Jesus brought was to be delivered to a rebellious

and wicked world and would therefore be met with rejection and hostilities, "peace" would be changed to a "sword."

v35 "Set a man at variance" means to split in two. The Gospel will often bring relationship breakup, even in a family, not a fault of the message but the rejection of the message by the sinful hearts of the people.

v35 A typical family of five. Father, mother, son and wife, unmarried daughter.

v36 'A man's foes shall be they of his own household.' Let us be very careful of our well-meaning relatives advice, make sure it does not turn us away from the instruction of God.

v37 Heartbreaking as these splits may be, a disciple must not allow any natural feelings change the relationship with Jesus. A time will come when the believer will have to make a choice.

v38 "His cross." Jesus had not yet mentioned the coming crucifixion, yet the disciples would have understood the statement as many Jews had suffered crucifixion under the Romans. A Jew willing to suffer death for their belief would not be unknown. To belong to Jesus will require a sacrifice of the believers personal desires.

v39 He who saves his life during persecution, by denying Christ, will eventually lose their life for ever, but anyone who loses their life for the love of Christ will save their life eternally. Note [1 John 1:5,6](#); [1 John 2:1](#).

v40-42 In conclusion Jesus reminds the reader that anyone who is prepared to suffer persecution for Him will be rewarded. This also applies to other believers and followers. If we take care of our Christian brothers and sisters, Jesus regards this care as being done to Himself. "These little ones" indicates that the smallest service to help the most insignificant followers of Christ will be seen by Jesus and rewarded.

Chapter 11

Matt 11:1 - 12:50 The claims of Jesus.

We now are given two chapters of teaching, showing the nature of the Messiah and unbelief of the Jewish nation.

John's disciples visit Jesus and listen to His teaching and ask questions about Him.

v1 is connected to the previous chapter.

v2 John was put in prison by Herod Antipas, [Matt 4:12](#). John is having doubts about the deeds and possibly the teaching of Jesus.

v3 "Are you the one?" John's message had been that the Messiah was coming, prepare yourself, [Matt 3:1ff](#); [Luke 3:2ff](#). John does not have any doubt that the Messiah was coming, only about the identity of the Messiah. "Is it You?" they ask. Perhaps John had expected a more "leader, judgmental Messiah" who would release him from prison.

v4,5 The disciples are told to go and tell John what they have heard and seen being done. "Do I fulfil the prophecies?" asks Jesus, [Isaiah 29:18ff](#); [Isaiah 35:5ff](#); [Isaiah 61:1](#).

v6 Jesus could understand the problems of John, because Jesus was not as many had expected the Messiah to be. John was reminded not to be offended or hurt by not understanding that the Messiah came first with mercy.

v7-10 Jesus now makes a tribute to John, He asks the people as to what kind of person they thought John was. The message from John did not follow popular opinion, and was strong in faith. Neither did he seek an easy life. He was God's messenger, he was more than a prophet, for he came with the final warning of the coming Messiah, (Malachi 3:1).

v11 As a result of this divine task, John is the greatest man born, yet he belongs to the Old Testament covenant and as a result those who come under the New Covenant through Christ have greater position in the kingdom of heaven than John, they are heirs of Christ.

v12 There is much discussion on the meaning of this verse. [Luke 16:16](#) is similar but spoken at a different time. It is thought that this is referring to the attitude of the people, being violent from the announcements of John of the coming Messiah.

v13-15 John was the last of the Old Covenant prophets foretelling of the coming Messiah. This included the coming of Elijah, [John 1:21](#) to open the Day of the Lord. Though John denied that he was Elijah resurrected. Jesus tells us that if the Jews had accepted John's message then he would have fulfilled the Old Testament prophesy. Since this did not happen, John did not fulfil the prediction, does this mean that the coming of Elijah is still to happen? [Matt 17:10-13](#); compare [Luke 1:17](#).

v16-19 Jesus now examines the 'hearers,' - "This generation," those around since the coming of John and Jesus, those who were privileged to hear the words of the New Covenant directly.

"Like unto children," these people are like a group of children in a public place, not able to decide what to play or do. v17 suggests that they talked about playing 'weddings' (piped) or 'funerals' (mourned) but were not willing to 'play' with John or Jesus, nothing appealed to them, so they did neither.

John's ministry brought the charge that he was demon controlled, but Jesus, because He had contact with sinners, was a "winebibber," always drinking wine, or a "glutton," always eating, so becoming as evil as those he was with.

v19 The actions of John and Jesus were proof of the message they came with.

v20-25 The effect of the Gospel being refused.

The cities and towns, where most of miracles of Jesus were done, are rejecting the message from God through Jesus. The Gospel's do not have any record of miracles being done in Chorazin, which was about 3 miles north of Capernaum, or Bethsaida, 3-4 miles to the East of Capernaum. Because of their position being near to the main town of Capernaum they would have been able to witness all the miracles performed there. Tyre and Sidon were major towns of the Phoenicians on the coast, often shown as very evil towns in the Old Testament. They had been under judgement during Nebuchadnezzar, [Ezekiel 26-28](#).

v21 "Sackcloth and ashes," the common Eastern way of showing regret and sadness for personal behaviour. Jesus tells the crowd that if these Phoenicians cities had heard the message they would have repented, turned away from their wrong life.

v22 Jesus then points out that it will be easier on the day of judgement for the evil town of Sodom, which rejected the messengers from God. The people of Capernaum, where many miracles had taken place, will have no excuse and will be sent to Hell.

v25-30 Men's unbelief.

The following verses are the result of this previous discussion. "I thank Thee, O Fa-

ther," a confession of full acceptance, acknowledgement and praise. The Father has complete authority in heaven and earth.

"Hid from ...wise and prudent," spiritual understanding does not come by intelligence, a person has to become like a baby, willing to learn.

v26 All revelation to the people is subject to control and pleasure of God. See [Eph 1:5](#); [Phil 2:13](#).

v27 Jesus now claims that the Father has given Him all the authority, so separating Him from other people. See [Matt 28:18](#).

The Father and the Son are one in knowing and understanding each other, but it is through the Son only that the Father has chosen to speak, it is only through the Son that we can see the Father.

v28 Because of His position we can come to the Father through Him for help, guidance and forgiveness.

v29 "Take my yoke," a Jewish way of describing a person becoming a follower and disciple, taking on the guidance and control. It is Christ, through His position, who can teach us of the Father and give rest from the guilt of sin. He can supply all the power and strength to take on this yoke.

Chapter 12

v1-50 Jesus meets opposition from the Pharisees.

The regulations covering the Sabbath was one area that the Pharisees had made many interpretations of the Law and were particularly a problem for the Jews. In this passage we are shown two different examples of the interpretation by the Pharisees and by Jesus.

It was the legal right under Jewish law to pluck and eat grain of another man's cornfield, [Deuteronomy 23:25](#). But, the Pharisees had made it illegal on the Sabbath.

v1 As the disciples walked through a cornfield they were picking the heads of corn, probably rubbing to separate the seeds to eat.

v2 The Pharisees saw this action, and under their interpretation, this act was reaping and therefore illegal on a Sabbath.

v3-6 Jesus reminds the Pharisees of the time that David entered the temple and eat the special shewbread restricted to the priests. [1 Samuel 21:1-6](#). Though divine Law restricted this special bread only for the priests, extreme human needs overruled this instruction. In addition Jesus points out that the priests were required to work on the Sabbath [Numbers 28:9,10](#). Jesus said "that there was One greater than the temple in this place." If the priest can work on the Sabbath then the Disciples working for Christ on the Sabbath makes them guiltless.

v7 [Hosea 6:6](#) is quoted here, God desires a proper internal heart and attitude far more than externals like sacrifices.

v8 Matthew & Luke leave out the addition by Mark "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." - "The Son of Man" is referring to the perfect Man - Jesus. If David could break the Sabbath without punishment then so could the Messiah, who is able to decide the real meaning and use of the Sabbath.

v10-21 Healing on the Sabbath.

[Mark 3:1-6](#); [Luke 6:6-11](#).

Only Matthew records the argument in verses 11,12. Luke seems to indicate that it oc-

curred on another Sabbath.

v10 Because the rabbi's considered healing as work, it was therefore wrong to heal on the Sabbath. Though if the person's life was in danger then they were allowed to practice healing. Please note there is no mention of not being able to heal in any form on the Sabbath in the Old Testament Law.

The Pharisees were out to catch out Jesus so they use this as a challenge.

v11,12 Jesus responds by asking them a question, "what would a normal person do if a sheep, a person's property, is in danger? A 'Person' is worth more than a sheep?"

The person must come to the help of the sheep. To not do good when you have the power is far more wrong.

v13,14 The miracle only makes the Pharisees more angry. [Mark 3:6](#) tells us that the Herodian sect joined them in the plotting. The Herodians were Jews who supported King Herod so would be against anyone who caused a threat to the king, most Jews hated king Herod, so it is a surprise that the Pharisees joined with them.

Jesus is now hated by the religious leaders in Jerusalem and Galilee area.

v15,16 Knowing the danger, Jesus now avoided open conflict with the leaders. This action now changes how His ministry is now carried forward, but he is followed by many people wanting to hear Him and receive healing, [Mark 3:7,8](#). Jesus asks each healed not to publicized their healing.

v17-21 Messianic prophecy.

Matthew now gives an Old Testament quote, [Isaiah 42:1-4](#) to show that the ministry of Jesus was according to the Messianic Prophecies.

v22-30 Challenged on the source of His power.

v22,23 Only Matthew tells us that the man was dumb and blind. Before this large multitude Jesus heals the man of the demonic possession, which causes the people to ask who this person truly was. "Is not this the Son of David?" The people still did not accept that Jesus was the Messiah.

v24 The Pharisees, without thinking, accused Jesus that His power comes from the Devil. The name *Beelzebub* is a name for Satan, it means "head or master of the house." In [2 Kings 1:1-4](#) the god of Ekron had the name of *Beelzebub*, "the lord of the flies" and this appears to have been changed to *Beelzebub*. The Jews did not consider him a god but a prince of demons.

v25-30 "A divided kingdom," will lead to destruction, Jesus was out to stop the work of Satan, if Jesus did this by the power of Satan then this can only lead to destruction.

v27 Some Pharisees claimed to have power to cast out demons, the power of exorcism, how silly it was for them to claim the same act as Jesus but by different source of power.

We must assume that some of these exorcisms were genuine, therefore the power came from God. If Jesus was therefore using the power of God then the kingdom of God, as prophesied, had arrived.

v29 The "strong man's house," or Satan's empire, was being entered, having bound Satan first by the meeting and beating Satan by Jesus at the Temptation, [Matthew 4:1-11](#); [Hebrew 2:14ff](#).

v30 In the spiritual battle of Christ with Satan there can be no one who will be neutral, sit in the middle, you are either for Christ or by not accepting Christ then you must be

for Satan.

12:31-37 **The unpardonable sin.**

When Christ died at Calvary His death was to pay for all sin, even the most severe and includes slander against God (blasphemy). However, there is one sin which will not be forgiven, anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit.

The special function or job of the Holy Spirit is to bring conviction and repentance, so making a person open to the forgiveness through Christ. If a person rejects every contact by the Holy Spirit then that person has taken themselves away from the only force which can lead them to forgiveness, [John 3:36](#). The final point of rejection must be at death of the person but by their actions God may decide not to make further contact at any point in a persons life.

v33 The nature of a tree decides what fruit it produces. The Pharisees thought that by making the fruit 'good' then the tree would become 'good.'

v34 An evil nature will always produce evil words and actions.

v36,37 We can often see the real heart of a person by the *careless* word or action.

Many people can appear good but have an evil heart. The Pharisees, speaking without thinking, had shown their real hearts, and Jesus tells them and us that upon this evidence we can be judged - "every idle word .. give accountin the Day of Judgment."

Consider [Matt 25:31-46](#).

v38-50 **Our commitment.**

The Pharisees wanted a *sign*, they wanted some sensational, spectacular act by Jesus to prove that He was the Messiah, a sign which would not need any faith by them, just need their sight. They were not willing to accept the miracles already done. Jesus was not doing the things, behaving as they had thought the Messiah would behave. See also [Matt 16:1ff](#); [John 4:48](#); [1 Cor 1:21-23](#).

v39 "Adulterous generation," a nation which being spiritually unfaithful, they were adulterous in turning away from God to a faith and religion which needed great signs. The only sign they were to get was the 'death and resurrection' of Jonah.

v40,41 The story of Jonah, who spent 3 days and nights inside the belly of the sea-monster, and then went to Nineveh warning of the coming judgement, symbolized the ministry of Jesus.

Some people have questioned the "three days and nights" with the Friday, Saturday, Sunday death and resurrection of Jesus. It is felt that the Jewish system of days provides the answer.

The men of Nineveh received the message and repented. So by their action the Jewish nation was in a very bad situation, as a nation they were not repenting even though the message came from a person far greater than Jonah.

v42 The queen of Sheba was searching for the truth, [1 Kings 10:1-10](#), found it in Solomon, and a greater than Solomon was here.

v43-45 The example given in this parable can apply to the nation or individuals. The warnings and calling for repentance started with the ministry of John, then Jesus comes and attempts to exorcize (drive out) the evil nature. But repentance without the person being taken over by the power of God meant that there was a danger of returning to a worse state than before.

The house of Israel was "empty," cleaned by the messages of John and Jesus, but not

opened to Jesus. A few years later the same generation were to be involved in the horrors of A.D. 66-70. Consider the prophetic events of [Rev 9:1-11](#) which will be the end time people.

v46-50 His mother and family.

The brethren are presumably the children of Mary and Joseph, born after Jesus.

The crowds were so great that the family could not get to Jesus. The concern of the family for Jesus was obvious, the initial preaching by Jesus had forced the family to move to Capernaum, [Matt 4:13](#); [Luke 4:16-31](#); [John 2:12](#). The preaching had brought Jesus into open conflict with the religious leaders.

v48 "Who is My mother? And who are My brethren?" Jesus prepares the listeners for a new truth.

v49,50 "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father." This is not referring to righteous work but the result of accepting the invitation of salvation through Jesus, [John 6:29](#). The spiritual relationship between Christ and believers is closer than family blood relationships.

Chapter 13

13:1-52 The parables on the kingdom.

The previous chapters have shown the problems of faith and unbelief of the religious leaders and many of the people. Matthew now records seven parables told by Jesus about the coming kingdom. Mark records four parables, including one not given in Matthew. Luke records only three, not all together.

Jesus supplied an interpretation (meaning) to two of the parables, "The Sower" and "The Tares," and a third, "The Net," partly explained.

v1-3 The "same day" links these events to the previous which showed that there was a very large crowd with Him.

Jesus leaves the house and using the boat as a platform to speak to the crowd (sound travels well over water). Jesus sat down in the boat. It was normal for a teacher to sit.

Parables:- a story which has a spiritual meaning and truth.

v3 The Parable of the Sower.

Jesus tells the story of a Sower going out to sow a field of seed, a common sight to the Jews. Each handful of seed is carefully scattered (spread) out across the ground, as a result of this, even if the Sower is careful in his throwing, some seed will fall on parts of the ground which were not suitable to growth.

v4 Some seed fell on the path round the field, the ground was packed down and hard, the seed lay on the top and was open to the birds to eat.

v5,6 Some seed falls on ground which is probably just a thin layer of soil on top of a rocky underneath. The seeds would grow to start with but as the sun dries out the thin soil the plants soon die due to lack of water and food.

v7 An area of the field which had not been prepared properly and was still full of weeds. The weeds and thorn bushes grew rapidly and taking all the food and water from the ground.

v8 The ground in Galilee was fertile and was able to produce good harvests.

v9 This verse indicates that the simple story has a deeper meaning.

v10-17 The meaning.

v10 The disciples later questioned Jesus why He spoke in parables. Jesus had used parables before so why was this different?

v11 "Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven," this shows that the parables are able to reveal something previously hidden. The interpretation shows that they still apply to the present day.

The rejection of the Messiah and the time delay before His return was not understood. The parables show the state of the Kingdom between these two events, the Kingdom exists - but the King is absent. [Colossians 1:10-14](#); [Matt 25:31-34](#). The giving of these parables shows that there exist two groups, 'one given,' and 'one not given.'

v12 The disciple, having turned to Jesus in faith, were already getting much of the truth of the Messiah and His plans, by careful examination of the parables they would get more of the truth. "Whosoever hath not," the second group who also heard but rejected the simplest of teaching by Jesus, they had rejected the previous teaching of Jesus and so God did not open their eye's to the truth for them to trample again.

v13-15 Jesus quotes from [Isaiah 6:9,10](#) showing that it is a partial fulfilment with the continued unbelief of the people.

v16,17 As the disciples responded to the message they receive, "see and heard" the promises given to the prophets, who had wanted to "see and hear" these promises by God.

v18-23 Interpretation of the parable.

v18 The Sower, not identified but obviously is Jesus or His servants.

v19 "The Word of the Kingdom," the seed is the Word of God, [Luke 8:11](#), the message given by Jesus about Himself and the future kingdom. The seed is always the same, just where it lands changes.

The seed falling upon the path is totally unresponsive and "the wicked one," Satan, comes and takes away any spiritual contact.

v20,21 The rocky soil represents those who initially hear the Word, emotionally accept the teaching with great enthusiasm, but turn away when they hit problems, tribulation or persecution, just like the Sun.

v22 The seed which grows amongst the thorns (the weeds, thorns not being visible when the seed is sown) are those who accept the teaching, but the cares and attractions of the world and its interests divide and prevents the maturing of the message.

v23 Whenever the message falls upon good ground fruit is produced, [Gal 5:22,23](#).

v24-30 The Tares.

v24-28 "The Kingdom of Heaven," is like a man who has the following situation. He sowed his good seeds in the field, but while his servants sleep evil men spread, deliberately sowing Tares, this is identified as the plant, darnel, which looks like wheat until the seed ear develops. The growth was not due to wind blown seed but deliberately sown by others.

v29,30 Harvest time. At harvest the difference between the wheat and tares will be obvious and can be separated, the tares are collected by the reapers and burnt. The time of the harvest will be at the time set by God, not by man. Compare [1 Cor 4:5](#).

v31-32 The Mustard Seed.

The conditions are similar to the first two parables, with Jesus spreading the Word of God. The mustard seed is very small, but in this story it continues to grow until it becomes a tree, [Mark 4:32](#). An unusual growth but does happen in Palestine. If the birds in the other parables are representing Satan and his servants then the birds in the mustard tree must be describing evil people living in the church and family of God. History shows that from a small beginning the church grew the spread of the message of Christ. This unusual growth allowed the enemies to seek shade and food in the church of Christ. A warning that size does not mean it is safe. See [Matt 10:16](#).

v33-35 The Leaven.

Leaven is always used to indicate evil so in this parable it does not represent the spread of the message of Christ. Leaven is used by Jesus as the evil doctrine of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herod, [Matt 16:6-12](#); [Mark 8:15](#); [1 Cor 5:6,7](#); [Gal 5:9](#).

v33 "Leaven"- a lump of old dough under fermentation.

The 'woman' in contrast to the 'man' in the other parables is therefore opposing the 'man' and is spreading false teaching, [Rev 17:1ff](#). Believers must beware of false doctrine slowly spreading into the kingdom of Christ.

v34,35 Jesus used parables to the crowd without any interpretation except to the disciples later. Matthew reminds the reader that the action of Jesus was fulfilling [Psalm 78:2](#).

v36-43 The meaning of the "Tares" is now explained to the disciples, there are some parts of the story which are given for completeness but do not symbolize anything.

v38,39 The 'field' represents the world, not the church. The 'seeds' are sown by the Son of Man, Jesus, and have produced 'plants,' the believer, "the children of the Kingdom" but counterfeit plants, the Tares, have also been sown by the devil and are growing in the world. Children of Satan often pretend to be believers, [2 Cor 11:13-15](#).

The harvest must take place at the right time or it could cause damage to the believers, so the angels of God will separate the believers from the followers of the devil at the end time, the second coming of Christ, when He takes His followers out of the world. We must note that The Church and the Kingdom are not completely the same. Members of the Church and the Kingdom may not be the same. Jesus talks about the 'Tares' being harvested "first," indicating that this harvest will be at the end of the Tribulation period. Also, after the Rapture of the Church many souls who were left behind will turn to the Lord during the Tribulation times and so exist in the Kingdom until the end.

v44 The Hidden Treasure.

The "treasure" may at first seem to represent the Gospel, salvation or the Church, or the giving of Christ for the world, but this cannot be so, for a man does not accidentally find the kingdom without searching for it. And why hide the treasure? The 'man' must still be Christ and the treasure is the nation of Israel. They rejected Him, so as part of the divine plan, Israel was hidden away to coming of the Messianic Kingdom. However, Christ gave all that He had, His life, to buy the whole field and so become the owner of the treasure. When He returns the treasure will be revealed.

v45,46 The Pearl.

Some explain this in the same way as the hidden treasure parable, but there are differ-

ences. The "merchant man," is still Christ, the merchant comes wanting to buy good quality "pearls," [1 Cor 6:20](#), i.e., men and women who respond to the message. To make the purchase he sold all he has, the death of Jesus on the cross. The one pearl represents the people of the Church, made up of men and women believers. [1 Cor 10:17](#); [1 Cor 12:12,13](#).

v47-50 The Net.

There are similarities to the Tares but slight changes in what is referred too. The net represents the Gospel message, it is put out into the 'sea,' the nations of the world for sometime. When the net is pulled in it contains different kinds of fish, some usable, some are bad and unusable.

At the end time the angels will collect the people, but some will appear to be believers but have not really responded, the bad fish. These are put into the fires.

v51-53 Did you understand?

The disciples are asked by Jesus if they were able to understand having been given the information on how to interpret the parables, [Mark 4:33,34](#). Jesus now compares the position and status of the disciples to the scribes who taught and explained the scriptures and God's Truth. He said that they are like an head of a house, the master, who has a rich store of old and new goods and distributes these. They have access to the Old Testament teachings and now the new teachings and truths revealed in the parables.

Matt 13:53-17:27 The rejection of Jesus.

v53-58 Jesus returns to Nazareth where He meets the spreading opposition.

v55 "The carpenter's son," [Mark 6:3](#) shows that as a person Jesus had learnt His earthly fathers job and had step brothers and sisters. Though Jesus and Mary had moved to Capernaum, [Matt 4:13](#) it appears that his sisters had married and remained in Nazareth, "with us."

We must remember that during the early life of Jesus He did no miracles and so the people just could not understand or accept that He was different.

v58 As a result of this unbelief He was only able to heal a few. [Mark 6:5](#) The power of Christ does not depend upon the faith of the person, but unbelief can prevent miracles as few people would have come to Him.

Chapter 14

v1-12 Guilty Herod's interest.

This is Herod the Tetrarch, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. He was the ruler of Galilee and Perea. Herod was often travelling or having parties so this may explain why he had not heard of Jesus.

v2 "This is John the Baptist." risen from the dead, was a common suggestion by many people, even though John had never done any miracles when he was alive.

v3,4 Herodias was the daughter of Aristobolus, an half brother of Antipas. She had been married to her uncle, Herod Philip, and this marriage had produced a daughter, Salome. Antipas was able to persuade her to leave her husband and marry him, though he was already married to the daughter of King Aretas. Such a marriage was adulterous and incestuous. John the Baptist had told Herod it was against the law, [Luke 3:19](#);

[Mark 6:17-19.](#)

v5 Herod was frightened of the crowds but eventually Herod had arrested John.

v6,7 Herodias was not satisfied with prison for John, so during Herod's birthday party she was prepared to debase or lower the value of her own daughter by making her dance before Herod in a very suggestive, sexual, way.

v8-11 The mother gets her revenge by use of the weak minded ruler.

v12 The disciples of John buried the body of John. Then they came to Jesus with the news.

v13-21 Five thousand fed.

[Mark 6:32ff](#); [Luke 9:11ff](#); [John 6:1ff](#).

When the Jews give a number of people they only include the men. Women and children are not included in the counted.

This is the only miracle recorded by all four Gospels.

v13,14 On hearing the news about John, Jesus takes His disciples into a quiet area to rest after their Mission [Luke 9:1ff](#); [Mark 6:30](#), the disciples also need further teaching. However, the crowds soon found Him and He gives into their requirements.

v15 Evening:- The Jews have two "evenings," the first starts at 3:00 P.M. and the second starts at sundown. In v15 the writer is talking about the first evening period.

v15,16 The disciples, realized it was late and wanted Jesus to send them into the villages for food. Jesus had another idea, Turning to the disciples He said "you feed them." Christ puts the responsibility onto the disciples so that they may become aware that He can provide all their needs, [John 6:6,7](#).

v17 Andrew points out that they have a small boy with five loaves and two fish, but he seems totally unaware of the divine power of Jesus.

v19 Jesus instructs the people to sit on the grass, having blessed the food he distributes the food by the disciples.

v20 After everyone is fed they collect 12 baskets of uneaten food which the disciples take with them in the boat.

v22,23 Jesus sends, commands, the disciples to go off across the sea of Galilee, while He remained behind on the mountain. They did not ask how He was going to follow them.

v22-36 Christ walks on the water.

[Mark 6:45-52](#); [John 6:15-21](#).

The disciples were about to be tested, they had just seen the miracle of food for all, Jesus wanted to see if they understood.

Jesus goes up into a mountain for prayer, He takes Himself away from the world during His time of prayer. But the disciples are still under His watchful eye, from His position He can also see the disciples in their boat. [Mark 6:48](#).

v23 "Evening" see notes for v15. This is obviously the second 'evening' at sunset.

v24,25 [John 6:19](#) tells us that they had rowed 3-4 miles and it was about 3 to 6 a.m. (fourth watch). The disciples had by now been rowing for many hours and must have been exhausted. The sea was rough and the wind was blowing against the direction they were rowing.

v25 Jesus now walks across the sea towards the boat, demonstrating the power Jesus

had over the natural laws.

Though the disciples had previously seen the power of Jesus over the storm, [Matt 8:23-27](#) they thought that they were now on their own. They still had not taken in that Christ's power could be with them in all circumstances or events.

v26 All the disciples were afraid, they thought He was a ghost or spirit being, they had turned back to their [superstitious](#) minds.

v27 "It is I," The disciples, though they had not recognized Him, recognized the familiar voice, they were immediately at peace.

v28-33 Peter walks on water.

This event is only recorded by Matthew. Did he somehow persuade the other writers not to include the record of his failure?

This is another occasion when Peter speaks before thinking, this has often appeared to be the normal action of Peter, he did not examine the difficulties before committing himself beyond what he was able to do.

v28 "If it is you Lord, tell me to come to you on the water."

v29-31 Jesus tells Peter to come. At first Peter walks upon the water, but he takes his eye of Jesus, sees the waves and wind and his faith fails. Beginning to sink, he calls out to Jesus - "Lord, save me!" Jesus reaches out and holds onto Peter, supernatural power directly from Jesus. "Why did you doubt?" He asks.

While Peter had looked at Jesus in full faith he had been given supernatural power by Jesus to walk on the water, then Peter took his eye of Jesus, he lost the faith, then lost the power to break the laws of nature and starts to sink.

This miracle had shown that just faith in Jesus was all we need to do any task we are asked to do by Him.

This miracle had shown that just faith in Jesus was all we need to do any task we are asked to do by Him.

v32 As soon as they reached the boat the wind dropped and sea became calm.

v33 The disciples are beginning to realize and accept the real identity of Jesus, though they had already thought about it, [John 1:41,42](#) the wording still suggests some doubt, this confession was not like that of Peter, [Matt 16:16](#).

v34 Gennesaret was a fertile plain to the South West of Capernaum.

v35 From [John 6:22-25](#) There may have been some days or even weeks before this event.

v36 The desire of the sick to just touch Him was probably as a result of the healing of the woman, [Matt 9:20](#). Note that healing came with their faith.

Chapter 15

v1-20 Conflict with tradition.

[Mark 7:1-23](#).

Scribes and Pharisees have travelled from Jerusalem to join with the local Pharisees, they want to challenge the religious behaviour of the disciples, compared with the religious traditions of the Pharisees. The conflict between religious leaders and Jesus is growing.

The ministry of Jesus in the Galilean area was obviously causing concern for the lead-

ers in Jerusalem.

v2 "Why do your disciples not follow tradition?" They challenge Jesus, asking as if Jesus is teaching these changes, "they wash not their hands" This was a rabbinic custom, not an instruction from the Mosaic Law, it was ceremonial not hygienic. Some rabbis considered this ceremonial act very important. In [Lev 22:1-16](#) the priests are instructed to make themselves clean and not becoming dirty, it appears the Pharisees and scribes had adopted this rule about washing.

v3 The question, as a response by Jesus, challenged the [contradictory](#) hearts of the Pharisee's, tradition was replacing the Word of God, some traditions actually broke the Law.

v4-6 This passage is taken from [Exodus 20:12](#); [Exodus 21:17](#).

Jesus picks up on one hypocritical teaching of the Pharisees, the fifth law, taking care of your parents. The Pharisees, instead of using their wealth to look after their parents, were saying that it was dedicated as an offering to God. They said it was to be used for spiritual purposes, but they were still using it for themselves. They claimed to love God but had no love for their parents. Matthew leaves out the word "Corban," and the Jewish customs as recorded by Mark.

v6 Jesus tells them that by their 'traditional action' they are cancelling the Law of God.

v7-9 This is based upon [Isaiah 29:13](#). Man made worship, teaching how to worship but the words come from their mouth but not from their heart.

v10-11 Most of the previous exchange has been with the Pharisees, Jesus now calls the crowd to Him, "You must hear and understand this" He tells them. It is not what goes into a man or woman through the mouth which makes the person dirty, it is what comes out of the heart and mind. Sin lies in the heart, which is started by disobedience and separation from God.

v12 The disciples were apparently worried by the words of Jesus against the powerful Pharisees, v15 suggests that they still had not understood the meaning of the words of Jesus in v11.

v13-14 "Every plant" is referring to the Pharisees, not their teaching. Jesus said that they were not the source of truth, if a blind person leads another blind person they will soon fall into an hole. The Father will "root up," the final destruction of all false teaching. Compare [Romans 2:17-24](#).

v15,16 For the disciples, the difficulty was the departure from tradition, which had now confused moral, right and wrong, and ceremonial action, and not in the meaning of the words used.

v17,18 The reference to the 'mouth' in v17 is as an opening for food and drink, while the 'mouth' in v18 is referring to the spiritual evil which comes out of the mouth, controlled by the heart of the person, their attitude, imagination and desire.

v19 [Mark 7:21-23](#) records more types of evil, wicked behaviour.

v20 Matthew records a conclusion.

v21-39 Jesus departs for Canaanite. Woman healed.

[Mark 7:24-8:10](#) v21 Jesus has moved away from His own people into a Gentile area near the two ungodly cities of Tyre and Sidon.

v22-24 A Canaanite, a person who was descended from the people who were inhabit-

ing Palestine before Joshua lead the Jews to conquered the area. *The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan,* Numbers 13:29; *Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?* Judges 1:1. But they permitted the Canaanite race to continue. *Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, nor the inhabitants of Bethanath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Bethanath became tributaries unto them.* Judges 1:33.

Though not a Jew, there is nothing to stop her calling on "the Son of David."

Eventually Jesus responds to her calling, He tells her that His ministry was not meant for her, it was His policy. The normal approach for Jesus was to only go to the Jews, "the lost sheep," [Matt 10:5ff](#) but, as in this case, He did allow help to non Jews.

v25-28 The Jews often referred to Gentiles as "dogs." See [Matt 7:6](#), and she obviously knew what Jesus was talking about, her reply shows her faith and that she was willing to be humbled, become a "dog" and accept what ever falls her way from the "master."

v28 As with other Gentile healing's, the cure occurs at a distance. [Matt 8:13](#).

From [Mark 7:31](#) it would appear that Jesus returned via Sidon, then east to Jordan, then south to Decapolis and the Sea of Galilee. This seems to indicate that He was avoiding the area under Herod Antipas.

v30-31 The reference to "God of Israel" could suggest that the healing's took place in an area where there were many Gentiles.

v32-39 **Feeding of four thousand.** [Mark 8:1-9](#).

Some Bible students think that this is a second report of the feeding 5000, but there are many differences and Mark includes both events in his record. However, it is hard to see how the disciples still asked where to get the bread as Jesus had already fed many more. The multitude had been with Jesus for three days, so there must have been sufficient food and water until then. Compare [Matt 16:9,10](#). It is possible that many of the people were Gentiles and so it could possibly be a problem for the Jewish disciples.

Chapter 16

v1-12 The Pharisees need a sign from Jesus.

[Mark 8:10-12](#). Compare [Luke 12:54-56](#).

v1 The Pharisees had made a similar request earlier, [Matt 12:38ff](#). This time they are joined by the Sadducees. These two groups hated each other but were united in a common hatred of Jesus. They cannot accept the signs of the miracles, they wanted a spectacular display that was obviously from heaven. They were tempting Jesus to prove His divine power, or use His refusal to prove that He was not from God, just as Satan did at the temptation. The message from John, the miracles and signs from Jesus plus the various prophecies like Daniel should have allowed them to read the signs. Jesus points out that they can tell the coming weather by the signs in the sky yet cannot see the signs of spiritual events. The only sign Jesus said that they would get was the sign of Jonah. Jonah was swallowed by a large fish, he was "dead" inside the fish for three

days and then came back to life. Just as Jesus would do after the cross. Compare [John 2:18-21](#); [Matt 12:40](#).

v6 In the New Testament the word "leaven" is usually referring to something bad. Compare [1 Cor 5:8](#).

v5-12 Jesus departs the region and goes into the more Gentile areas.

Read [Mark 8:15-27](#).

During this journey we see that the disciples were still not able to see the spiritual meaning of His words, they thought Jesus was telling them off for not bringing food.

v9-11 Jesus reminds them of the feeding of the five and four thousand and that more was leftover than they started with. The disciples were concerned with the requirements of living when Jesus could supply far more than they needed.

v12 The teaching of the [Pharisees and of the Sadducees](#), as religious leaders of Israel, were spiritually dead and should be avoided.

v13-20 **The confession of Peter.**

[Mark 8:27-30](#); [Luke 9:18-21](#).

Caesarea Philippi, about twenty-five miles north of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus does not appeared to have entered the city, just the region as such.

v13 Jesus asked a question, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

v14 The different opinions showed that though the people connected Jesus with the coming of the Messiah prophecy, few realized He was the Messiah. Elijah was expected to come before the "Day of the Lord," [Malachi 4:5,6](#). Some thought John the Baptist was Elijah, some thought Jesus was. Jeremiah was expected to reappear to reveal the location of the Ark that he had hidden, as recorded in 2 Maccabees 2:1-8. (A history work covering the period 175 to 134 B.C. Found in the Apocrypha, certain books in the Jewish Old Testament collection, not accepted for public use.)

v15 Jesus asks the disciple for their opinion.

v16,17 Similar statements had been made earlier, [John 1:41,49](#). Peter responds for the other disciples, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The result of being with Jesus and seeing Him at work and hearing His words. A solemn statement of faith revealed by spiritual power showing the spiritual state of Peter. See [Gal 1:15,16](#); [Eph 6:12](#); [1 Cor 2:10-14](#).

v18 Jesus seems to make a play on words, "Peter" (Petros) means "a piece of a rock or rocky object." The spiritual body of Christ, the church, first mentioned here, is to be built upon the divine fact stated by Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," [1 Cor 3:11](#); [1 Peter 2:4-6](#). There is only one confession we should make "Jesus is Lord," [1 Cor 12:1-3](#); [Rom 10:9-10](#).

"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "Hell" the realm of the dead. "Gates" The way into hell, normally death. The Church of Christ, to start on the day of Pentecost, will not be subject to physical death, the resurrection of Jesus will show that believers can also be resurrected. In addition, believers who die before the return of Christ will go to be with Christ, not wait in Hades. Note [Phil 1:21-24](#); [2 Cor 5:8](#).

v19 See [Isaiah 22:22](#) "Keys," this indicates the power to open the way. "To thee," indicating that it applies to Peter alone. Peter is to be the first among the disciples to open the kingdom at Pentecost. Peter is to play a leading role during the early church.

The title "stone" also applies to Jesus. See the following references [1 Peter 2:6-8](#); [Eph](#)

[2:20](#); [Matt 21:42](#); [Romans 9:32,33](#); [1 Cor 3:6-11](#). However, at this time it is Peter who is involved in this promise, there is no indication that it also applies to any successors in any office Peter held. This instruction also involves all the other disciples with Peter as the leader, as occurred in the early church recorded in Acts.

"And whatsoever thou shalt...." This promise does not mean that God will be bound, controlled by Peter's statements, all must be according to the will of God.

v20 It was not yet time to make this promise known by others.

v21 Jesus now has a group of people who believe in Him as the Messiah, v16. Jesus now starts teaching about His future plans, reasons, opposition and events which will lead to His redeeming work on the cross.

v22 Peter thinks that he is in a senior position following the verses 18,19, he feels it is his responsibility and duty to keep Jesus safe. It is obvious that though they recognised the divine personality of Jesus they did not understand that the Jewish Messiah must suffer first, [Isaiah 53](#). Jesus therefore tells Peter off, not to interfere with God's plan.

v23 "Get thee behind Me, Satan!" Peter is being used by Satan as a tool to turn Jesus away from His purpose. Satan was using the human mind and aims in an attempt to interfere with the plans of God.

v24 [Mark 8:34](#) tells us that up to now Jesus and the disciples have been in isolation, now Jesus calls the crowd to join.

v24 The follower must be of the same mind as the "Master," saying "no" to personal independence. "Take up his cross," indicating a daily *death to the world*, Christ must come first in all things.

v25 If your not willing to take on the demands of believing and following Christ then you will eventually lose any possibility of salvation. The heart of the person was not really in Christ. See the story of the seed being sown, [Matt 13:3-23](#).

v26 There is nothing in the world which can replace sins forgiven, salvation and eternal life.

v27 The rewards will be given for faith when He returns, "He shall reward every man according to his works."

v28 This verse has caused some Bible students a problem, we know that all who were present on this day are now dead. The question is when did the Son of Man come in His Kingdom? On His resurrection? The start of the church at Pentecost? Or was it when John while on Patmos saw the future and the New Kingdom. How about when some of the disciples saw a preview of Christ in all His glory on the mount of [transfiguration](#), which occurs soon after this statement. See [2 Peter 1:16-18](#).

The passage in [Mark 8:38](#) indicated that the ultimate date Jesus is referring to is His Second coming.

Chapter 17

[Mark 9:2-13](#); [Luke 9:28-36](#).

v1-13 The Transfiguration.

Peter, James and John are now given a special experience, to see Jesus in His true appearance. We are not told why these three disciples were given this special treatment, they were also given special treatment on two other occasions, [Luke 8:51-56](#); [Matt](#)

[26:37,38.](#)

v1 "High mountain," traditionally thought to be Mount Tabor or more likely Mount Hermon which is near Caesarea Philippi.

v2 "Transfiguration," the word indicates that the change came from within, not a reflection of God's glory as with Moses, [Exodus 34:29-35](#). The same word "metamorphoō" or what we call today "metamorphous," is used in [Rom 12:2](#); [2 Cor 3:18](#), this shows that the full spiritual change for a believer comes from within and will not be completed until the return of Christ, [1 John 3:2](#).

v3 Moses and Elijah, these two people represented the Law and the Prophets. These were talking to Jesus about His coming death at Jerusalem, [Luke 9:31](#). This action shows that the death of the Messiah was not separate from the Old Testament. Some Bible students see Moses, who physically died and Elijah, who was taken to heaven without death, represent the two groups of believers that Christ will bring on His return.

v4,5 Peter wants to make three tabernacles, the kind of places of worship that would have been built by the worshipers for the Feast of the Tabernacles. The "bright cloud" indicated the divine presence. "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON" acknowledging the divine position of Jesus, "Listen to Him" so showing that Moses and Elijah had nothing more to add, [Heb 1:1,2](#).

v6,7 Frightened by the voice, the disciples are reassured and calmed by Jesus.

v8 The disciples were obviously covering their eyes for when they opened their eyes, all was back to normal.

v9 "Do not tell anyone," not even the other disciples were to be told of this event at this time.

v10-13 The teaching by the scribes was that Elijah must come before the Messiah, [Malachi 4:5](#). The disciples were asking if this event was the fulfilling of this prophecy.

v11 The first answer Jesus gave appeared to indicate that the event was still future, then He said that Elijah has already come, who was it? John the Baptist said "I am not Elijah" when questioned, [John 1:19-23](#), this would have satisfied the unspiritual Jews just looking for signs, yet those who were spiritually minded could see that John came in the "spirit and power of Elijah," [Luke 1:13-17](#). John had pointed out the "Lamb of God," [John 1:29](#); [Matt 3:1-3](#); [Mark 1:7,8](#) [John 1:19-23](#).

v14-20 Powerless disciples.

[Mark 9:14-29](#); [Luke 9:37-43](#).

Following the period in the glory the group returns to the crowd, its problems and suffering.

The child appears to be suffering epileptic fits, produced here by demonic presence. The disciples, who had been left behind, had been approach to heal the child, but had not been successful. Compare events in [Matt 10:1ff](#).

v17 Jesus is disappointed that without the physical presence of Him the disciples faith had failed. This was especially important as His presence on earth was soon to end and they would only have His spiritual presence.

v18 Jesus removes the demonic presence and the child is cured.

v19 During a time of quite the disciples ask Jesus why they could not heal the child.

Matthew, being one of those who was involved, brings out the need of faith in the reply.

v20 The disciples had failed to accept in faith the power already given to them, [Matt 10:1ff](#). They had no doubts as to who Jesus was but did not have the faith in the authority and power given by Jesus to them.

The mustard seed is very small yet can grow into a small tree. See [Matt 13:31ff](#); [Mark 4:31ff](#); [Luke 13:19ff](#). If a person had the faith of a mustard seed, which grows from a very little seed into a tree, they would have the power to move a mountain. We must remember that Scriptural faith requires the trust and understanding of God's Word, this means that seeking God's will in all matters is required, you cannot do what you think is needed.

v22,23 Jesus has to keep reminding the disciples of the coming events.

v24-27 Payment of Temple Tax.

Compare [Mark 12:13-17](#).

This is the final visit of Jesus to Capernaum, which had been His place of residence for most of the short ministry.

The temple tax was introduced to support the Tabernacle, [Exodus 30:11-16](#). Over the years this had developed into an half-shekel payment made in the spring. It appears that it was now due or overdue.

v25 Jesus has already anticipated the coming question and asks Peter "where does a king get their tribute, from their own children or others." "From others" responds Peter. Therefore, Jesus as the Son of God, is not required to pay for the support of the House of God.

v27 But to prevent the wrong impression among the people at this time, including no respect for the House of God, it will be paid.

The money is supplied by a miracle. Because of His deity and omnipotence He knew that a fish had a money inside it and that it would be the first to be caught on a fishing line. The fish contained sufficient tax money for Jesus and Peter.

Chapter 18

18:1-35 Life in the New Kingdom.

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

[Mark 9:33-37](#); [Luke 9 46-48](#).

This passage deals with relationships between Christians.

This follows an argument between the disciples, [Mark 9:33,34](#); [Luke 9:46](#). This may have been as a result of the special treatment to the three at Caesarea Philippi, [Matt 17:1ff](#) or Peter in the temple tax problem, [Matt 17:24-27](#).

v2-5 Jesus calls a child to Him, turning to the disciples He tells them that they must become like a young child who seeks no power or position, they must stop trying to get a high position, exalting themselves because it could affect their entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

v6,7 Jesus is referring to young childlike believers, anyone who causes harm to a believers faith will be subject to punishment. A 'millstone,' the larger top stone used for milling corn.

v7 Some believers will ‘stumble,’ possibly as part of God’s preparation or moulding (shaping) of the believer to what God wants for the person. However, any human offender, believer or non-believer must expect punishment if they harm spiritually another believer in any way.

v8,9 Jesus must be talking about other believers doing the offending here, only a believer can enter into ‘life.’ A person must be prepared to take some very drastic, far reaching action to avoid offending. See [Matt 5:29,30](#).

v10 Not children but believers. This does not indicate that each individual believer has a specific angel watching over them. See [Heb 1:14](#), angels care for groups of believers.

v12-14 This parable shows that the lowest believer is important, the shepherd is concerned over even one lost sheep. Jesus used the same parable to show salvation of sinners, [Luke 15:4-7](#).

v15-20 Behaviour to offending brothers.

At the time the ‘Church’ did not exist, so Jesus is talking to Jewish followers, but the message also applies to Believer’s and the Church.

Even with the above warnings there will be problems between believers. The verses shows how the believer who has been hurt should behave. First approach the other believer privately, explain the problem, hoping for them to realize their faults and confession, this should result in an apology and restoration of fellowship with the Lord and the church.

v16 If it becomes necessary to take the matter further it must involve several witnesses’s being present.

v17 "Tell it to the church." If the person is still not ashamed or has not any regret, and the matter is sufficiently serious to affect the church, then the church must consider the matter. Jesus cannot be referring to a synagogue, because of the absence of Jesus as indicated in v20. This must be the Christian church, which did not exist at the time. If the offender failed to accept the counsel of the church then the person was to be treated as an outsider, (Gentile, publican). This must be only as a last resort and all effort should be made to restore the person to fellowship with Christ.

v18-20 Any decisions which are based upon these conditions must be reached through seeking God’s will on the matter by prayer, The Word of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. See [Matt 16:19](#); [John 20:23](#).

v19 "If two of you shall agree," shows the importance of a church membership always having a prayerful way of working. See also [1 John 5:14](#).

v20 "I am in the midst of them." A promise of the special presence of Christ in the smallest congregation.

v21-35 Forgiveness.

Instruction on forgiveness.

v21 "How often?" Following on the previous verses Peter now wonders how often forgiveness should be offered for repeated offences. "Seven times?" was the religious teaching based on [Amos 1:3](#); [Job 33:29,30](#).

v22 Jesus, however, moved the level of forgiveness passed a normal level of counting, "seventy times seven." Christ sets the standard, [Col 3:13](#).

v23-35 The servant who cannot forgive.

This parable shows that having received forgiveness from God we must be prepared to forgive others.

v23 The king represents God the Father, see also v35. The king is checking the financial commitments of his servants.

v24 A servant of a king, who has access to the king's money. He has been borrowing or using the king's money for himself, and now owes ten thousand talents (*Talent* a valuable coin of the time).

v25-27 The king calls in the debt, but by humbling himself and throwing himself at the feet of the king the servant receives forgiveness and the debt is cancelled.

v28-34 On leaving the presence of the king the servant finds a servant who owes him a small sum of money. (one penny was a day's wages). There was no forgiveness or time given to pay off the debt and the second servant ends up in prison.

The other servants take the matter to the king who challenges the behaviour of the first 'forgiven' servant. The king punishes the servant for his failure to forgive as he had received.

v34,35 "Delivered him to the tormentors," This cannot therefore refer to the eternal loss of one truly saved, that would not agree with other scripture. As the first servant had been forgiven fully from the original debt neither can it be referring to someone who was not truly saved. This must be indicating a temporary punishment by God the Father. The word translated *tormentors* can also be used to indicate involvement in illness or sickness, see [Matt 8:6](#). Also consider [1 Cor 11:27-30](#).

Chapter 19

Matthew records that Jesus now departs from the area of Galilee and starts on His final journey to Jerusalem.

19:1-12 Teaching on Divorce.

v1 "Beyond Jordan" comes the area name "Perea" to the East of the Jordan river.

v3 There were two religious teaching groups on divorce, the strict "Shammai" taught that divorce was only lawful due to the wife's very bad conduct. The second group, the "Hillel," taught that [Deuteronomy 24:1](#) allowed divorce for any reason. The Pharisees are therefore asking Jesus to which group does He belong.

v4-6 In His reply Jesus does not refer to either but goes back to the original purpose of God the Father at creation, [Genesis 1:27](#); [Genesis 2:24](#). God's plan was that for a man and wife they would be "one flesh," any separation of the marriage was not according to God's will.

v7,8 The Pharisees then quoted the writings of Moses, [Deuteronomy 24:1](#). Jesus showed that they had misunderstood the command, the instruction was to protect the wife from the husband's mood changes, stop him getting rid of his wife for any reason. v9,10 If "[fornication](#)" occurred it appears that Jesus allowed this as a condition for divorce, otherwise adultery is being committed on remarriage. Note: Under Jewish rules only the man can divorce the woman. In Mark, which was written for the Gentile reader, the woman is also permitted to divorce the man, [Mark 10:12](#).

Note that under Jewish teaching, 'fornication' normally referred to sexual acts by the bride to be during betrothal. (Joseph's concern, [Matt 1:18,19](#)). If this was the case then

Jesus does not permit divorce under any condition.

v10 This could explain the concern by the disciples.

v11,12 Following the thought "not good to marry," Jesus comments that not all men are able to accept that situation. Some people cannot marry because of being born with problems, others are restricted by the action of men (eunuchs). Others prefer to spend all their time in working for the Lord instead of marriage and its demands.

v13-15 The blessing of the children.

The little children must have been very young, [Mark 10:16](#) possibly even babies. But the disciples were not happy with the parents bringing the children.

Jesus reminds the disciples of His earlier teaching, [Matt 18:3](#). Entry to heaven requires a mind and faith like a child.

v16-30 The Rich Young Man.

[Mark 10:17-31](#); [Luke 18:18-30](#); Compare [Luke 10:25-30](#).

This young man, called "a ruler" in [Luke 18:18](#), wants to know how he may earn eternal life, to work for it. Mark and Luke tell us that he call Jesus "Good Master." Our Lord starts by asking the young man how he really saw Jesus, v17, for only God is good.

Jesus then points him to what is already written in their Law, what instructions God had already sent and lists first the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 5th laws:-

Not murder, not commit adultery, not steal, not lie.

Honour Mother and Father.

Love your neighbour as yourself.

These are not given as a way of obtaining eternal life, of salvation, this was not what the Law was meant to do. Jesus is listing them to make the man think about his question.

v20-22 "All these things have I kept," not the words of a person who is proud, but from a person who thought "works" earned eternal life.

v21 Jesus now reveals one of the real problems the young man has, "Go, sell, give away your riches, then follow me." Put your faith in Christ. The man's reaction showed just how far he was away from God, riches counted more.

v23 "It is hard for a rich man to enter" Many righteous people in Scripture were rich, e.g., Abraham, Job, Joseph of Arimathea, many Jews thought that wealth was a reward for a righteous life, but it is not the wealth, or the money which is the problem, it is the false faith and trust which may come with being rich.

See also [1 Tim 6:17](#); [Mark 10:23-26](#).

v24 This verse has caused some discussion. Some people think the "eye of needle " is referring to a special small door giving access into a walled city at night, a fully loaded camel could not get through it. Others feel Jesus is comparing the largest animal and smallest hole known by the Jewish people and how difficult it would be to do. Jesus is highlighting how riches can turn a person away from God. Consider [1 Tim 6:10](#); [1 Tim 6:10](#). (Note: "the love of money").

v25 "Who then can be saved?" The disciples were obviously of the same belief that wealth showed a divine favour. If a rich man could not therefore be saved, who could

be saved?

v26 Salvation is the work of God, only He can provide true righteousness.

v27 "We have left all and followed you" is Peter's response, this is what the young man could not do, [Matt 4:18-23](#); [Matt 9:9](#). "What shall we have therefore?" Not necessarily a demand for reward but Jesus shows the disciples what the reward would be.

v28 "Regeneration" or 'new spiritual birth,' [Titus 3:5](#) which will occur when the Messiah sets up His kingdom. Consider [Rom 8:14-19](#).

"Twelve thrones," clearly shown for the disciples in the Millennium.

v29,30 If we make a sacrifice for Christ during our life, then we will be generously rewarded. There is however a caution, "many that are first shall be last," 'many,' not all, may find that they are not rewarded as they expected, eternal life is not a *reward* but a *gift* from God. Divine reward may not be according to the standards set by Man.

Chapter 20

This parable has a story which would not have happened in the real world but is designed to bring home a truth of the Kingdom of Christ. We must be careful not to search for theological meaning in all the detail. This parable can be linked to the words of Matt 19:30.

v1,2 An 'householder,' a master of the vineyard, needs workers for his vineyard at the harvest time. In the morning, at dawn, he goes out and hires the first group of men. The men and the master agree a wage, to receive a penny for a days work, the "penny" being the normal days wages for a labourer.

v3-7 More workers are needed later in the morning, the householder goes out to hire more from the market place. There is no evidence that these people are lazy, or refusing to work, they had just not been hired.

The householder hires additional workers at 9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m. 5 p.m. during the day, each workers responds to the call and work.

v8-10 When the day ends, the workers are given their wages, starting at the last to be hired, each received the agreed penny despite the number of hours worked.

v11-15 This obviously caused a problem with those who were hired earlier, but the householder points out they have received the agreed wage. How the house holder pays the rest is up to him.

This passage is in response to a question by Peter in Matt 19:27 following the young man rejecting salvation due to riches earlier.

Each true believer responds to the invitation by God through Jesus, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* John 3:16. There is no time or age involved with this promise, it applies equally to a young believing child and an elderly believing person about to die. The response is the same, forgiveness and everlasting life.

In the parable Jesus is showing that God will reward the same to each true believer independent of the time involved. However, we are also told that those who serve faithfully, to the best of their abilities, will also be rewarded in addition to those promised in John 3:16.

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v15 "Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" - why are you envious because I am so good and generous?

v16 A repeat of [Matt 19:30](#), showing this parable is linked to the exchange with the disciples, [Matt 19:27-30](#).

This parable teaches that any service for the Lord will be rewarded, equal faithfulness will be equally rewarded. But the decision on faithfulness is of God, only He can know true faith and use of opportunities. This may be different to how others may see the situation.

v18-34 The group now move away from Perea, east of the Jordan and are now heading directly for Jerusalem. The following verses describe the events on this journey in the area of Jericho.

v17-19 Death and Resurrection predicted.

[Mark 10:32-34](#); [Luke 18:31-34](#).

On the way Jesus takes the disciples into a separate and quite place. The coming message was for them alone.

v18 A further prediction of the coming Death of Christ and His Resurrection, [Matt](#)

[17:12](#); [Matt 17:22,23](#). It adds detail to the previous predictions and in addition we are told that the death would involve the Gentiles, who would mock, scourge and crucify Him.

v20-28 **A grand request by the sons of Zebedee.**

[Mark 10:35-45](#).

The mother of the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, approaches Jesus with a request for specific rewards for her two sons, to sit on either side of Jesus in the Kingdom. This may have been as a result of the twelve thrones reward and the idea that the kingdom was soon to arrive. [Matt 19:28](#).

We must note that this request would have needed a complete faith in who Jesus was and that He was able to fulfil the promise. However, it did show that they were not humble in their attitude and mind.

v22,23 Jesus questions as to whether they are able to suffer in the way He is about to suffer, "drink of the cup.....baptized with the baptism?" The two brothers are doubtless sincere when they respond, "We are able."

This was later to prove true as James was the first disciple to die for Christ, [Acts 12:1,2](#), and John suffered variously over a long period.

But Jesus again reminds them that it is the Father who decides the rewards.

v24 The rest of the disciples were angry with the action of the brothers, especially as they had used their mother Salome and her relationship with her sister, Mary. Identified by comparing [Matt 27:56](#); [Mark 15:40](#); [John 19:25](#).

v25-27 Our Lord pointed out that with human government they control position and greatness by the use of authority, which they forced upon their people, His kingdom will be different. A sign of spiritual maturity and position will be a willing attitude to be a servant of others.

v28 The greatest example of this is Jesus Himself, with a complete submission at the cross, where He "gave His life as a ransom for many."

Note the words "for many." A clear statement of substitution (in place of) sacrifice. Consider [Isaiah 53:3-5](#); [Phil 1:1-11](#).

v29-34 **Blind men healed.**

[Mark 10:46-52](#); [Luke 18:35-43](#).

The three records of this event have some differences, one or two blind men? Before or after Jericho? The second problem could be due to there being two Jericho's, the roman town occupied by the poor people and Herod's palace and fortress, also called Jericho, about a mile to the west.

Mark mentions only the predominant, the main person, "blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus."

v31 "Thou Son of David!" This title means "the Messiah." Before this event Jesus had not encourage the use of that title in public, now as he heads for Jerusalem He is happy to claim the title.

v34 Jesus was never to pass this way again, it would be the last chance for healing. "Jesus had compassion on them." The self giving love of Jesus which would lead Him to the cross for us.

Chapter 21

Matthew omits the events at Bethany John 12:1ff.

v1-11 The King makes a public announcement.

Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19::29-38; John 12:12-19.

This is the first of a series of visits to Jerusalem during the final week ending in the crucifixion.

Jesus had spent the night at Bethany, the exact location is unknown but it is thought to be east of the Mount of Olives.

The Mount of Olives was the place where the Jews expected the Messiah to first appear.

v2-6 We are now approaching a special event, the instructions to the disciples about the mother ass and her young male ass is very specific (exact details), showing that the coming event was very important.

Jesus had normally walked everywhere, and the village was only about 2 miles away from Jerusalem, but this event was important, Jesus was about to fulfil Zech 9:9, though the disciples did not seem to understand this until much later, John 12:16.

v7-8 Both animals were brought, the mother ass being needed at first as the colt would have not left her. The colt had never been ridden but submitted to the disciples coats being place upon it and then Jesus mounting it.

Some of the multitude now place there clothes onto the road as a sign of honour. Others cut down palm branches, John 12:13.

It was unusual for a Jewish king to ride an ass, a horse was more suitable as the ass was considered a lowly animal.

v9 The shouts of the crowd clearly showed that they expected that Jesus was the Messiah. "Hosanna," a Hebrew word meaning *Save now*. "Son of David!" a title associated with the Messiah, up to now Jesus had avoided such public displays, even though he had allowed individual announcements, John 4:25,26; Matt 16:16-20 but with this event there was an unmistakable announcement to the nation. See also Psalms 118-26 which was one of the Psalms (113-118) used during the Passover.

v10,11 This event occurs just before the Passover and Jerusalem will be full of Jews from outside the area and possibly from outside the country. Jesus had also deliberately avoided Jerusalem during His ministry. Because of this the Messianic announcement obviously caused many of the people to ask the question, "Who is this?" At the end of the day Jesus enters the temple, after looking round He returns to Bethany with His disciples, Mark 11:11.

v12-17 The purifying (cleaning) of the Temple.

Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-47.

Jesus had made a similar cleanup of the temple at the beginning of His ministry, John 2:13-22.

On the day following His public announcement Jesus enters the Temple and throws out all those who bought and sold.

The outer Court of the Gentiles was the location of the stalls where the sacrificial animals could be bought and sold, also people could exchange their foreign money into money suitable to use in the temple, for taxes or offerings. Presumably these stall own-

ers were making a profit on each exchange.

"Those who sold pigeons," These were meant for the poor to use as their Temple offerings. (As offered at the birth of Jesus, Luke 2:24.)

All the buying, selling and money exchange was controlled by Annas the High Priest's and his family.

v13 "It is written," Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11. "Den of thieves," the home of robbers, protected by the religious leaders in a sacred building.

v14-16 Matthew is the only Gospel which records Jesus healing and the reappearance of the Hosanna's from the people worshipping in the Temple.

Responding to the objections of the priests Jesus quotes Psalm 8:2 which shows that God will get praise from what the world thinks is the most insignificant (smallest, unimportant) - a baby.

v17 Again He returns to Bethany overnight. Compare Luke 21:37.

v18-22 The Fig Tree cursed.

Mark 11:12-14; Mark 11:20-24.

This event occupies two separate incidents over 24 hours, Matthew joins it into one incident.

The fig tree is a common tree in this area and is often used as a symbol for Israel. The tree is unusual in that the leaves and fruit appear at the same time, often with the fruit coming first. This tree had put out its leaves in April and should have grown fruit as well, though the fruit may not have been matured it should have been edible at this stage. There was no fruit, only the leaves.

Jesus could have created fruit but he does not. Instead He gave a human reaction, "Let no fruit grow on you." A tree does not know of good or evil and is not responsible for its actions.

v20 Matthew seems to indicate that the tree dies 'quickly' but it was not noticed until the next morning by the disciples.

v21,22 Jesus tells the disciples that such power and even more was available to those who believe in prayer. However, with this faith will mean that any prayers will be done in the will of God.

v23-27 Jesus authority is questioned.

Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1-8.

v23 during the third visit of Jesus to the temple He was approached by members of the Sanhedrin, the chief priests, elders and scribes (Mark 11:27). They want to know by whose authority He was acting, the cleansing of the Temple, the miracles and acceptance of the position and worship as Messiah. The Sanhedrin or a senior Rabbi, (teacher) would normally have given agreement and so authority.

v24 Jesus responds to the challenge by asking them a question, The Baptism of John, by whose authority was that done, from 'heaven' or from 'man'?

v25,26 This question caused the Sanhedrin representatives some heart searching and exposes their dishonesty. The ministry of John the Baptist was very popular and had been recognized as prophetic, John had also publicly proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, John 1:29-37; John 3:26-30; Acts 19:4.

If the religious leaders acknowledged and accepted John's divine authority, they would have to accept Jesus as the Messiah and His teaching, on the other hand if they

rejected John then there would be a public outcry as many people had accepted John. v27 They refused to answer, and so their cowardly action did not deserve any answer from Jesus. Instead He tells a parable.

v28-32 The Two Sons.

Matthew is the only one to record this parable.

The two sons are representative of the Jews. The son who said "I will not" represents the religious outcast, publicans and harlots, who eventually accepted the message and teaching of John and often became followers of Jesus. Consider the parables of Luke 15:1-32.

The second son represents the attitude of the religious leaders, they initially gave approval of John, but when they had seen what would be the effect on their life they turned away, John 5:30-39; Luke 7:29,30.

v33-46 The wicked farm workers.

The title "husbandman" normally referred to a farmer who rented the land to farm from another land owner, he was a 'tenant' farmer.

This parable gives the original answer to the "by whose authority" question by showing Him as a special divine Son sent by the Father.

We must always be careful not to read too much into the details of parables. It is obvious that the householder represents God the Father who has planted a vineyard, a symbol of Israel, with the kingdom of God. Yet Jesus showed human thinking in that the householder did not anticipated (expected) the behaviour of the farmers.

The story showed that the householder had made special preparation for the running of the vineyard, all the necessary equipment supplied. Then it showed the shameful behaviour of the Jews with the various messengers from God down through the Jewish history. It is amazing how much patience the owner had with the farmers, but finally he sent his son and so reveals the evil heart of the farmers, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.' See John 11:47-53, the exact thoughts of the religious leaders.

v39ff From this point the story turns from history and becomes a prophecy.

The son is killed off, a prediction of the coming crucifixion. In the story the vineyard is taken from the farmers by the owner and given to others, the church. At this point the Jewish leaders had not realized the meaning of the story but this was soon to change, v45. "They feared the people" and the popularity of Jesus. The same fear also prevented them turning against John, v26.

v40 Jesus asks the scribes and Pharisees what should happen to these husbandmen, they did not hesitate in their reply, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, who shall render him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus then points out that they had pronounced sentence on their own heads and actions, v42-45.

The difference in the story was that after the rejection and death of the son the owner punished the men, there was no mention of the resurrection as happened with Jesus, He was to become the stone which will break those who rejected Him. The leaders realized that Jesus was talking about them.

Let us look at the parable in more detail.

The vineyard: This has been fully setup and planted by the owner and then given to

the tenant farmers for care. God in Isaiah talks about Israel being the vineyard of the Lord. Israel was supposed to tell the world about God, they often boasted about the law, but forgot to produce fruit for the owner of the vineyard, God. Ceremonies and ritual were more important than the "fruit."

Unfortunately, this also now hold for the church of Jesus Christ today. We have many rituals and ceremonies in the church today, many of these are for Man glorification, not God, the true faith has been lost, forgotten.

The treatment of the servants: Repeatedly the Israelites claimed that their father was Abraham yet generation of the tribes of Israel ignored and harmed the messengers and prophets sent to them. Finally they were to reject and destroy the Son of God sent to them.

The Jews were the most favoured people, they had been put in charge of the Words of God, while the world was in darkness the Jews had the revelations of God. Instead of telling the world in thanks they closed their ranks and said they were better than the world.

Today the Believer also has the revelation from God, how are you using it? The greatest sin in the world is to disobey God the Father.

Also consider 1 Peter 2:6-9; Romans 11:25,26.

Chapter 22

v1-14 Marriage Feast Parable.

This parable is similar to Luke 14:16-24, but there are differences and the occasion when told. We should not therefore attempt to compare the two stories.

As part of the marriage there was also a supper in honour of his son to which many people close to the king were invited. How would you feel if all your close friends rejected your invitation to your wedding?

v2 Jesus is using this parable to show the Jews what will happen if they reject the invitation He is giving from His Father. The king, his son and the marriage feast represent, God the Father, Jesus, and the coming Messianic kingdom.

The marriage involves the son of the king, the son is heir to the throne so any refusal to attend the marriage is not only discourtesies (very rude, not polite) but also shows the real loyalty of the person to the king.

Under the customs of the time there is an initial invitation sent out, then a second invitation on the day of the event.

v3-6 The king now sends out the servants with the second invitations but those invited, (Israel), but they make light of the invitation and found various excuses for not coming, even though they had been previously been invited and knew all about the coming wedding. Not only did they ignore the invitation they also attacked the messengers. For example look at Israel's attitude to John, Matt 21:25,26; and Stephen, Acts 7:51-60.

v7 When the king hears of the refusals and behaviour of the people he sends in his armies to destroy them. This is probably a prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies in A.D.70 because they had rejected the invitation by God. Today many people are too busy to consider their future and heaven, no time to accept the

invitation of Jesus. Business and pleasure are more important.

v8,9 The king needs guests for his wedding and sends his servants out into the streets and highways and invite anyone who will come. This is obviously referring to the message of salvation being taken to the Gentile nations.

In the Kingdom of Christ the Gentiles who turned to Christ became the Church who was to become the Bride of Christ. In this parable Jesus is explaining the result of unbelieving by the Jews and their relationship with the coming Messianic Kingdom. As the Church did not exist at this time perhaps these people from the highways were Jew's who did respond to the invitation after the resurrection or even during the Tribulation.

v10 The servants went out and found both 'good and bad,' the gracious invitation by God was offered to all, both sinners and those who thought they were religious responded. Compare Matt 13:47ff.

v11-14 The wedding garment.

It must have been the custom for a king to supply suitable clothing for entry into his presence, those coming from the 'highways' would not have suitable clothes. The man is held responsible for the failure to not have the correct clothes. He had received the invitation but had not bothered to enter the way the king had demanded, all he needed had been provided.

The lack of suitable wedding clothes prevents the man entering the feast, this must also apply to the future Kingdom. The clothes indicate that entrance to the Kingdom of Christ needs the righteousness of God, given as a gift through the death of Jesus. Just attending church, following all the ceremonies to the letter is not the right "clothes" needed to enter God's heaven, the heart must also be made right. This man stands in the presence of the king with no excuse.

v12 'Friend' a way of addressing someone who was not known. This man represents a person who has claimed that they are ready for the kingdom of Christ but were not. In the other parables this person is shown as 'Tares' or 'bad fish'.

v13 'Outer Darkness.' The person is removed from the presence of the king and his feast, - from the presence of God, into eternal punishment- 'weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

v14 A reminder that only a few respond to the call for salvation through Jesus. Scripture teaches that we each are responsible for any rejection, as in this story. See also Matt 11:28.

v15-46 Jesus is questioned.

v15-22 'Pharisees' and 'Herodians' ask questions about payment of tax.

The Pharisee leaders send their 'disciples' with the Herodians, each group were against the other but joined together because of a common hatred of Jesus.

v16 A very hypocritical introduction, the speakers certainly did not believe what they were saying.

v17 The Roman Poll tax was imposed (forced) upon every Jew. The question was deliberately made in an attempt to force Jesus to either accept submission to the Roman Empire, thus admitting He could not be the Messiah, or make an anti Roman statement, saying it was not necessary to make the payment and risk being charged with treason by the Roman authority.

v18 Jesus could read their evil thoughts and knows what they are attempting to do. He challenges them. "Why are you tempting me, you hypocrites?"

v19 "Show me a Roman tribute coin," the tax was paid with a penny, a *denarius*, a day's wages for a labourer.

v20,21 The questioners agree that the coin contained an image and inscription of Caesar. This allowed Jesus to respond with "Render (present as payment) therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's." This coin came from Caesar's government, so Jesus tells them to pay it back to him. Consider Rom 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-15; Acts 4:19,20.

'To God the things that are God's. The believers are told to be subject to the powers of government as God put them there, but we must always be subject to His Will in all things.

v23-33 Marriage questions.

Sadducees' question the resurrection.

Their question comes as a way of proof that there cannot be any resurrection. "Moses said," Deuteronomy 25:5. A practice which had been practiced by the ancient people. On death of the husband the brother was expected to marry the widow. This practice had now ceased so was not of real interest for the Sadducees.

The Sadducees gave the example of multiple weddings, "whose wife was she?" they asked.

v29-30 "You do not know the scripture," these men thought that if resurrection was to occur then men would be restored to their earthly state, the same form of existence. A commonly held view by many religious teachers, but there is no scripture teaching to confirm this. They could not see that God could raise the person to a much more glorified level. "Made as the angels" in the matter of marriage, Jesus does not say man would become an angel, neither that any earthly relationships will be forgotten. Consider 1 Cor 15:38-50.

v31-33 "Have you not listened to what God said? **I am** the God of the living, not the dead." By saying that God was "**I AM**" the God of Abraham..." God referred to the patriarchs in the present, not the passed, they were not dead but still living beings.

v34-40 Once again the religious leaders were showing how little they understood the teaching of God, it must have pleased the Pharisees that the Sadducees had been embarrassed.

A Pharisee lawyer now approaches Jesus. See Mark 12:28-34. "What is the greatest law?" We are not told why the lawyer is asking this question. Some Bible students think that he planned to develop an argument using the 613 rabbi expansions of the original commandments.

v37-40 The answer by Jesus gives the main points of Deuteronomy 6:5 *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* and Leviticus 19:18. We should have a full reverence for God and care for our neighbour's.

"All your heart," The Hebrew belief was that the heart was the center of the person, it was from the heart 'self comes'. They believed the heart controlled all the right and wrong of a person, their moral thoughts. Problem is that the 'heart' also shows and controls the bad in a person.

v41-46 Jesus now turns and asks the Pharisees a question about the Messiah. He asks them the same question he had asked the disciples in Matt 16:15,16.

"The son of David." The Messiah was expected to be from the family line of David, this was the normal teaching of the scribes and Pharisees, Mark 12:35. Jesus then developed this response by quoting Psalm 110:1ff. "How was it that David called the Messiah Lord?" The Jews accepted that the Messiah was a descendant of David, yet David acknowledged that the Messiah was his superior. The Jew's saw the Messiah as a king, a political ruler, but this Psalm, "given by the Spirit," shows that the Messiah was greater than David. Mark 12:36.

Jesus shows that their teaching and understanding of scripture had numerous problems and as a result they did not challenge Jesus any more.

Chapter 23

23:1 - 25:46 Jesus gives warnings and prophecies of judgment.

Jesus makes a public announcement about the wrong and evil of the Pharisees.

v1-12 This warning is given to the disciples but is also open to the listening multitude.

v2 "Sit in Moses' seat." They have taken the place of Moses to explain and control the interpretation of the Law.

v3,4 As the Pharisees explain how to obey the Laws, the people were required to obey what they said. However, the Pharisees did not obey the laws or interpretation themselves. There was also some doubt about their interpretations, this was allowing them to misuse the spiritual teaching of the Old Testament.

They added to the Law, by doing so made the burden of obeying the Law much more difficult. The Pharisees realized the interpretations could be wrong but still did not make changes, yet because they knew ways of avoiding the obedience of the laws for themselves they were not doing what they insisted must be done.

v5 Phylacteries, two small hollow boxes made of skins, each divided to make four compartments, each compartment contained one of the following Old Testament passages written on strips of parchment (skins of animals). The normal passages were from [Exodus 13:2-10, 11-17](#); [Deuteronomy 6:4-9](#); [Deuteronomy 11:13-22](#).

These boxes were tied across the persons forehead with leather straps. This action came from an exact (literal) meaning of the words from [Exodus 13:16](#). Sometimes these boxes were attached to the left hand.

These boxes were occasionally worn by the common people but all Pharisees wore them as a sign of spirituality.

"Enlarge the borders of their garments," Tassels worn on the four corners of the outer coat according to the instruction of [Numbers 15:38-41](#); [Deuteronomy 22:12](#). The priests made them large, again as a sign of spirituality.

Many Jews, including Jesus, also had these tassels on the bottom of their outer garment. [Matt 9:20](#); [Matt 14:36](#).

v6,7 "Seats of honour, - greetings in markets," The Pharisees wanted to draw attention to their position, become the object of attention.

"Rabbi, Rabbi." A title indicating *teacher* or *doctor* indicating they were the 'spiritual instructors.'

v8-12 The following words of warning were given to the disciples. The followers of Christ should not seek position of these titles *Rabbi*, *Father* or *Master*. This does not prohibit the use of these titles as Paul called himself "father" when referring to Timothy as his "son" in the faith, [1 Cor 4:14-17](#).

v11 "He that is greatest," shows that there will be different ranks in the Kingdom but it is the spirit of humility which controls and guides the believer, not as with the Pharisees who were out to be as important as possible, often 'taking the place of God' in the decision of how to worship.

v13-36 **Seven woes and wretchedness of Pharisees.**

See also [Mark 12:38-44](#); [Luke 20:45-47](#).

Jesus now turns to the Pharisees who were in the crowd and gives them warnings.

v13 "Hypocrites!" The Pharisees were 'acting,' pretending holiness and righteousness. By their behaviour they were "shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven," if they had understood the scriptures they should have been encouraging the people to follow Jesus. In addition, any who were trying to "enter in" were being stopped.

v14 Not only do you play act righteousness but you use your power to rob poor people, then make fake long prayers as a sign of your 'righteousness' which is fake.

v15 The Pharisees were going out into the world persuading people to change their religion to follow their teachings, make "proselytes," adopt the Jewish faith, but really taking them to hell because of their wrong teaching and behaviour.

v16-22 Pharisees are guides but totally blind, introducing oath-taking. It is sad that a person's word cannot be accepted or trusted unless they make an oath. However the Pharisees were saying that there were different binding, legal holding levels of oaths. An oath which involved the general temple or altar had very little force, but mention the gold of the altar, gifts of the temple, or even the throne of God and the oath was binding, legal.

Jesus points out the stupidity of this teaching as the temple, as a whole also contains all the other area's which they considered more important, the 'altar,' 'gold,' 'gift,' 'heaven' and 'throne of God.' Jesus taught "swear not at all," [Matt 5:33-37](#).

v23,24 The Pharisees were very concerned with the tithe (tenth) payment of the various herbs according to Leviticus 27:30 "*And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.*" These herbs were used for adding to food for seasoning. This payment they considered more important than "weightier matters of the law."

Jesus said that they were more interested in looking for the small fly, 'gnat' in their drink and ignored and swallowed the 'camel' in the cup.

v25,26 The fifth woe shows that the Pharisees were more interested in the external. The Pharisees had great concern in ritual purifying, this did not come from the Mosaic law. They cleaned the outside of the cup but did not notice the rubbish in the cup, in their own life.

v27,28 The hidden evils of the Pharisees. Each spring, after the rain of winter, the graves were whitewashed to stop people defiling themselves by accidentally touching the grave. "*And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields,*

or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days." Numbers 19:16. See also [Luke 11:44](#). This action of whitewashing also made the graves more attractive in appearance, but contained rotting bodies. Jesus said that this is what the Pharisees were like, righteous on the outside, full of outward show, but rotten inside.

v29-31 The Pharisees are now told that they were as bad as their ancestors. By the act of building and taking care of the tombs of those who attacked and murdered the prophets they were proving that they supported these people and their acts. Their own plotting to kill Jesus confirms and proves this, [John 11:47-53](#).

v32 Jesus here is saying "Whatever you have to do, do it quickly," just as Jesus told Judas, [John 13:27](#).

v33 See [Matt 3:5-8](#) for John's reaction to the Pharisees and Sadducees.

v34 Jesus is claiming that He is sending the messengers, He is claiming to be God. See [Luke 11:49](#); [1 Cor 1:24](#).

v35 Persecution of the messengers, "Abel unto the blood of Zechariah," including all the murders of the Old Testament. Jesus tells the religious leaders that they are part of this group because they have failed to learn the lessons from history. In the sight of God they share the guilt, being completed in the coming crucifixions of the Messiah.

v36 A severe prophesy for these listeners, fulfilled in the siege of Jerusalem ending in the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D.

v37-39 Jesus is expressing sadness and grief for the city of Jerusalem, [Luke 13:34,35](#). "You that kill the prophets, and stone them," links this remark with those of verse 33 and 34. See also [Luke 13:34,35](#); [Luke 19:41-44](#).

v38 "House," can be translated as 'the Nation,' 'the City' and 'the Temple.' As these words were given by Jesus as He left the Temple for the last time, then the most likely meaning is 'the Temple.' The Temple was about to be rejected by the Messiah as not the 'house of God,' v39 "you shall not see Me henceforth," the public ministry of Jesus was now finished. After the resurrection Jesus only appeared to His followers.

v39 "Till ye shall say," When Jesus returns at His 'Second Coming' the Jews will welcome the rejected Messiah. Consider [Rom 11:1ff](#).

Chapter 24

v1-25 The Fall of Jerusalem and future events.

The material in this chapter also contains considerable prophetic information made by Jesus. Some of the predictions appeared to have been fulfilled in 70 A.D. in the destruction of Jerusalem, other parts seem to refer to the Church age and also the Tribulation period. It is therefore difficult to interpret the information.

Much of the information given by Jesus seems to parallel the vision of Daniel's seventieth week. In addition some of the material ties up with Revelation.

Matthew's record appears to contain information about events still in the future while an apparently similar account in [Luke 21:12-24](#) appears to cover the Church age.

The initiation of this discussion is due to a question made by the disciples.

v1 The Temple, at the time of Jesus, was built by Herod and was considered a magnificent structure. It was constructed of very large limestone blocks covered with golden

decoration and ornaments. There must have been a great national pride in this structure, this appears to have included the disciples.

v2 It was therefore a terrible shock to the disciples when Jesus tells them that soon the temple would be destroyed.

v3 The Mount of Olives is a hill to the East of the city of Jerusalem, from the top of this hill you could see the Temple. While Jesus and the disciples were sitting on this hill that evening they asked Jesus, "when shall these things be?" - that is the destruction of the Temple.

"What shall be the sign?" The Jewish Teachers knew from the Old Testament that the coming of the Messiah would indicate the end of evil, the wicked would be destroyed, [Dan 9:25-27](#). The disciples would have been taught this and so they were expecting an answer from Jesus which would have developed this teaching, hence their words "end of the world." This idea was still present after the resurrection, [Acts 1:6,7](#).

Jesus directly indicates that the answer involves the events given in Daniel, the answer concerning the tribulation of Israel. See also Rev. 6-19.

v4-14 First Half of Tribulation.

The order of the Seals in [Rev 6:1ff](#) and the order of events in verses 4-14 are very similar, these are the first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation.

v5 Appearance of one who are saying, 'I am Christ,' The appearance of the Antichrist - the first seal. Though there may be some to appear before the tribulation, [1 John 4:1-5](#).

v6,7 "Wars and rumours of wars," [Rev 6:3,4](#), the second seal.

v7 "Famines," [Rev 6:5,6](#), the third seal.

"[Pestilences](#) and earthquakes," [Rev 6:7,8](#). Death for quarter of the earth's people.

v8 "Beginning of sorrows," - 'birth pains,' things are about to get worse.

v9,10 "Shall kill you," [Rev 6:7,8](#). Fifth seal. The Jew and the Christian are hated by the world. A turning away from their faith.

v11 "Many false prophets," [2 Thess 2:8-12](#).

v12 "Love of many shall wax cold." Because of the state of the world many, who were religious, will abandon their beliefs, including the Jews.

v13 There will be a saved group of Jews, given the 'Mark' by God as protection.

v14 "Gospel preached." The Messianic kingdom is about to be established, the message of salvation will go throughout the world. See [Rev 11:3-12](#).

v15-28 The second half of Tribulation.

v15 The 'abomination of desolation.' See [Dan 9:27](#); [Dan 12:11](#); [Dan 11:31](#). This event predicted the worship in the temple by Antiochus, when he [profaned](#) (not showing respect for God or holy objects) by offering a pig on the altar, but also it is referring to the Antichrist, who will demand [idolatrous](#) worship for himself in the new Temple he had built. [Rev 13:5-8](#); [2 Thess 2:1-4](#). Jesus indicates that all these events are future, v21 indicates that it can only be referring to the Tribulation time and not due to the events associated with 70 A.D. and the destruction of the temple.

v16-20 The events show that the second half of the Tribulation will be very terrible under the Antichrist.

Immediate flight will be necessary, [Rev 12:6](#); [14](#). "On the Sabbath day," this could cause problems for the non believing Jews, the problem will not apply to any true be-

lievers still on the earth. The Church has already left and will be in heaven.

v21 Further warnings of coming terrors. "since the beginning" and "nor ever shall be," identifies the events to be only the final tribulation.

v22 "Days ... shortened," The terror of the Antichrist will be cut short by God and the arrival of Christ, [2 Thess 2:8](#).

v23-27 Many would be 'saviours' will appear during this persecution time. But the coming of Christ will not be a gradual event. It will be like a flash of lightning covering East to West, it will be very obvious.

v28 "Carcass," spiritual dead and decaying wicked, while the "vultures," agents for divine judgement are waiting. Consider [Rev 19:17,18](#).

v29-31 **Son of Man comes.**

v29 "Immediately after," compare v21. There is no reference to the Rapture of the Church, [1 Thess 4:16,17](#) as further events happen on the earth until v30.

v30 This is the actual return of Jesus to the earth at the end of the tribulation to setup the Messianic Kingdom.

v29 "Then shall the sun be darkened." This event and the other events in the heavens is also recorded in Joel 3:15 "15 *The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.*" and [Isaiah 13:9,10](#).

v30 "The sign of the Son of Man," What is the 'sign of the coming' we are not told, possibly His glory. Whatever it was it makes the Jews and world "all the tribes" will recognize the Messiah. See [2 Thess 1:7,9](#).

v31 "Angels." Collect the 'elect' from all round the world, "the four winds." Compare the parables of the 'Kingdom of Heaven,' [Matt 13:18ff](#), the collections carried out by the angels.

v32,33 The 'fig tree' is a frequent symbol in the Bible for the nation of Israel. [Luke 13:6-9](#); 'I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time:' Hosea 9:10. Look at the notes on fig tree behaviour in [Matt 21:19,20](#). 'When the leaves appear,' Jesus is saying that summer is near. A rebuilt, revitalized nation is about to enter the end events.

v34 "This generation shall not pass till....." On first reading it appears to suggest this applies to the same generation as the disciples, but this cannot be possible, though the nation was scattered in 70 A.D. The original word now translated *generation*, (*genea*) can also be translated 'race' or 'family.' This makes better sense, the Jewish family will not be destroyed, even though experiencing severe suffering. It will be part of the arrival of the Messiah for the Millennium kingdom. In addition, apparently, the early church were still understanding and expecting that the Lords return was still to happen, even after all the disciples and followers had died.

v35 Jesus makes a serious prediction, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." Consider [Rom 8:16-18](#); [Rev 21:1](#).

v36 It is very important to note **only** the Father knows when this will happen, **no one else knows!!!!** [Acts 1:6,7](#). Take no notice if someone tells you "they have worked out or know when."

v37-39 "The days of Noah." These were days when men had turned away from God, great wickedness was everywhere, they just lived as they wanted, finally God moved and judged the world with the flood. Only those who followed God were saved and

inherited the 'new world.' The return of Christ will be like this.

v40-42 This passage follows on after the 'tribulation' and return of Christ, so it cannot be referring to the "Rapture of the Church."

Two will be working in the field, one taken for judgement, one to receive the blessings of the New Kingdom. Two women grinding, one taken.

A warning to the listeners of Jesus and us today "Watch, be prepared." This warning is repeated in v44, and [Matt 25:13](#).

v43-44 If the owner of the house had known that a thief was going to break into his house then he would have kept guard and watched. Believers have been warned and have no excuse for not being prepared and ready for the return of Jesus.

v45-51 This story is showing the behaviour between a servant who can be trusted to do his job properly and the evil servant who take advantage of his master being away. The master has placed the trust servant in charge of his home and other servants while he is away. He is faithful in his duties and as a result when the master returns he is rewarded.

The evil servant uses the power and lack of control to take advantage of his fellow servants, he does not use the authority he has been given properly and lives a life unworthy of his position. This man takes advantage of the delay in his masters return, because he does not know when the master will return.

Believers are in this situation, the possible return of Jesus has now been over 2000 years, and still we do not know when. The believer is the servant of God and we each have been given an area of responsibility while we are waiting for His return. There are others who appear to be servants of God, the evil servants, who misuse their authority and power.

Christ will return suddenly and without warning, His appearance will reveal the servants who are [hypocrites](#).

v51 "Weeping and gnashing of teeth" shows the eternal result for these hypocrites.

Chapter 25

Jesus now moves away from the original question, "when will it be" to showing that the return of Jesus will be a time of testing for being a true follower, v1-13. Testing attitude to service, v14-30. Testing the Gentile nations, v31-46.

v1-13 The Ten Virgins.

This story is based upon the marriage custom of the time. Unfortunately there have been numerous interpretations of the story. To get the true meaning we must consider the teaching and subjects on either side of the story told by Jesus.

Jewish marriages took place in two stages, The bridegroom goes first to the home of the bride to take part in some religious ceremonies and collect his bride. He then takes the bride to his home for the general festivities.

In the parable there is no indication that the virgins were to marry the bridegroom, they were just guests invited to the marriage.

The parable seems to indicate that the bridegroom, Christ, has collected his bride, the Church, and is now returning to his future home. Christ is returning to the earth with His bride at the end of the Tribulation.

The virgins are the professing (have faith in their belief) Jewish remnant, (small number left over).

v3 "Foolish," meaning 'stupid.' The lamps would be an oil filled container with a wick to light. These would have been lit as the virgins waited for the bridegroom, but because of the delay the oil would have been used up.

"Oil" is often used in the Bible to represent or are symbolic of the Holy Spirit. [Zechariah 4](#); [Isaiah 61:1](#).

The ten virgins appear to be outwardly the same, virgins with same lamps and have same activity, but five do not have some additional, other source, the presence of the Holy Spirit.

v5 They were all asleep, the parable does not mention there was any blame for this activity. They were waiting for the coming Messiah (the bridegroom), but the 'foolish' virgins were not ready, something was missing.

v6,7 The virgins hear of the coming bridegroom and prepare and adjust their lamps, in preparation for joining in the procession with the bridegroom.

v8 'Our lamps are gone out,' the foolish virgins realize their foolishness in not being prepared.

v9 The Holy Spirit is a free gift, but it is a personal desire and acceptance, 'buy for yourselves.' is the response to 'Give us of your oil.'

v10-12 While they are searching for the source of the oil the bridegroom arrives, the doors shut and the feast is begun. Later the foolish return and it appears they were unable to get the oil as the bridegroom responds with 'I know you not.' Christ will reject anyone who is not prepared for the day of return.

v13 "Watch and be prepared for the return of Christ."

v14-30 The Talents.

This is similar to the parable given by Jesus at Jericho, [Luke 19:11-27](#).

The man is very obviously Jesus, "the Son of Man cometh," v13.

A talent was a very high value coin, in this parable the coins are made of silver as v18 uses the word *argurion*, meaning silver money.

The **talents** represent different responsibilities given to the servants, reflecting what the *man* thought was the abilities of the servants.

Jesus is revealing that each believer has not been given the same abilities by God or lives in the same situation, many people may not be able to use their abilities to serve the Lord due to the world they live in. However, we have all been given the abilities we need to serve God in our locality, do not bury them in the ground as the servant did. This talent may not be preaching, it could be prayer, finance as well as witnessing. v16,17 The first two servants, though having different amounts were able to double the values and both received the same praise and reward, keeping their talents, v20-23,28. v18 The servant who received only one talent just buried the money, he failed to use the gift for any purpose.

v19 "After a long time," This showed that the return of Jesus was not to happen soon, even though in the parable the Masters return was within the life of the servants.

v24,25 The third servant has a very different in attitude, he has a very sad view of his master, "a hard man," cruel and lacking in mercy, "reaping where he did not sow," gaining from the hard work of others, harvesting the fields he did not sow then separating the good seed and removing rubbish, the 'chaff.'

The servant could not see that the master was a man of care and love for his servants, who wanted them to have a happy life. All the servant could see in his master made him fear the master, unable to see the love the master had for his servants. The servant had not even placed the money in a bank that at least would have earned some interest for his master. Though the Jews were not allowed to get interest from each other they could do it from a Gentile banker, [Deuteronomy 23:20](#).

v28,29 The single talent is now taken from the lazy servant and given to the one with ten talents who knew what to do with it in a good way.

v30 Shows that the punishment for failing the master will be eternal punishment.

Compare [Matt 8:12](#); [Matt 13:42,50](#); [Matt 22:13](#); [Matt 24:51](#).

This final verse shows that this parable cannot be referring to Believers and use of their abilities for the Lord, because a true believer cannot lose their salvation because they do not work for the Lord, this conflicts with [John 5:24](#) where salvation only needs believing and faith.

Therefore this parable must be talking about those who were passing through the Tribulation period and were saved in this period, Jew or Gentile. This agrees with other scripture where a believing group will be saved to live through the Millennium period.

v31-46 Judgement of the Nations.

The Son of Man comes at the end of the Tribulation to start the Millennium. The judgement scene is not referring to the time in [Rev 20](#), the Great White Throne as this involves the resurrection of the wicked, to be judged as individuals, not as a group. This judgement must be applied to those who are alive on the earth at the return of Christ.

This judgement creates two groups of people, Jesus calls the groups, the "sheep" and the "goats." The sheep are called to the right side of Jesus. He then explains why the separation, these are the people who have looked after "His brethren." The 'sheep' and 'goats' are not referring to "my brethren," so they must be the Gentile or non Jew nations, the brethren must be the faithful Jew's who took the Gospel message to the world during the Tribulation, [Matt 24:14](#); [Rev 7:1-14](#). verses 35,36 shows the problems which will face 'the brethren,' but the work of these will bring an untold number of Gentiles to salvation. It is these who will do the 'caring of the brethren.'

v41-46 'Depart from Me, ye cursed,' the original Greek text suggests 'Depart from me under a curse.' The wicked are sent into the everlasting fire, prepared for Satan and his angels, not for Man. These people do not inherit this punishment, they go there by rejecting the grace of God.

In the parable these people want to know how they rejected God. "The way you treated my servants" was the answer. Their hearts shown by their attitude and actions.

v46 "Everlasting, eternal punishment." Some feel that God is a God of love and He would not make it eternal, but the text used makes no indication of an end to this period. Consider [Matt 18:8](#); [2 Thess 1:7-9](#).

Let's examine this thought a little more. We forget the purity and holiness of God so if He is a God of love, then He also has to be a God of anger, of wrath against the wrong of Man, our sin. The sin of Man is the centre of all the world's problems, righteousness is the answer to sin, the opposite to sin must come to correct the problems.

Let us also remember that God sent His Son to die on the cross, in great love He was

willing to pay the price for Man's sin, but if Man rejects this love what can you expect but punishment.

Chapter 26

The passion and death of Jesus. Matt 26:1 - 27:66.

The following passages contain information which is very important to the Believer, unfortunately there are slight problems of order of events and time between each of the Gospels.

v1-16 The plot against Jesus.

[Mark 14:1,2](#); [Luke 22:1,2](#).

v1,2 The final prediction of the coming death of Jesus. The Feast of the Passover is eaten on the evening of the day, each day starts at sundown in the Jewish system. This prediction must therefore have been made in the evening.

Christ had previously predicted His death in [Matt 16:21](#); [Matt 17:22](#); [Matt 20:18](#); [John 10:11,17,18](#).

The Religious leaders were out to destroy Jesus, they knew the danger of doing it around a feast, so were trying to make other arrangements, but the date has been set by God, Jesus was to die at the Passover Feast as the **Lamb of God**.

Caiaphas had been high priest since about 18 A.D., he had been out to destroy Jesus for some time, [John 11:47-53](#).

v6-13 Jesus at Bethany.

[John 12:1](#) records that these following events appeared to have happened six days before the Passover, though neither Matthew or Mark gave an accurate time for this event, they just record "when Jesus was in Bethany." We have to assume that Matthew's record had gone back a few days to show what may have caused Judas to arrange the betrayal, v14.

v6-13 Jesus anointed

[Mark 14:3-9](#); [John 12:1-8](#).

v6 Simon the leper must have been previously healed by Jesus as he would not have been allowed to live with the healthy people.

v7 "A woman," [John 11:1,2](#); [John 12:3](#) tells us this is Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus.

"Very precious ointment," the other accounts tell us it was 'a pound of ointment of spikenard,' worth over 'three hundred pence,' [Mark 14:5](#); [John 12:5](#).

The use of this ointment on Jesus upset the disciples, they were angry with this waste as they saw it. Matthew does not highlight any special blame on a single disciple, perhaps he was ashamed at being one of the objectors. John, however, states that Judas was the one who started the objections, [John 12:4](#), but the objection was hypocritical, he was not concerned for the poor just having the money for his own use. [John 12:6](#).

v10-13 Jesus explains the reason, "for My burial." It had been revealed to Mary that she would not have the opportunity to do the normal acts of a burial, events would take place too quickly. There may have been a little preparation after the death before they put the body in the tomb, but the women were on the way to the tomb to apply the various burial procedures when the tomb was already empty. The events at Bethany with

Mary were the only time that Jesus was anointed for burial.

v14-16 Judas arranges the betrayal.

[Mark 14:10,11](#); [Luke 22:3-6](#).

"Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests." We are not told how long after the Bethany events this happened, but could explain his change of attitude in those days.

v15 The original text suggest that Judas was paid at the time of making the offer. Thirty pieces of silver, a small sum, basically the value of a slave. [Exodus 21:32](#).

v17-30 The Final Meal.

[Mark 14:17-21](#); [Luke 22:14-20, 24-30](#).

The Last Supper was not the Passover Meal, Jesus was being sacrificed on the cross at the time that the lambs were being killed in the Temple as part of the Passover. See [1 Cor 5:7](#). Jesus gives the direction for preparation of the feast, He obviously did not want to reveal the exact time of His death at that time. He also wanted the disciples to eat a meal together and at the same time introduce the Feast of Remembrance, now kept by Believers today.

v17-19 Preparation for the Passover.

The house was prepared for the Passover Feast by making sure there was no leaven(yeast) in the house. This day begins at sundown so the disciple would have been working during the earlier hours of this day.

As a response to the disciples question Jesus gives them instruction on going to a man. This man would be obvious as in [Mark 14:13](#) and [Luke 22:10](#) we are told that he would be carrying a jar of water, an unusual task for a Jewish man.

v18 The message Jesus sends to the man suggests that they would all be taking part in the Passover feast, it is interesting the additional comment recorded by [Luke 22:16](#) "*I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God*," indicating that Jesus would never take part in the Passover Feast, the disciples plan will be interrupted.

v20-30 The Last Supper.

[Luke 22:14-20, 24-30](#).

Read the events recorded in [John 13:2-30](#) at this point.

We are now rapidly approaching the last few hours of the life of Jesus. He joins with the disciples for the supper and makes the announcement that one of them will betray Him, give Him away to the people who want His death. See [Matt 17:22](#); [Matt 20:18](#); [Matt 26:1,2](#).

The disciples must have realized how weak their faith was as they all asked "Lord, is it I?" But their question obviously did not expect an answer of "yes".

v23 Jesus now makes this interesting prediction. "He that dipperth his hand with Me in the dish, the same shall betray Me." The group were probably eating from a common dish, so this statement did not generally reveal who the traitor was, but showed how terrible the betrayal was, even eat with Jesus, a sign of closeness to a Jew.

v24 "As it is written." The coming events have been predicted in the Old Testament, it is all part of the plan of God, but men cannot claim they are innocent as it is the heart of Man which is fulfilling the events of God's plan.

v25 Judas must have been silent up to now and now asks the question, "Master, is it I?" It does not appear that the other disciples heard the question or the answer. We are not told when the events of [John 13:23-26](#) happened, it did not seem to mean anything

to John and Peter as Judas left soon after, [John 13:27-30](#).

v26-29 Jesus introduces the Lord's Supper.

[Mark 14:22-25](#); [Luke 22:17-20](#); [1 Cor 11:23-25](#).

v26 "Take, eat; this is My body." As Jesus was present at this point these words must only make the bread as symbols, as a reminder to the believer of what was about to happen and the cost for their redemption.

v27 "He took the cup and gave thanks," This was the New Covenant or Testament which was put in place at the death of Jesus on the cross. The Old Covenant put in place by God in the Old Testament involved the death of an animal as payment for sin each year. But the death of Christ was to be a perfect sacrifice, which allowed Man to be put right, justified by God through the death of Christ. See [Heb 8:6-13](#).

v28 "My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many," The death of Christ was able to cover all the sins of the world but here we see that it was effective only for those who believe.

v29 "I will not drink henceforth....." Jesus points the believer forward to the future Messianic Kingdom, the Father's Kingdom. [Mark 14:25](#).

The events of [John 14:1ff](#) must now have occurred.

v30 They depart for the Mount of Olives.

v31-35 Peter denial and other disciple failures predicted.

[John 13:36-38](#); [Luke 22:31-34](#); [Mark 14:27-31](#).

The record of John seems to suggest that the predictions happened before they left the room, it may be that Jesus gave two separate warnings to Peter.

The material recorded in John 15,16 and 17 fits here.

v31 It was only Peter who was to deny Jesus but all the eleven disciples were to run away and leave Jesus on His own. See prediction [Zechariah 13:27](#).

v32 Even though Jesus knew of His coming crucifixion He still expected to meet them again in Galilee.

v33-35 Peter's full of pride, he feels so much more superior to the others, "Though all men shall be offended," also puts doubt on the devotion of the other disciples. This boasting, which later resulted in failure, may be why Jesus especially challenged Peter in [John 21:15](#).

v36-56 Events in the Garden of Gethsemane.

[Mark 14:32-42](#); [Luke 22:39-46](#); [John 18:1](#) The name "Gethsemane" means "oil press," it was situated upon the Mount of Olives across the Kedron valley. The area was often used by Jesus and the disciples, [John 18:2](#).

Jesus chooses to leave the eight disciples together as a group and takes Peter, James and John farther into the garden. Finally He withdraws Himself a little way from those three to be alone as He prays. As He separated from each group He asked them to wait and watch with Him. During the next few hours Jesus needed all the encouragement and sympathy He could get, "to wait and watch with Him," v38.

v39 "If it be possible, " If it was within the Will of God, " let this cup pass from Me." Any normal human would try to get away from the coming crucifixion, but in addition to this the Son of God was about to become sin for all mankind. This "cup" did not come from Satan but from God the Father, [John 18:11](#), the price for sin had to be paid, the divine wrath, anger for sin was to come upon Jesus as the sin-bearer. This event

had to mean that God would have to turn away and could not look upon His Son, the reason for the cry on the cross, [Matt 27:46](#).

"Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Knowing of the coming experience the prayers of Jesus are made in perfect submission to the Father. The Father answered the prayer, not by removal of the 'cup' but by added strength from an angel, [Luke 22:43](#).

v40,41 Returning to the disciples He finds them fast asleep, perhaps because of his boasting Jesus turns to Peter, "could you not watch with Me one hour?"

Jesus urges Peter and the others to "Watch and pray," so that the coming events do not surprise them and lead them into temptation.

The demands of the physical body was overruling the spiritual desires.

v42-45 The time of prayer to the Father is repeated two more times, each time Jesus returns to find the disciples asleep.

v45 "Rest now, the plan of God moves on to the next step."

v46 "Let us be going." Not to run away but to go to meet the soldiers with Judas showing them the way, [John 18:4](#).

This is an organized group as Judas is accompanied by armed Jewish Temple guards and Roman soldiers, [John 18:12](#); [Luke 22:52](#).

The soldiers, especially the Roman soldiers would not have known Jesus so Judas had arranged a sign of love and greeting to identify Jesus, the Greek words in the original text suggests Judas held Jesus closely with his arms round Him as a sign of affection. Jesus questions this action, [Luke 22:48](#). Jesus goes on to identify Himself to the group, [John 18:4-8](#).

v50 "Friend," comrade, companion, a term which showed a previous long term friendship.

v51 Peter, identified in [John 18:10](#), attacks one of the high priest servants with a sword, the disciples had two short swords with them, [Luke 22:38](#). John, who had connections with the high priest family, identifies the servant as Malchus, [John 18:10,15](#).

v51 "smote(cut) off his ear." This thoughtless act by Peter put Jesus position in danger, this required a miraculous action to stop any damage to the coming trial, armed action was not part of the accusation against Jesus.

v52 The message of salvation was not to be advanced or spread by the action of violence.

v53 "twelve legions of angels." A Roman legion would contain 6,000 soldiers, Christ could call upon a far superior force, but He was here to die on that cross as planned by His Father.

v55 The Soldiers had obviously been well armed "come out as against a thief, with swords." They had expected a violent reaction to the arrest, yet all previous meetings with Jesus had only shown a non violent attitude. The statement by Jesus that all these events are so "that Scriptures ... might be fulfilled" is very important, all was just as God had planned.

Go to [Crucifixion](#) for full list of events.

Jesus was first taken to Annas, a previous high priest who still had considerable power, [John 18:13](#). This meeting must have been arranged for the various members of the Sanhedrin to assemble for the very **irregular night meeting**. A second meeting took place at dawn to formally condemn Jesus as the earlier meeting during the night was illegal, [Matt 27:1](#).

v57-68 First Trial.

The Sanhedrin was assembled and ready to start the illegal trial.

John was known by the high priest family and was therefore allowed in to the courtyard, John then obtained permission for Peter to also enter.

v59 The Jews had to find some reason to condemn Jesus, they knew there was no real case against Him so were creating witnesses, some were obviously false. Under the Jewish Law at least two witnesses were required, [Deuteronomy 17:6](#) The only ones they could find were two who claimed that He would destroy the "temple of God" and rebuild it in three days. This was a misquote from three years previous, [John 2:19-23](#).

v62 Caiaphas challenges Jesus to speak in His defence, hoping that Jesus might make a statement that could be used to condemn, Jesus remains silent, [Isaiah 53:7](#).

v63-66 "I adjure thee by the living God," Jesus is told to answer as under an oath, He must answer. Caiaphas wanted Jesus to admit who He was, His deity. The response by Jesus was all they wanted, 'Blasphemy.' This was the real cause for His condemnation, [John 19:7](#) and why the religious leaders wanted Jesus removed, [John 5:18](#).

It was Jesus Himself who provided the evidence for His coming death by confirming the challenge of Caiaphas, "I am the divine Messiah."

v64 "The Son of Man sitting....." Compare [Daniel 7:13,14](#). A prediction that the role of those present will one day be reversed.

v65 "rent his clothes," Caiaphas the high priest shows righteous horror, a man 'claiming to be God.' This is blasphemy. To a Jew this is the worst religious outrage, "guilty of death" can be the only announcement, v66.

v67,68 Jesus is now exposed to severe physical violence, probably by the soldiers, temple guards present, [Luke 22:63-65](#), mocking Him, false worship, strike with their fists, all attacking this title "the Christ, the Son of God."

v69-75 The denials of Peter.

[Mark 14:66-72](#); [Luke 22:55-62](#); [John 18:15-18, 25-27](#).

While Jesus is on trial Peter is also on trial in the courtyard outside. He is challenged as being a follower of Jesus on three occasions by various people.

v69 Peter is first challenged by a maid, identified by John as the person controlling entry to the inner courtyard. This maid identifies Peter as being with Jesus, he denies it and enters the courtyard.

Matthew and Mark appear to refer to a second "maid" while Luke indicates that it was a man, probably Peter was challenged by a group of people lead by the maid.

v72 Ignoring the command of Jesus not to use an oath to prove your statement as the truth, [Matt 5:33-37](#), Peter again denies knowing Jesus.

v73 "After a while," about an hour, [Luke 22:59](#), a relative of the man, Malchus, the man who had his ear cut off by Peter, [John 18:26](#), now challenges Peter, in addition he points out that Peter is speaking with an accent and uses words which comes from the Galilee area.

v74 Peter now swearing and cursing, using oaths, for the third time denies any knowledge of Jesus. As he finished speaking the cock crows for the second time, [Mark 14:72](#). "Peter remembered the word of Jesus," [Matt 26:34](#). Peter realized the terrible thing he had done and breaks down, left the court crying in shame. Even though Jesus

had warned him he still failed Jesus, the simple sound of the cock crowing brings it all back to his memory.

Chapter 27

v1,2 The Second Trial before the Sanhedrin.

[Mark 15:1](#); [Luke 23:1](#); [John 18:28](#).

Under the Jewish law it was not permitted to hold a trial at night, neither should it take place just before a Sabbath or festival. In addition Jewish law also specified that for any trial which was a capital crime, e.g. might result in death of the prisoner as the punishment, there must be two trials, a day apart. This day break trial was therefore an attempt by the religious leaders to bring the trials into some sort of a legal procedure. Pontius Pilate was the Roman procurator, the governor of the Judea area A.D. 26-36, and was therefore responsible for law and order under the Roman rule. He was present in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, though his official residence (home) was in Caesarea. Rome always had the final decision in any crime which involved execution as a punishment.

v3-10 The regret by Judas Iscariot.

Judas sees that Jesus is being taken to Pilate, and now knows that instead of making the Jewish leaders recognize and accept who Jesus was, his action and betrayal had resulted in Jesus instead being condemned to death by the religious leaders.

Judas "repented", the original Greek used in the text was not the usual word used in the New Testament for 'repentance to salvation,' it indicates a feeling of guilt for doing something wrong without any reference to God. His main "change of mind" was towards the money. He finds the chief priests and elders, probably still in the high priests house or on the way to Pilate. Judas then tries to return the thirty pieces of silver. Judas realized that he had sent an innocent man to trial and death. The priests answered, "That's your problem, nothing to do with us."

v5 The refusal results in Judas going to the Temple and throws the money into the sanctuary. He then goes and hangs himself. The additional details in [Acts 1:15-20](#) do not contradict. The money was considered dishonourable, full of shame and disgrace, it could not therefore be placed into the temple treasury, [Deuteronomy 23:18](#). It is worth noting that the priests were quite happy to pay Judas the money in the first place.

v7,8 "Potter's field, to bury strangers in, called the Field of Blood," A field, apparently well known to the Jews of the time, "unto this day," was purchased with the money.

v9,10 There is some discussion as to which verses Matthew was referring. [Jeremiah 18:1-4](#); [Zechariah 11:12,13](#) are possible.

v11-31 The trial before Pilate.

[Mark 15:2-5](#); [Luke 23:2,3](#); [John 18:28-38](#).

Matthew continues the story from v2.

v11-14 Jesus is taken into the Praetorium, the main residence area of the Roman governor.

Pilate must have already known about the arrest of Jesus as he would have had to authorize the Roman soldiers being present in the Garden arrest, [John 18:12](#).

The first question by Pontius Pilate comes from the Jewish charge, "Are you the King of the Jews?" [Luke 23:1,2](#); [John 18:28-33](#). The response of Jesus indicates that He agrees with the question, However, He ignores the charges made by the Jewish leaders. The non response by Jesus is very unusual for anyone accused, this makes Pilate think careful about this man before him, but has to consider this action as an admission of guilt.

Following further questioning by Pilate Jesus supplies information about His kingdom, [John 18:36-38](#).

In [Luke 23:4-13](#) we are told that Pilate tries to pass the judgement on to Herod, but Jesus was returned after Herod had had his fun.

v15 The origin of this custom is unknown.

v16-18 Barabbas was guilty of robbery, murder and a very violent uprising against the Roman authority, compared with Jesus, who had healed and helped so many people. Pilate knows why the religious leaders are bringing the charge,- personal desires - they are jealous of Jesus.

v19 As Pilate waits for the Jewish reaction to his offer of freedom of Jesus or Barabbas he gets a message from his wife, she has had a dream. We are not told what was the source of this dream. It would seem strange if it came from God as it could have stopped the trial and then the planned crucifixion. However, God does not think or behave in the same way as man and may have been making sure that the Roman judge knew he was killing an innocent person, Jesus.

v20,21 During the interval the chief priest and elders have persuaded, possibly paid for the crowd to choose Barabbas and reject Jesus. This action shows just how morally and spiritually corrupt and evil are the minds of these religious people.

v23 "Let him be crucified!" Execute Him in the Roman way, not the Jewish way which was normally stoned to death.

v24 A Jewish symbolic custom, [Deuteronomy 21:6-9](#), the meaning is obvious but does not take the guilt away from Pilate for he still has to authorize the execution.

v25 The history of the Jewish nation after this time shows what was the result of this statement by the Jews. See [Acts 5:26-28](#).

v26 The Roman scourge was a very cruel torture, they used a whip made of many leather strips joined at a short handle. The leather strips or thongs had pieces of bone and/or metal attached to the thongs. This was applied across the bare back and front of the person. Many people had died as a result of the scourge.

The scourging was done before Jesus was taken to the cross for crucifixion by the Roman soldiers. [John 19:1-6](#) tells us that this scourging was a final attempt by Pilate to satisfy the Jewish hatred of Jesus, but it did not work.

v27 The Praetorium must have been part of the Castle of Antonia, this would explain why there was a "detachment of soldiers (about 600 men)" present.

After the soldiers had received their orders to crucify Jesus they take the opportunity to mock, make fun of Jesus in an unkind way. They stripped Him of His clothes and put on Jesus a purple robe, possibly a soldiers cloak, they then made a crown out of the thorn tree and gave Him a reed as a sceptre, a staff carried by a king. They then bowed their knees as in false worship, spit and hit Him as they called out "Hail, King of the Jews!"

v31-56 The Crucifixion.

For events order see [Crucifixion Events](#). History of the use of the [cross](#).
[Mark 15:22-32](#); [Luke 23:33-43](#); [John 19:17-24](#).

v32 Simon of Cyrene is made to carry the cross, He represents all Mankind, Man has to carry their cross to the punishment, even though God Himself was to pay the price. The sons of Simon are known to the readers of Mark's Gospel, [Mark 15:21](#). Perhaps the effect of this day brought the family to salvation.

v33 Golgotha. An Aramaic word meaning 'skull,' the Latin equivalent is 'Calvaria.' The exact location is unknown, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre could have been built at the place, it was outside the city during the New Testament times, others claim Gordon's Calvary, further to the North is the place.

v34 Wine vinegar mixed with gall had the power to deaden pain and other reactions and make it easier for the prisoner, but Jesus, after tasting refused to take it, He needed all His abilities fully functioning.

v35 Crucifixion. A method of execution which often takes the person many hours and often days to die.

"Parted His garments," [John 19:23,24](#) tells us that the soldiers divided the items of clothing into four and then gambled on the cloak which was seamless and could not be split. "Spoken by the prophet," [Psalm 22:18](#).

v36 Part of the soldiers duty was to prevent someone rescuing the person.

v37 Pilate had prepared a sign to fit to the top of the cross, to show why he was being crucified, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." which caused a major reaction from the religious leaders, [John 19:19-22](#); [Luke 23:38](#); [Mark 15:26](#).

v38 "Two robbers," the same word was used to describe Barabbas, an indication that they were probably part of the same gang and that Jesus was taking the place of Barabbas in the execution.

v39-43 Those who walked by called out names and challenged Him, [Mark 15:29](#). These were the basic charges of the Sanhedrin, 'destroy the temple' and 'Son of God.' The chief priests and religious leaders joined in with the mocking, not by directly speaking to Jesus but talking to the crowd, they list all the things Jesus had done, "He saved others," not acknowledging the miracles, in fact trying to say they are fakes as He cannot save Himself. "We will even believe Him if He comes off the cross." They did not realize that by staying on the cross our Lord Jesus was saving the world, the task for which He had come. "He trusted in God; let Him deliver him now," we must praise God He did not save His Son.

v44 The thieves also accused Jesus of being a false person, though one was later to realized that he, as a robber, deserved the punishment, [Luke 23:39-43](#).

v45 Jesus was initially nailed to the cross at 09:00 a.m. (third hour, [Mark 15:25](#)). Three hours passed then there was a supernatural darkness "over all the land" from noon to 3:00 p.m. (sixth to ninth hour).

Some have said that this was an eclipse of the sun, the moon gets in line with the sun and covers it, but the Passover festival occurs at full moon, which means the moon was on the wrong side of the earth. We are not told how far "there was darkness over all the land" covered, whether local or global.

v46 This is the only words from the cross recorded by both Mark and Matthew. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" God is holy and pure and could not look

upon the evil sin of the world being put on His Son, [2 Cor 5:21](#); [Gal 3:13](#). We cannot appreciate the full meaning of this but we must remember that God the Father and His Son had been together for eternity.

The Father God did not leave Jesus as He was able to give His life into the Father's hands, [Luke 23:46](#) but as the Judge, God the Father had to separate himself from Jesus so that Jesus could have spiritual death in place of sinful man, spiritual death is separation from God.

v47-49 Some it seems mis-heard the "Eloi" for "Elias" and thought Jesus was calling for Elijah. The soldier for some reason offers Jesus a drink as the crowd now turn against Jesus saying "Let be; let us see whether Elijah will come." Even with the darkness they still do not accept the claims of Jesus and previous events showed this statement by the priests was false.

v50 Jesus now makes the last two final announcements from the cross, in a loud voice, "It is finished," [John 19:30](#). The task that had been set by God the Father was now completed, Jesus was now able to give up His life and give it into the hands of the Father. All the Gospels confirm that the death was a voluntary release of life, not death as a direct result of the crucifixion.

v51 Veil of the temple:- This was the curtain which divided the Holy place from the Holy of Holies, [Exodus 26:31](#), only the high priest was allowed past this curtain on the Day of Atonement, [Leviticus 16:1-30](#). "From the top to the bottom," normally a tear would have started at the bottom, this could only happen if the curtain was deliberately torn by someone. God had now shown that the way to Him was open through the death of His Son, [Heb 10:19-23](#)

v52,53 This events in these verses is only recorded by Matthew. Following the death of Jesus the writer records that the graves of many of the Old Testament saints were opened and their bodies were resurrected after His resurrection. We are not told whether the bodies returned to their graves after this event. It is possible therefore these Old Testament saints went to heaven with Jesus, [1 Cor 15:20](#).

v54 Having seen all the events on and around the cross the Centurion makes this statement, "Truly, this was the Son of God!" An amazing acceptance from a pagan Roman soldier who had not been brought up under the Jewish teaching.

v55,56 A group of women are standing near the cross.

One was Mary Magdalene. In [Luke 8:2](#) we are told that she had been cleaned of seven devils by Jesus. Some people claim she had a bad past but there is no scriptural record. Mary the mother of James and Joseph, [John 19:25](#) records she is the wife of Clopas(Cleopas).

Mother of Zebedee's children, Salome, [Mark 15:40](#), sister of Mary, [John 19:25](#).

The Roman soldiers confirmed that Jesus was dead, [John 19:31-35](#). To make sure a soldier pushed a spear into His side, "and forthwith there came out blood and water." This is a sign that the person had been dead for some time as the blood is separating.

v57-66 The Burial of Jesus

v57 "When the evening had come," this would be the period 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus come to take the body down.

Joseph of Arimathea was a rich member of the Sanhedrin, [Luke 23:50,51](#). His position and wealth allowed him to have a tomb close to Jerusalem, though he obviously

lived elsewhere.

v58 As Joseph of Arimathaea was not a relative his request for the body would need some explaining to Pilate, the Roman controller.

v59,60 Once Joseph had permission, he removes the body from the cross, assisted by Nicodemus. They wrapped the body in the usual linen cloth and placed the body in Joseph's tomb. The entrance was closed with the usual large round stone.

v61 These actions were all seen by the two Mary's.

v62 "After the Day of the Preparation," compare [Mark 15:42](#). Some people think this must be Saturday but Matthew does not refer to the 'Sabbath' and the day of "Preparation for the Feast day" would have been on Wednesday night. See [John 19:14, 31](#). On this basis the entombment of Jesus would have been a full 72 hours, from sundown Wednesday until sundown Saturday.

v63,64 The private predictions of the resurrection by Jesus have somehow reached the ears of the chief priests and Pharisees and want to prevent anyone stealing the body and claiming a resurrection. Unfortunately the disciples seem to have ignored this promise by Jesus and all they saw was a dead Jesus.

v65,66 Having obtained Pilate's agreement, the tomb is sealed, so they would know it had been opened, and a temple guard is mounted at the tomb until after the third day.

Chapter 28

The resurrection of the Jesus Matt 28:1-20

The Gospel of Matthew is not so detailed as those of Luke and John but this gospel is the only record which contains details concerning the soldiers on guard, v11-15.

v1-8 The Empty Tomb

v1 "After the Sabbath," [Mark 16:1,2](#); [Luke 24:1](#); [John 20:1](#), a group of women go to the tomb to complete the normal Jewish practice of the embalming of the dead body. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome set out for the tomb, the other gospels record their concern on how to remove the large stone to open the grave. As the women approach the tomb there was an earthquake, [John 20:1,2](#) tells us that Mary Magdalene left to tell the disciples that the tomb had been opened, she did not see or receive the message from the angel. The angel of God had rolled back the stone. The Temple guards are so scared they are paralyzed with fear.

This was not the moment of the resurrection, just God revealing that it had happened to the witnesses, in a supernatural way, that the resurrection had happened.

The angel also had a message for the two other women, "He is risen, come and see."

The additional message "He goeth before you into Galilee," as He promised, [Matt 26:32](#), does not restrict Him appearing to individuals or private groups in Jerusalem. Peter and John, having been contacted by Mary Magdalene, arrive at the tomb about this time, look into the empty tomb and depart, probably Mary Magdalene had followed the disciples to the tomb and then remained there, [John 20:3-10](#).

v8 The women, frightened, yet full of joy, take the message to the other disciples.

Mary Magdalene waiting at the tomb, [John 20:11-17](#) now meets Jesus.

v9,10 [Luke 24:9-11](#) records that the women had already contacted the disciples, Jesus now appears to the women, possibly somewhere near the tomb, but we are not told the

exact location. The message Jesus gives the women is similar to the angel at the tomb.

v11-15 The soldiers report.

Matthew's gospel is the only record of this event. The soldiers must have been Roman as they were there under Pilate's instruction, though they were under direct Sanhedrin control, [Matt 27:65,66](#).

The soldiers have to admit that they had failed in their duty, they were frightened by the events at the tomb, this would have been a serious admission for a Roman soldier, possibly a punishment of death for their failure. However, the story they made up could be considered just as bad. If the soldiers were asleep, how did they know what was happening? They would all have had to been asleep and that is even more serious charge for a Roman soldier. Yet this story was accepted by the Jews.

The Sanhedrin were all part of the lie and promised to persuade Pilate, v14, if he tries to take action, possibly a further bribe?

The other Gospels record many appearances of Jesus during this period and His physical departure from the earth.

v16-20 The Great Commission

Fulfilling the earlier instructions by Jesus before His Crucifixion to the disciples, He now appears to the eleven disciples in Galilee. This may have also been the time Jesus appeared to "about five hundred" as mentioned by Paul, [1 Cor 15:6](#). Galilee would have been the home of most of the followers of Jesus and so would not have caused too much attraction to the authorities.

v17 "They saw Him and worshiped, but some doubted." This also proved that Matthew's report was an honest commentary on the events he recorded, willing to say 'some doubted.' Yet they believed only on the basis of "many infallible proofs," [Acts 1:3](#).

v18 "All power is given unto Me." The following commission had all the power of authority from God the Father, the ultimate power in heaven and earth.

v19 "Make disciples," teach the world about Jesus, bring people to know salvation and the saving power of Jesus Christ. "Baptizing them," the symbolic public show, that Christ is your Saviour.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," Showing the full, distinctive, unique, different character of the Christian baptism, so different from the earlier baptism carried out by the Jews.

v20 "Teaching them," Not just salvation but having a deep knowledge of Jesus, His teaching and way of life.

"I am with you always. " We may not feel the presence of Jesus in our life, but He is there, "until the end of the world." See [Romans 8:28-39](#).